

ISSUE 38 SUMMER 2003

# VIEWS

Harmonious Powers with Nature work  
On sky, earth, river, lake and sea;  
Sunshine and cloud, whirlwind and breeze,  
All in one duteous task agree.

And thus through many seasons' space  
This little Island may survive;  
But Nature, though we mark her not,  
Will take away, may cease to give.

Floating Island (extract)  
by William Wordsworth

## **FEATURE**

Islands and Oases

## Editorial panel

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**Jo Burgon**, Head of Access and Recreation

**Lucy Cordrey**, Nature Conservation Technician

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**Martin Hyde**, Assistant Archaeologist

**Tamzin Phillips**, Environmental Practices Adviser

**Caroline Thackray**, Territory Archaeologist (South)

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**Views** is intended as a free exchange of ideas, experiences and practices. Comments and contributions are welcomed at any time from the **Views** readership. However, if a contributor's opinion differs widely from policies and practices endorsed by the National Trust, we may wish to discuss with the contributor the best way to represent their view, whilst also giving space for the Trust's approach to be stated in the same or a future edition.

Articles containing what could be interpreted as negative references to a named or identifiable individual within the Trust, their work or opinions, will be cleared with that person before publication.

Please submit articles in the following format:

**Format:** Articles can be sent to any member of the editorial panel. Commissioned material should be sent directly to the person that commissioned it. Send via email, on disk (Word 97, Word 6/95 or WordPerfect), or as a hard copy.

**Length:** Shorter, punchy pieces are easier to digest than long, complex ones, especially if you want non-specialists to read the article as well as the converted! The maximum length is 1,200 words. Please use sub-headings to divide articles into manageable 'bites'. Corrections will be made, as necessary, to grammar and punctuation. If we think your piece would benefit from further editing, we will contact you to discuss possible changes.

**Illustrations:** These will be reproduced in black and white. We can use almost any medium: colour or b/w prints, slides, line drawings, cartoons, or good photocopies. We are trying to improve and increase the pictorial content and would prefer to receive an illustration with each article if at all possible. Please include a caption with each illustration and provide us with the name of the photographer or artist so that they may be credited.

**Deadlines:** Please meet the deadlines given. Final deadlines are printed at the front of each issue but commissioned writers may be asked to meet an earlier deadline. There is no guarantee that articles or changes after a deadline will be included.

For an information sheet on writing for **Views**, please email: [correspondence.views@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:correspondence.views@nationaltrust.org.uk)

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# EDITORIAL

We planned this issue's feature to focus on the particular conditions faced by island properties, to show how all properties are an oasis, a sanctuary, for people and wildlife, and also to demonstrate how nothing really happens in isolation; sooner or later the effects will be felt elsewhere, their scale and implications only obvious with hindsight.

What the long-term impacts of current actions may be could exercise the most visionary prophets but going by the feature articles, they should, at the very least, be significant, unpredicted and felt worldwide. This is why the feature begins with an article on what the founding of the first National Trust led to, then moves on to coexistence – not necessarily an harmonious state – and ends with a modest study of sustainable energy on three small islands. Environmental imperatives promise to push the value of this type of research to the fore and the work on those islands could easily have global implications.

Again, thank you to all contributors – the spontaneous and the solicited are equally appreciated. The breadth

of interests covered is substantial but if you don't see your work reflected in these pages, please write an article for us or nominate someone else to. **Views** has always been a good vehicle for new ideas, and we'd like to hear of more. We'll be taking steps to broaden the range by increasing the membership of the Editorial Panel. If you don't recognise a familiar name or title on the list, you can always email an article to 'views' (or [correspondence.views@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:correspondence.views@nationaltrust.org.uk) from outside).

Communication within the Trust and to the wider world is a hot topic at the moment and a popular issue at the One Trust workshops. I have been persuaded to slow down on a review of **Views** to give everyone a breathing space but that doesn't mean that your opinions aren't welcome – if you've something you want to say, do email or complete the form at the back of the magazine. All feedback received is avidly read, discussed and acted upon.

Jacky Ferneyhough  
Managing Editor

## Article Deadlines

**5 September 2003 – Winter (Issue 39)**

**5 March 2004 – Summer (Issue 40)**

The theme for **Views** 39 (Winter 2003) will be Science and Technology.

Feature editors: Sarah Hickey, The Registrar, and Tom Bolton, Policy & Campaigns Assistant

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**GIVE US YOUR VIEWS!**

# IN BRIEF

## Meaning and Value of Heritage?

Sara Northey, Senior Policy & Campaigns Officer (Communities & Development), Queen Anne's Gate

One of the Trust's three priority areas of work in the NTSP is 'to deepen our understanding of the meaning and value of heritage'. But what do we need to know about heritage that we do not already know, and what does this mean for the day to day work of the Trust?

Last summer Policy & Campaigns and Conservation produced a discussion paper for Trust staff, seeking their views on the development of this priority area of work. Last September a seminar involving staff from across the Trust refined the paper for presentation to the Executive Committee. With committee approval for an 'evolutionary but innovative' approach outlined in the paper, we are now convening a project group to take forward implementation. None of this could have been done without the huge number of comments and suggestions from Trust staff.

The primary objective, set out in the paper, is 'the continuing need for the Trust to demonstrate the contemporary relevance and importance of the historic environment and its value for its own sake'. The committee paper set out the Trust's thinking on both natural and historic heritage, but the focus of activity will be the historic environment, to include created landscapes, but not 'natural systems'.

A small team from Policy & Campaigns, Conservation and Customer Services is currently:

- taking soundings from staff about the types of work now underway to meet this objective, and asking for suggestions of future projects;
- seeking to coordinate other relevant strategic activities, eg mapping exercise of learning provision at properties (Community, Learning & Volunteering) and Farming Forward work (Policy & Campaigns/Conservation) in meeting Trust priorities;
- planning a summary leaflet establishing the Trust's role and approach, showcasing some initiatives and identifying future priorities for the Trust and for external policy makers.

## Reaching external audiences

The Trust's work in this area is in part a response to burgeoning public interest in history and heritage. A 2000 MORI poll<sup>1</sup> found that 96 per cent think heritage is important to teach us about our past and our future and 76 per cent agree their lives are richer for having the opportunity to visit and see examples of this country's heritage.

Yet set against this public interest there is still widespread political indifference to heritage because it is not seen as relevant to today's issues. In particular its contribution to the economy and to social progress is not fully understood, either by decision-makers or indeed by the sector itself. Added to this, there is the widespread feeling that many heritage organisations do not appeal to a wide cross-section of the public. To meet this challenge the Trust is:

- researching ways to measure the social contribution of the historic environment, in partnership with the Institute of Field Archaeologists and the consultancy firm, WS Atkins;
- working jointly with English Heritage to make the case for continued lottery funding for heritage and to develop indicators for the sector;
- supporting the new voluntary sector body, Heritage Link, in developing coherent messages for government, in particular on planning and inclusion issues;
- contributing to the English Heritage Review of Designations;
- piloting the Untold Story project which brings together local groups with little or no experience of Trust properties to explore the significance of historic places from their own perspectives.

If you are interested in knowing more about any of this work or have suggestions for innovative work we could do, please contact Sara Northey on 020 7447 6644.

## Reference

<sup>1</sup>'Attitudes towards the Heritage', MORI research study conducted for English Heritage, July 2000 ([www.english-heritage.org.uk/policy/government-reviews/MORI-research](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/policy/government-reviews/MORI-research)). ■

## Gorffennol ar Gyfer y Dyfodol<sup>1</sup>: A Welsh perspective on the historic environment policy

Emma Plunkett Dillon, Archaeologist, Wales

In England the contribution of the historic environment to quality of life, sense of place and sustainable development has been clarified by the policy review published as *Power of Place* (English Heritage, 2000) and its follow-up *Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future* (DCMS, 2001). Wales, with its different legislation and statutory bodies, did not have the benefit of this process. The lack of such guidance was brought into focus by the contents of the consultation and discussion papers that followed the establishment of the Welsh Assembly. The scant reference to the historic environment reflects a failure to recognise how this contributes to national identity and economic well-being.

### Taking the lead

The National Trust has taken a lead in seeking to address this policy deficiency. Working closely with our partners, the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) Wales/Cymru, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales (CPRW) and members of Wales Environment Link, we argued for a comprehensive review of the historic environment in Wales and took every opportunity to promote the economic, social and educational value of our heritage. Fortunately through the Wales Environment Link, regular meetings with Sue Essex, Minister for the Environment, enabled us to present our case.

In 2002 it was announced in Cabinet that a review would be undertaken although what form this would take was not explained and consultation documents continued to emerge with no, or inadequate, reference to the historic environment. Recognising that lack of information might be exacerbating the prob-

lem, the CBA Wales worked with the Trust, the CPRW and the Institute of Field Archaeologists to produce a leaflet explaining the value of the historic environment in terms of regeneration, tourism, education and access. An ideal occasion to launch this came about when the Minister asked the Trust to work with Cadw to organise a conference on the historic environment.

### Conference on the historic environment

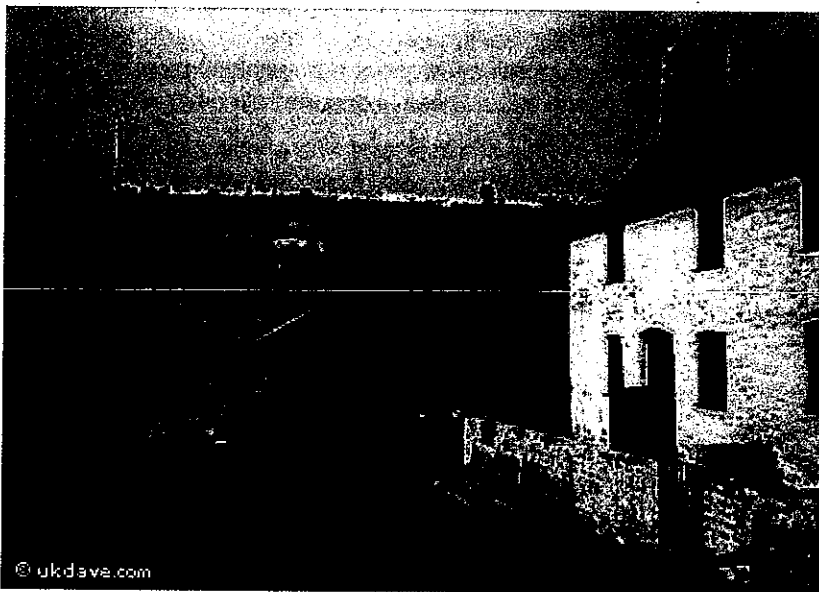
Originally intended to focus on regeneration, the Trust persuaded Sue Essex to broaden the remit to include many of the issues raised in *Power of Place*. In July 2002 key speakers from across the United Kingdom and Ireland came together before to an invited audience of over 100 delegates. In her keynote address Sue Essex declared:

This conference is the beginning of a wider initiative looking at the historic environment and what it can mean for Wales. We have learnt from the loss of the Dunlop Semtex factory in Brynmawr where despite the efforts of people over ten years, the economic rationale was not strong enough to save the building, and also Blaenafon, which is now a World Heritage Site. We need to face up to these lessons and have courage to learn from positive and negative aspects. We should recognise how much the historic environment can mean to the regeneration of Wales.

### New research

New research findings presented by Professor Steve Hill, former economic adviser to the Welsh Development Agency, found that the historic environment made an annual contribution of approximately £780 million per year and supported over 22,500 jobs. He argued that these figures highlight the potential for such 'appreciating assets' in building a new economy based on a healthy historic environment that helps bind people and businesses to place. It was also estimated that heritage sites made up 80 per cent of the most visited attractions in Wales in 2000. Case studies cited included the venue of the conference itself, Cwmaman Institute.

A typical working-men's institute built in 1872, Cwmaman Institute fell into disrepair after the demise of the coal industry. However, the local community raised funds to finance a rebuild retaining the original façade. Now it has a turnover of £700,000 per annum and supports 24 full-time equivalent jobs.



Part of the Blaenafon World Heritage Site: Engine row and stack square.  
© ukdave.com

Steve Hill asked that we recognise the historic environment as an 'economic and cultural asset'. This is a necessary first step towards accepting the need for the regular investment required if we are to sustain, conserve and manage this essential element of Wales. Without this we will not be able to maximise its economic, environmental and social benefits.

In the past the standard solution has been to pull buildings down and start again. This rarely involved a detailed understanding of what makes communities work or what gives identity and attachment. As Professor Dai Smith of the University of Glamorgan told the conference we should be 'incandescent with rage at the cultural lobotomy that has proceeded along with the environmental cleansing of Wales since 1945' and that places like the valley institutes are 'an infusion of minds onto a landscape'. Sensitivity requires interpretation, preservation and the means to reconfigure buildings connected to the past so that they can become functional in the present.

Primrose Wilson, Chair of the Northern Ireland Heritage Lottery Fund, argued for a 'bottom-up approach invigorated by fiery spirits in the community'. Peter Wakelin of Cadw concurred with this view, citing Blaenafon World Heritage Site as an example of how community self-esteem can be unlocked by acknowledging the significance of our past.

Other speakers highlighted the importance of working in partnership. Funding from organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and also landscape protection schemes, eg Tir Gofal, can act as catalysts to unite partners, inspire enthusiasm and promote understanding. Education and access at all levels is essential although this should be a two-way process between the education sector and those who manage and care for the historic environment.

### Looking to the future

The Trust was greatly encouraged by the deep commitment to the historic environment of Wales demonstrated by both speakers and audience. All contributors asked for planning and investment, and looked to the Welsh Assembly to take a lead. The minister responded by establishing a group of consultants under the directorship of Paul Loveluck, President of the National Museums and Galleries of Wales, to undertake the promised review of the historic environment. The report, *Review of the Historic Environment in Wales*, was published in March 2003 and we will be contributing our opinion to this consultation document in due course.

The Trust continues to give priority to historic environment policy in Wales. Geraint Hopkins, recently appointed Wales Affairs Officer, has responsibility for this within the Cardiff office and works closely with the Trust's archaeologist. Whatever the outcome of the review the Trust anticipates that it will continue to make a real contribution to the understanding of the

economic and social benefits of the historic environment. We will maintain our partnerships and look forward to working with the next Welsh Assembly.

### Note

This article is based in part on one written by Carys Howell and Emma Plunkett Dillon for *Agenda* (Winter 2002/3), the journal of the Institute of Welsh Affairs.

### Reference

<sup>1</sup> Gorffennol ar Gyfer y Dyfodol – 'A past for our future'. ■

## Logboats and Guinness: Archaeology Conference, Northern Ireland, October 2002

Rob Woodside, Territory Archaeologist, Cirencester

Last October the Archaeology Conference was held in Northern Ireland for the first time ever. The Archaeology Section was joined by members of regional staff, the National Trust Archaeology Panel and representatives from the National Trust for Scotland, the Environment & Heritage Service (EHSNI), Queen's University Belfast, the Ancient Monuments Board, Dúchas (Heritage Service, Republic of Ireland) and An Taisce (National Trust for Ireland).

Our guide over the two days was Thomas McErlean from the University of Ulster, a passionate enthusiast for the archaeology of Northern Ireland.

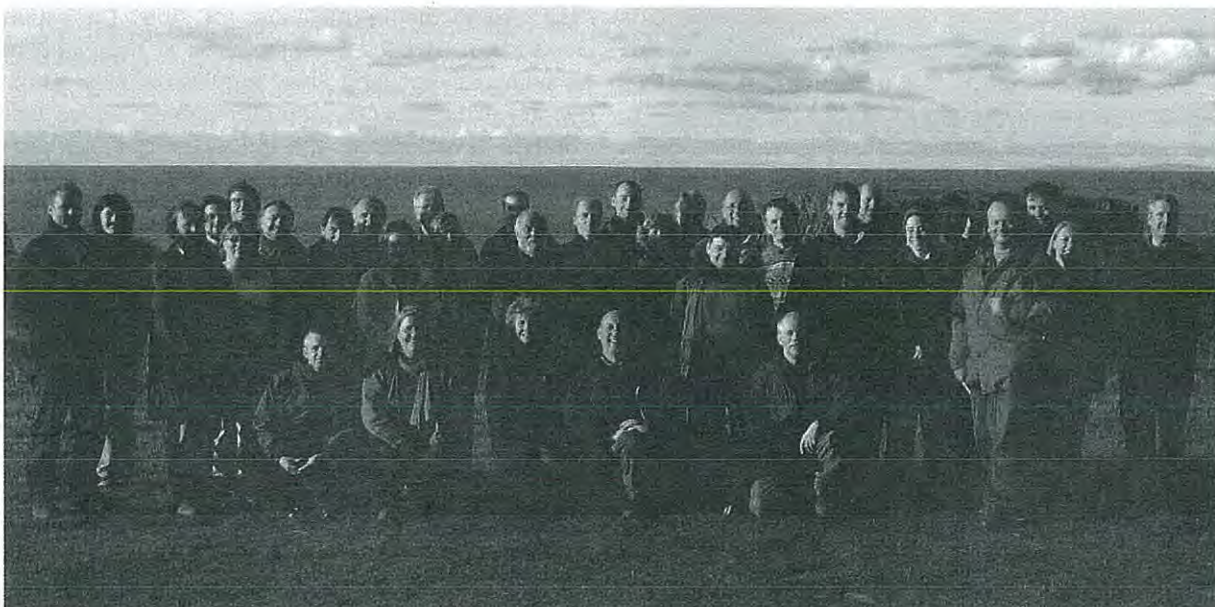
### Extraordinary sight

The first day of the conference focused on the archaeology of Strangford Lough, travelling anti-clockwise via the early Christian settlement at Nendrum where the EHSNI foreshore survey had identified an extremely rare early medieval tidal mill. Crossing over on the ferry at the mouth of the lough, we travelled up to Greyabbey to see the medieval fish traps on the foreshore. Walking out on the mud we witnessed the extraordinary sight of a Neolithic logboat still resting where it had been abandoned almost 6,000 years ago.

The second day was spent visiting sites along the north Antrim coast. Blessed by perfect weather we started at Dunluce Castle, one of the great iconic sites in Northern Ireland. A detour to Portballintrae was rewarded with a visit to a rare and unusual Iron Age ritual site believed to be dedicated to water deities.

At the Giant's Causeway we were able to learn about some of the planning issues surrounding the World Heritage Site, as well as hear about approaches to coastal and maritime archaeology in Northern Ireland. Our whistlestop tour also included the remains of the sixteenth-century castle at Dunseverick and the early twentieth-century lime and basalt workings at Larrybane.





National Trust archaeologists, contemplating log boats and Guinness. © NT

### Heritage behind the headlines

The conference also gave us the opportunity to catch up on the burgeoning political role archaeology is now taking throughout the UK home countries, and to learn more about the work of the Trust in Northern Ireland. For many, the conference provided their first opportunity to visit the province and to see the beautiful land and rich heritage that lies behind the headlines.

The Trust's properties in Northern Ireland are more than worthy of detailed archaeological investigation. Following the Organisational Review a new project archaeologist has been appointed to undertake a two-year survey to record the region's extraordinary historic environment. ■

### Historic Properties go wild in Scotland: Historic Properties Conference, Edinburgh, September 2002

Sophie Chessum, Curator (Interiors),  
South Territory, Polesden Lacey

What, I hear you say? Ninety conservators and curators on a sight-seeing trip – wearing kilts, drinking whisky, eating haggis and doing the sword dance?

Well, not quite... though there was an evening of Scottish country dancing but only one kilt got an airing and I did not see any whisky all week.

So what was it all about?

#### Who?

The conference participants were Conservators, who are responsible for the physical care of our historic properties and their contents – advising on preventa-

tive conservation (housekeeping) and the remedial treatment of objects – and Curators, a role similar to that of the former Historic Buildings Representative, who record, provide understanding of and present all aspects of historic buildings (from mansions to cottages), their collections, gardens and landscapes. We were joined throughout the conference by colleagues from other sections of the Directorate and from other departments.

#### Why?

This was a chance for this nationwide team to meet up, welcome new staff, exchange ideas, share experiences, build on our knowledge and continue our professional development. It was also a great opportunity for the team, under the Historic Properties Director, Merlin Waterson, to discuss new ways of working and to look forward.

#### Where?

The University of Edinburgh was our base – yes, that meant student halls. We had been invited by the National Trust's sister organisation, the National Trust for Scotland (NTS), and it was an irresistible opportunity to meet the NTS team and see how they present their properties. There was also a chance to visit some privately run properties, learning from their experiences and giving them the benefit of our own. Ideas for best practice in historic houses were exchanged as well as the occasional revealing tale.

Ian Gow, Curator at the NTS, was our excellent local guide and did much of the leg-work in organising visits and opening many doors that might otherwise have been closed to us. Much credit to the organisation and logistics of mustering nearly 100 staff goes to Ed Diestelkamp, Buildings Design Adviser, and David Adshead, Architectural Historian.



David Walker leading the tour of Georgian Edinburgh. © NT. Taken by Sarah Staniforth, 2002.

### What?

The conference proper was three days but the majority of us took the opportunity to come up early and spend a weekend exploring Edinburgh's heritage. The Saturday and Sunday were packed from dawn until dusk with visits to a variety of historic buildings and museums. Highlights included a walking tour of Edinburgh's elegant Georgian streets, a pilgrimage to Abbotsford House – home of Sir Walter Scott and still shown to the public by his descendants – the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (where I realised the limits of my knowledge of Scottish history) and Bowhill – a stark house currently undergoing an extensive re-roofing project, which is set in a spectacular landscape. The house contains glorious pictures, furniture and tapestries.

The conference itself was a successful blend of formal presentations and visits to museums and historic buildings led by their own specialist staff. We bene-

fit from the experience of the Education Department and the Design Office at the National Museums of Scotland and heard about their forthcoming exhibition on computer games, *Game On*. The NTS talked us through the recent complex project to re-service Newhailes – including details of the building works, interpretation and the pleasure (and a few pitfalls) of opening a new property to visitors. We were fired-up by stirring talks on the future by Merlin Waterson and Peter Nixon, Director of Conservation.

The conference was a great success – contacts were made, much useful information was exchanged and experience shared. It was also enjoyable and a memorable first meeting for staff in their new roles – all in a city famous for its merrymaking. ■

### Energy Management at Basildon Park

Amita Mehta, Assistant Adviser (Energy), Cirencester

Supported by the National Trust, TV Energy and the Government Office for the South East, Basildon Park is piloting an energy efficiency and renewables audit which began in April 2003. The site is supporting the assessment and establishment of energy auditing methodologies within the National Trust.

The project involved:

- An assessment of current and future energy efficiency measures on the site;
- An assessment of current and future renewable technologies used on the site;



Newhailes, Midlothian. © NT. Taken by Sophie Chessum, 2002.

- A rationalisation plan for energy metering on the site;
- Involvement of staff and volunteers to understand energy management issues and deal with any queries and ideas raised;
- Assessment of funding opportunities;
- Benchmarking energy performance against government energy efficiency standards where appropriate;
- A seminar to enable the Trust to advocate energy efficiency measures and methodologies to external organisations and internal audiences.

A report and case study of the work that has taken place will be distributed.

If successful, Basildon Park will act as a catalyst for other energy exemplar sites across the Trust. These will be used to promote to internal and external audiences 'best practice' in energy management at historic properties. ■

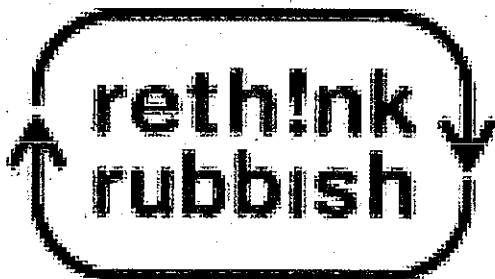
### **Coleshill Recycling Initiative**

Juliet Phipps, Property Manager, Buscot & Coleshill, Thames & Solent

In the village of Coleshill, where all but five of the 68 houses are owned by the National Trust, the Trust has recently launched a recycling initiative in partnership with the parish council, district council and the county council. This was triggered by discussions at a parish council meeting about ways we can, as a village, reduce the amount of domestic waste we produce.

We arranged an initial meeting inviting residents to bring along their ideas and suggestions about how we might tackle the issue. We arranged three speakers – the district council's waste strategy coordinator, the county council's waste reduction officer and Tamzin Phillips, the Trust's Environmental Practices Adviser. The meeting was well supported and a tremendous success.

We discussed how we might reduce biodegradable materials away from landfill sites and how to encour-



age householders to reduce the amount of weekly waste put out for collection.

We also identified that we needed to look at:

- home composting
- community composting
- using recycling boxes and local waste recycling centres
- using a shredding machine for garden prunings/cuttings.

The district and county councils were both extremely willing to help us, and offered us advice and financial support to get us started.

Since then we have:

- Identified a community composting site within the village. The county council are meeting all the set-up costs and will obtain the necessary planning consents and Environment Agency approval. The county council will also provide a shredding machine and operator every two months to shred the garden waste collected.
- ordered home composting bins for every household in the village. There will be no charge as the cost is being met by the Trust, the district and county councils.
- continued to encourage householders to use the green box scheme – and most now do.
- ordered some recyclable shopping bags (to cut down on using plastic ones) which will bear a unique Coleshill logo, designed by the village children. These will be provided free of charge to householders.
- arranged to establish a Community Action Group within the village, comprising volunteers who will be responsible on a rota basis to keep an eye on the community composting site.

The 'formal' launch of this initiative took place in April when the home composters were lined up on the village green for householders to collect. County and district council representatives provided advice about how to make home compost.

The county council are supporting ten similar village initiatives within Oxfordshire, Coleshill being the fourth to have been established. Many other local authorities are also supporting community waste action initiative; contact the recycling officer for your local council for more details.

For any further information please contact Juliet Phipps on 01793 762209. ■

# VIEWPOINTS

## 'Boz Looan': A Midsummer Madness

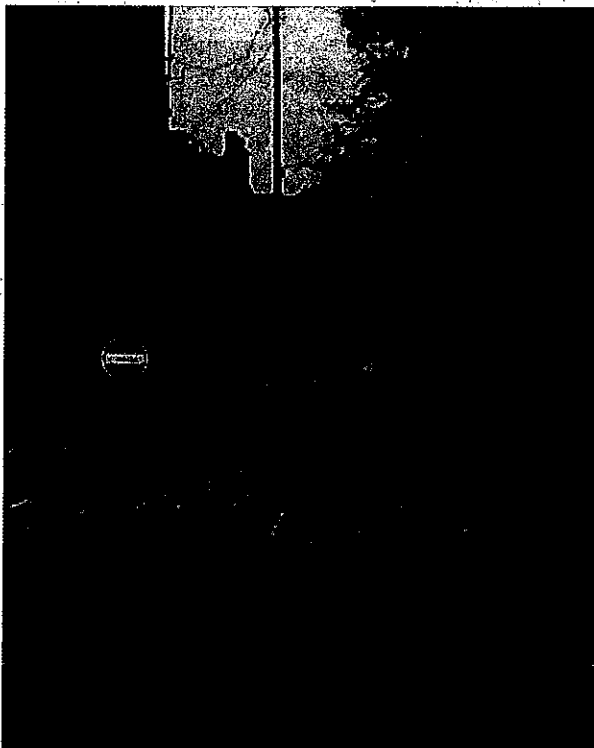
Jeff Cherrington, Assistant Countryside Manager,  
North Cornwall

### What's in a name?

Three hundred children and young people; twelve schools, 200 adults, 3,000 visitors, twelve acres of performance space including steep slopes, a river, two bridges and harbour entrance – all for a midsummer community event. Oh yes, and it was held in the middle of a small village on the North Cornish coast.

It all started in 2001 as part of the National Trust's Dance in Trust programme. In the previous three years the events had taken place at Trerice, Lanhydrock and Cotehele in Cornwall. This year the idea was to take it to a countryside property with involvement from the local community. And so it was that Boscastle, a small village of 800 people, became the focus of much activity.

The event needed a name and, after some deliberation, the event became *Boz Looan* – *boz* or *bos* meaning home and *loosan* meaning celebration or festival in the Cornish language. The date became 22 June, the nearest Saturday to Midsummer Day.



Leading the procession. © NT. Taken by Jeff Cherrington.

### Involving the community

Central to the event was the participation of the community and local schools. Involving them was one of the more challenging aspects of the event. There were many meetings and much one-to-one liaising by countryside staff. The schools were paramount in encouraging others within the village to get involved. In partnership with Dance Agency Cornwall, ten primary and two secondary schools worked with professionals in dance, arts and crafts. Slowly but surely, more and more people became more and more enthusiastic about the celebration.

### Surfing pigs

The schools worked on dances that reflected the history of Boscastle. For example, Boscastle Primary School pupils based their performance on a battle at the castle that gives the village its name. Through a series of dances, they presented a little piece of history to the watching visitors. They followed this with surfing pigs – local legend has it that a certain Parson Hawker was so incensed at being fed seal meat instead of pork 'that he released all the pigs in Boscastle'. What else would a truant pig do but go surfing for the afternoon? Well, this is Cornwall!

Local people attended dance and crafts workshops and made costumes, masks and props that would not have been out of place in a New Orleans carnival. Some produced puppets for their performances in the aptly named *Story Lane*, telling a delighted audience tales of witchcraft – women who would 'sell the wind' to sailors, sunken ships, ghosts and the lost bells of Boscastle.

Boz Looan also revived the practice of the village procession. An important part of Boscastle's history in times past, the procession, from the upper village to the harbour, gradually died out about 50 years ago.

### The event itself

So at 5.30pm sharp on 22 June, the sound of drums echoed down the valley from the upper village, as hundreds of children, adults and young people streamed past the waiting crowds. Musicians, stilt walkers, dancers, kite flyers and a group dressed in wetsuits and flippers buoyed up the crowd for an amazing evening.

The audience was entertained by a collage of performances including *The Boscastle Breakdown*, the traditional dance of the area. In a new twist to an old



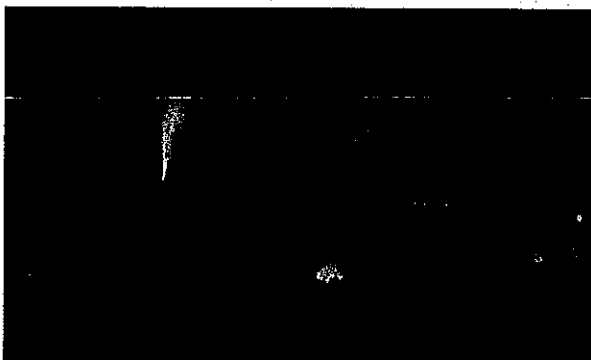
'You really had to be there.' © NT. Taken by Jeff Cherrington.

dance, some local schools had been working on updating the *Breakdown*. Mixed in with the straight-legged hopping was some very modern break-dancing with clear drum 'n' bass influences. One version of the Boscastle Breakdown involved a group of boys in wetsuits and flippers performing their own unique version. You really had to be there!

The two secondary schools, Bodmin Community College and Sir James Smith's, from Camelford, worked with the small team of professional dancers, fire wranglers, technicians, riggers, Cornish Youth Music group and even four abseilers(!) to come up with an astonishing piece of theatre. Three thousand visitors caught the distant sound of drumming as a group of twenty young people, dressed in white and beating gold-painted drums, marched into view. The harbour was rigged like a ship in full sail as a choir sang *Not long till dawn and she's back from under the sea*, a traditional Cornish fishing song. On the hillside opposite, another group waved coloured ribbons in a choreographed set of moves, whilst above them on the skyline, fire dancers whirled lighted gourds.

Among the bonuses of the day were the impromptu performances such as one man standing on a barrel to sing traditional Cornish songs or the Circle Dance that began as musicians played traditional Cornish music, the dancers ranging from the very young to the white of hair.

A shower of fireworks brought to an end an amazing evening of dance, music, storytelling, performance



Firework finale. © NT. Taken by Jeff Cherrington.

and entertainment. Most of the audience drifted slowly home, whilst the staff joined a jamming session with fiddles and guitars in the local pub.

### The morning after . . .

There was a sense of calm over the village during clearing up the next day and an appreciation from the villagers that a spectacular event had just occurred. As one lady said: 'I take my hat off to whoever organised it. It was a brilliant evening. There was something for everyone – from my five-year-old niece to my grandmother.'

The next task for the countryside staff who live and work in the area is to test the water and see if the community would be interested in organising something for next year. Judging by the overwhelmingly positive reaction, Boscastle may see another procession this year followed by . . . well, who knows? ■

## 'The Standard of Accommodation Varies'

Neil Edwards, Working Holidays leader and former member of the National Trust Council

We probably take today's high standard of accommodation at National Trust basecamps for granted and expect nothing less. But it wasn't always like this.

When Acorn Camps, as the Trust's Working Holidays were once known, were in their infancy, there were no basecamps. Accommodation was wherever it could be found, which gave rise to some rather interesting hovels. When I started, the Acorn Camps' booklets warned 'the standard of accommodation varies' and 'if you do not expect too much you will not be disappointed'. Lest these rather special wrinkles in the Trust's history of hospitality were ever to be forgotten, I thought it might be timely to share a few of these wonders with you. Perhaps some of you will have experienced the same places?

### En suite elephant trap

The first project I ever went on – 11 to 18 July 1978 – was at Nymans Gardens in West Sussex. The Acorn Camp booklet said 'Old cottage, formerly game-keeper's. Quiet and isolated. OL ES SP.' What this meant was that it was the tiniest cottage you can imagine – four rooms, two up, two down. The upstairs rooms had some elderly, metal, narrow bunk beds; nothing else would have fitted in the rooms, leaving standing room for one person at most. Downstairs was a small dining room and a rather thin kitchen, equipped only with a modest twin camping gaz stove.

OL meant oil lights, ie the nearest electricity was about half a mile away. SP meant stand pump, actually a tap on the other side of the dirt track that led down to the cottage. My first task on arrival as a gullible new vol-



Old school house at Croft: Yes, we were staying here in this weather. No, there wasn't any heating. © Neil Edwards

unteer, freshly collected from the rail station, was to dig an 'elephant trap' in the woods. I considered the leader was worrying unnecessarily here – but perhaps there was a circus in the area? So I went along with the plan and, after a while, it became apparent that this little ritual was associated with the third set of initials, ES, which translated in politest Trust English to 'elsan sanitation'.

But there was better to come. By September, I had signed up for an Acorn Camp at Formby Point in Merseyside where we could expect 'caravans set in a site in the middle of the property'. It all sounded rather luxurious. First impressions upon arrival, however, were rather a disappointment.

There were four small touring caravans, of a type more dilapidated and life-expired than I had ever seen. It was the Trust's very own gypsy encampment. I had done caravanning before, so had some idea of how to cope, and found myself sort of in charge of the catering for the four of us crammed in our caravan. The main challenge was to extract enough survival rations from the leader's caravan. Each caravan started off by doing their own cooking until it became apparent that the girls' caravan seemed to be rather better at it, and from then on we prevailed upon them when we could get away with it.

### **Brownie-sized**

In future years I was to discover basecamps and there were some other pleasant surprises, too. Morville

Hall, in Shropshire, was one. Annexed to the hall was a holiday home (a former coach house) for Brownies. Every comfort was provided for, in a basic sort of way, the only downside being that everything was Brownie-sized. It was just like living in a doll's house. The big bonus was the private swimming pool at the back of the hall.

Being the first Acorn Camp of only three or four ever to be held at Morville, we soon became the centre of attention for the village, clearing out the village pond. The local school turned out to come and marvel at us, and we knew we'd made it when one of the village's elderly residents turned up on site with a bottle of sherry (but only one glass) to share with us. We weren't too proud to disappoint him. Our status in the village was confirmed with free beer from the village pub at the landlord's (or maybe the brewery's?) expense on our last night.

Croft Castle, in Herefordshire, was once a regular fixture in the Acorn Camp programme and, for many years, an old and only half-derelict schoolhouse served to provide spacious accommodation. It even had some rickety bunks but was otherwise 'best described as basic'. As a place to stay, its saving grace was The Bell, a short trek up the road in the village of Yarpole, noted for its interesting cider which came from some scruffy containers kept hidden behind the bar. The real mystery of The Bell, however, was its closing time. Despite extensive research, we never did find out!

### A watery ritual

Twenty years ago, probably the most famous accommodation for Acorn Camps was Bransdale, a collection of then derelict watermill buildings, three fields from the nearest road in one of the more remote parts of North Yorkshire. Acorn Camps there were presided over by Squadron Leader J A K. Edwards (no relation), complete with handlebar moustache and the kind of presence that instilled respect at twenty paces. The first camp at Bransdale was charged with putting a roof on the main mill building, and, thereafter, subsequent camps continued restoration of the buildings to basecamp standard.



Shower facilities at Bransdale. © Neil Edwards

The nearest pub being more than six miles away, the Squadron Leader ran his own bar for the annual two weeks there and the local bakery did special Acorn Camp-size (double-the-length) loaves to feed the multitudes. The camps there were real Events (with a capital E) in the local calendar, and the popularity of the location and of the Squadron Leader meant that the camps were usually fully booked within a few days of publication of the Acorn Camps booklet.

At the time, every room was on a different level, with the kitchen being the highest. The ritual on departing was to block the kitchen sink with a rag, turn the cold tap on and disappear. Water cascaded over the sink and into each room in turn, finally running out of the front door into the millrace, until the warden came along to turn it off – the whole basecamp then being thoroughly washed. The happy annual ritual at Bransdale came to a sad end when fire regulations got the better of the place and the basecamp was shut for some years.

### Worst ever accommodation?

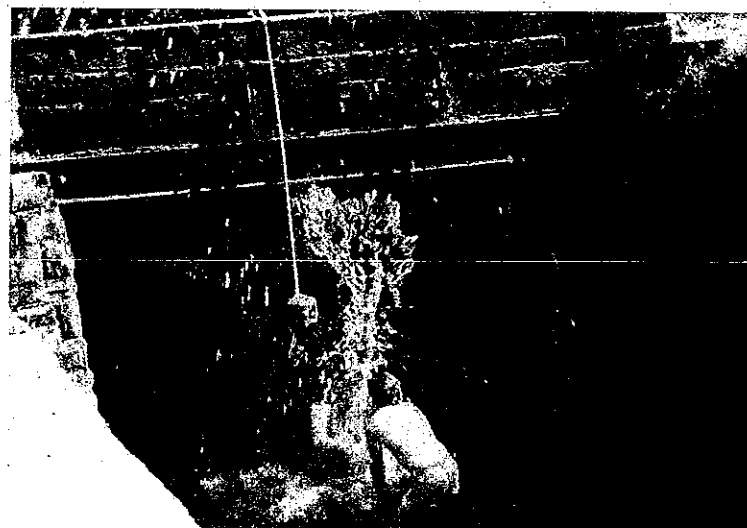
However, the Trust's pièce de résistance just has to be the one-off, never-to-be repeated 1985 camp at Ullswater, in Cumbria, with accommodation at the grandly named Lyulph's Tower Bothy

My assistant and I had agreed to meet the warden in a car park by the lake mid-morning and it was immediately apparent that the warden was in the same state of excitement as we were, having never seen the accommodation himself. The Acorn Camps booklet said 'annexe to Outward Bound school' so we were expecting something quite plush. Our fears began to set in as we set off up-hill, on foot, to find the place. We eventually arrived and were quite overcome – in fact quite speechless.

The expected hot showers were distinctly absent as was hot water altogether, in fact, as was any supply of water, sanitation, electricity, indeed facilities of any kind. And the building had only three walls; the other one was definitely missing. It soon transpired the Trust had borrowed the place from the Outward Bound Centre with no questions asked on either side. It was, of course, just a small hut on the hillside that those doing Outward Bound were sent to, to see if they could survive the night.

Still, the volunteers were due to arrive in a few hours, so we accepted the challenge. A borrowed milk churn was used to fetch water daily – a bit much to lug up the hillside but we took it in turns. The toilets in the public car park served as sanitation. Washing facilities were in the river (yes, Cumbria is a bit cold in April), and we were in the pub for as long as possible, daily. But we all survived to tell the tale, and my assistant spent only a week in hospital at the end.

So, Lyulph's Tower Bothy just has to win the award for the worst-ever Working Holiday accommodation... unless, of course, you know better? ■



Other washing facilities at Bransdale. © Neil Edwards

## Landscape, History, Nature and Aesthetics

John Sales, former Head of Gardens,  
The National Trust

Richard Ellis began a debate (**Views 35**, pp.14–15) of huge importance to everyone involved in conserving our landscape, all of which is of course historic. He emphasised the 'Natural Environment' and rightly urges us to 'thrill over ecosystems', regardless of the landscape's perceived scenic value and the degree to which it has been manipulated towards a particular stylistic ideal. Not surprisingly we all respond to any landscape differently, according to our particular interests and background, and it is perfectly possible for a site to be a great work of art as well as bearing the statutory burden of being a 'multi-designated nature conservation site'!

For me, this stimulating argument was muddled by inter-disciplinary rivalry and encumbered by abstract theories of art and design invented by individuals to match their own perceptions of landscape.

### Recognising significance

Landscape can be anything from the almost totally natural to the almost totally contrived, with ecosystems to match, often involving people. Furthermore aesthetic and artistic value has to do with our emotional response to all kinds of sensual experience – sight, sound, smell, movement, character, associa-

tion and ethos. It can involve processes (even ecological processes), events and natural phenomena, ie it is 'what turns you on'. At its best landscape can embrace all of these; not forgetting the values that ordinary visitors and residents may attach to the place.

The sensitive recognition, careful evaluation and thorough analysis of all the landscape's qualities was the key message of Jane Gallagher's piece (**Views 36**, pp.18–19), which rightly emphasised the need to take a broad and balanced view. This must depend not only on exhaustive survey, research and observation but also on assessing the relative value of each characteristic and quality comprising the site and its surroundings. Only in this way can we arrive at the full significance of the place, identify potential conflicts and decide upon valid measures for conservation, renewal and possible development.

Perhaps the most serious misapprehension is to assume that history, beauty, design, wildlife, ecology etc. are separate and competing elements, when in fact they together create the distinctive aesthetic of the place. Any valid Statement of Significance must incorporate all this and make it possible to formulate clear ideals and a unique philosophy for the place, leading to firm principles for conservation and management.

### Another perspective

Keith Alexander's response (**Views 37**, p.18) to Jane Gallagher's article, makes the mistake of trying to use generalities to support an individual case. No one



Naturally pleasing:  
Visitors and  
residents unworried  
by their designer  
surroundings.  
© NTPL/Chris King



would dispute his nature conservation bullet points as they apply to the Trust's landscape parks as a whole. But like historic, aesthetic, social, educational, archaeological, environmental, horticultural, architectural, cultural, iconographic and recreational significance and potential, nature conservation interest varies enormously according to the site both in absolute and relative terms. The National Trust owns the most important collection in one ownership of almost everything one can think of in the countryside. A Statement of Significance provides the most promising way of giving full weight to each element according to its relative importance, always on the understanding that they are interrelated.

Keith illustrates Petworth Park and emphasises its significance for deadwood invertebrates and fungi. But he should ask himself why a designed landscape consistently maintained according to 'Brownian' principles for 250 years has retained and developed its national significance for these qualities? Without the benefit of nature conservation advisers persuading the owners to leave dead wood lying where it falls and dead stumps to rot in situ, the park nevertheless achieves outstandingly high nature conservation values. Similarly despite the estate routinely knocking the tops off the anthills for two and a half centuries (in the interest of achieving smooth 'Brownian' turf), I am given to understand that the park has an exceptionally high population of ants and woodpeckers. Perhaps then Petworth should be studied as an historical model for the conservation of parkland habitat leading to these particular aspects of nature conservation interest?

### Continuity is the key

The fact is that continuity is the key to conservation. As well as analysing its existing values we should discover as much as possible about the way each place has been managed, replanted, maintained and developed over the centuries before pronouncing our views on future management. We alter long-established systems at the peril of what exists. We carry out sudden major restorations, however desirable or even essential, in the knowledge that they will have a profound effect. Gain needs to be measured against possible loss.

In practice it is usually possible to accommodate all interests, but there is no doubt that conflicts will occur that are difficult to resolve. The purpose of a well-written Statement of Significance is to describe the distinctive values, qualities, systems, artefacts, origins, constraints and opportunities of the place and to indicate their relative importance, always assuming that they are to a large degree interdependent. Clearly, dominant features and qualities that are uniquely important to the character and content of the place must come first. For the guidance of managers it is vital for every property that a valid Statement of Significance is hammered out by all concerned. This

should lead to clear-cut 'Principles of Conservation and Management' which should guide every aspect of management, upkeep, repair, adaptation, renewal, access, interpretation, opportunity and constraint. ■

### Peter Nixon, Director of Conservation, writes

*This debate on the management of historic designed landscapes is timely and apt. The newly formed Conservation Directorate embraces disciplines with a wide variety of views on the management of historic parks. We are committed to working towards new principles of management which are shared by all the Directorate's staff. In this respect the contributions in previous issues of Views on this subject by Richard Ellis, Jane Gallagher, Keith Alexander and now John Sales will help to inform the process of internal debate we are holding within the Directorate during the year. As a result of this and the overall financial pressures facing the Trust, and the need to have as effective and cost-efficient training programme as possible, we are postponing our training course on the management of historic parks. This course, which was due to run in October 2003, will be postponed until 2004 when, resources permitting, we will be able to run the course in a way which reflects a confident, common perspective for the management of historic designed landscapes. ■*

## Restoring Farmland – The Denmark Farm Experience

Janet Lister, Nature Conservation Adviser, Devon and Cornwall

*Janet Lister wrote this article when she was the Plant Ecologist/Earth Scientist, Cirencester.*

### Introduction

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and its numerous regional and local offspring abound with targets for restoring wildlife habitat to our farmed countryside. Denmark Farm, near Lampeter in mid-Wales, shows how this can be achieved, particularly for the Lowland Meadow BAP Priority Habitat.

This demonstration farm, run by the Shared Earth Trust, also illustrates how biodiversity can be restored more generally within a farmed environment, including marshy grasslands rich in plant species and an average of 46 breeding bird species on a land holding that previously supported only 15.

In the mid-1980s, Denmark Farm was an intensively managed stock farm, typical of the ryegrass monoculture covering so much of British farmland. As such it was judged by the RSPB to be 'a very barren place ... very low in wildlife interest'. Prior to that it had been through a decade of very intensive management, including drainage over the whole site from the mid-1970s, together with very high stocking rates and fertiliser inputs. Hedgerows had not been ripped out but

were in very bad condition, having been grazed out at the base.

In 1987 the Shared Earth Trust embarked on a pioneering experiment to see if it was possible to reverse the process of ecological destruction and the farm now provides a living case study in the successful restoration of biodiversity to the farmed countryside.



Cirencester staff on a recent visit to Denmark Farm. © NT. Photo by Lucy Cordrey.

### Background

Denmark Farm lies on gently undulating terrain at an altitude of about 200 metres, underlain by Ordovician shales. Soils are naturally somewhat acidic with moderate fertility levels. They comprise well-drained brown earths on the upper slopes and poorly drained gleys below where the hard rock geology is blanketed in glacial till.

The demonstration site covers 16 hectares (40 acres) of which one-third has been taken out of production to create a range of new habitats, including woodlands, shelter belts, a lake and field scrapes. The remaining two-thirds comprise a wide range of grasslands and marshes managed through low intensity systems by a combination of haymaking and grazing.

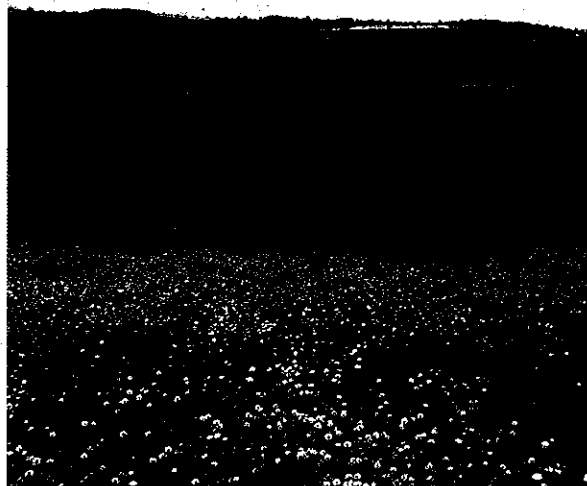
Within the areas that have continued to be farmed, the restoration work has comprised:

- Ceasing the spreading of manures and fertiliser to reduce soil fertility.
- No grazing stock between April and mid-July, allowing most plants to flower and set seed, ground-nesting birds to breed, small mammals to colonise dense vegetation and a wide range of insects to breed and feed.
- Light stock-grazing averaging about 0.2 livestock units per acre per annum.
- Grazing spread over a long period, allowing six months for the pastures to be grazed down so that there is no dramatic transformation in the sward that might damage small mammal and invertebrate life.

- Breaking of field drains in the early 1990s by digging a trench along the line of the contour every 10 metres, breaking each drain in the process and then lightly back-filling the ditches.
- Haymaking and the export of the hay crop from the fields to reduce soil fertility.
- Light winter grazing to poach the turf and encourage seed within the soil seed bank to germinate and create bare patches that can be colonized by windblown or animal-borne seed.

Grazing has been mainly with suckler cattle and calves, latterly Highland cattle, at about 0.25 livestock units per acre during July to December. There has also been occasional limited winter grazing by sheep or ponies and some grassland has been subject to liming. There has been no reseeding or other introduction of plant or animal material during the restoration period, except for planting of trees within the woods and shelter belts.

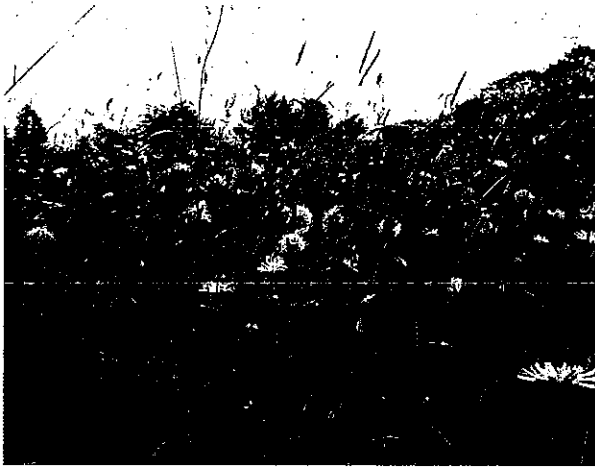
Exact field management has varied according to weather, ground conditions and general expediency, in the way that it would on a conventional farm, rather than in the strictly controlled conditions of a scientific experiment. This limits the interpretation of the outcomes but the project is nevertheless valuable in demonstrating what can happen under a particular management strategy.



Denmark Farm with flowery hay meadow flora in the foreground, marshy grasslands beyond and neighbouring land in the distance, still intensively managed. © NT. Photo by Lucy Cordrey.

### The results

Fields within better drained parts of the farm formerly dominated by ryegrass have been successfully restored to diverse flora very similar to that found within traditionally managed hay meadows never subject to much agricultural improvement. These fields have wild flowers such as yellow rattle, knapweed, eyebright and tormentil amongst mixtures of red fescue, sweet vernal grass and other native grasses.



Rich hay meadow flora at Denmark Farm. © NT. Photo by Janet Lister.

- So-called 'noxious weeds' such as creeping thistle and dock have declined as nutrient levels have dropped and are not a problem, despite lack of herbicides. Ragwort is also infrequent, probably because of the grazing practices – its seeds are dependant on finding gaps in the vegetation and it is mainly a weed of heavily grazed swards.
- Fields, previously drained, have reverted to marshy grasslands rich in wild flowers including an abundance of greater bird's-foot-trefoil, also marsh bedstraw, sneezewort and marsh cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*), the latter a rather local species.

At the moment, most of these grasslands fall short of meeting the criteria defining the purple moor-grass and rush pasture Priority Habitat of the UK, as they are a species-rich community of acidic and comparatively nutrient-poor soils also known as rhos pasture. Further reduction in nutrient levels and pH would presumably be required, and even then the vegetation would probably be missing key species due to the isolation of the site from other rhos pasture areas.



Marsh cinquefoil at Denmark Farm. © NT. Photo by Lucy Cordrey.

- An average of nineteen butterfly species, coupled with a marked increase in overall abundance, has been recorded since 1991 – double the number of species and 26 times the abundance encountered on neighbouring intensively managed farmland in comparative surveys.
- Surveys of day-flying moths have shown that Denmark Farm has about six times as many species and an abundance index fifteen times as high (per unit length of transect) as neighbouring farmland.
- The farm now supports fourteen species of breeding dragonfly and damselfly, a notable diversity in west Wales.
- The rough pastures have an average population of 207 million ground invertebrates per hectare, compared to 16 million in a typical ryegrass field.

### The future

The management system at Denmark Farm differs from that of an ordinary farm in that the Shared Earth Trust does not own its own stock and hence has no animals housed on site. Traditional hay meadow management, of the type that took place on farms before modern agricultural intensification, involved spreading muck on the fields to maintain organic matter in the soil and replace nutrients lost in the hay cut. Denmark Farm does not produce any muck to spread. This has been useful in terms of restoring low nutrient levels to the fields and hence plant species diversity.

There are, however, now signs that the grassland is beginning to change from a typical hay meadow sward. In particular:

- Grassland productivity has decreased to such an extent that it now costs money to cut the hay.
- There is a tendency for sward structure to become very open, with an unusually high frequency of ribwort plantain.

The long-term implications of a continued absence of muck spreading are not clear. It may eventually result in a loss of floristic diversity. The Shared Earth Trust has experimented with liming. This has had the effect of releasing nutrients locked up in the soil and thereby improving plant growth, with some corresponding repression of wild flowers by increased grass growth. These effects are being lost, however, as time passes since the liming took place.

### Further information

The Shared Earth Trust has published a series of information booklets based on their experiences at Denmark Farm. The following are currently available:

- Restoring and Managing Damp Pastures
- Transforming Intensively Managed Grassland
- Conservation for Wetland and Water Species

- Restoring, Creating and Managing Small Ponds
- Designing and Constructing Large Ponds and Lakes

They run a series of standard courses at the farm on the theme of biodiversity restoration; also ones on practical management skills such as hedge-laying and species identification. In addition, they will tailor a programme specifically to meet the needs of a specific group, such as Trust staff.

Full details of their publications and courses are available on the web at [www.shared-earth-trust.org.uk](http://www.shared-earth-trust.org.uk) or phone 01570 493358.

### References

Shared Earth Trust, undated: *Restoring Biodiversity to Farmland – Monitoring Programmes and Methodology*

Shared Earth Trust, undated: *Restoring Biodiversity to Farmland – The Denmark Farm Experience*

Shared Earth Trust, undated: *Transforming Our Countryside* ■

## Property Interpretation for the Family

Emma Ward, Textile Conservation Apprentice and Arkell Travelling Fellow 2002

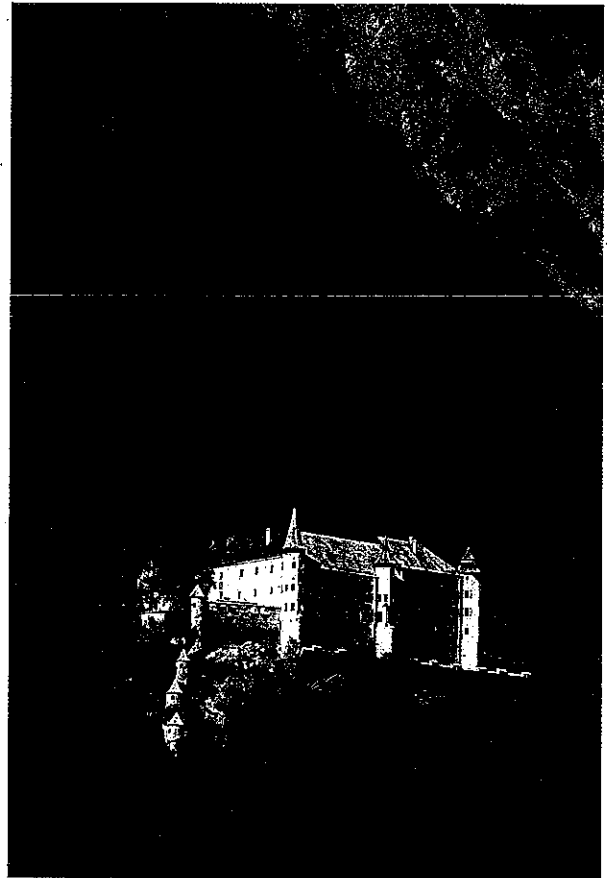
'Once upon a time, long long ago, there lived a family. There was the father, the mother, one son, one daughter and 0.4 other!

The family lived in Britain where the summers were long and hot. Now, there was nothing the family liked more than going to visit big stately homes. They would wander around all day and admire the pretty countryside and pretty objects of a world gone by. Often these houses would be run by the National Trust, with a guarantee of a lovely afternoon tea and friendly people in the rooms to enthuse about Lord So-and-so's comode. It was bliss.

Then, after a long day the family would get back into their estate car and drive home, feeling civilised and, above all, the ideal family.'

### A story, a fairytale, history

The difference between the three phrases above is interpretation. The short story above contains a real impression of historic fact but it is delivered in a fictional manner. The means through which historic properties deliver their interpretations has a great impact on who will actually listen. The relevance of this observation was the foundation of my Arkell Fellowship report, completed in 2002.



A fairytale setting: Tratzberg Castle, Austria. © Tratzberg Castle

### Property case studies

For the report four case studies were made:

#### 1. Tratzberg Castle, Tirol, Austria

Interpretation method – audio guide

Tratzberg Castle uses a simple and direct means of interpretation with the audio guide used as the main means of interpretation. It is a relatively unusual form of audio guide due to the simultaneous use of separate adult and children's tapes.

One need only look at Tratzberg Castle to see that it is ideally suited to the construction of a story. Through the media of films, television and fairytales, it is easy to surmise that everyone who visits the castle, young and old, has a preconceived idea about life here. Both the adults' and children's audio guides build upon this basis and create accessible stories aimed at the visitor's knowledge level. Through a balanced use of storytelling narration, recreated historical characters and factual information, every visitor receives accessible interpretation from which they can form a personal understanding.

#### 2. The Workhouse, Southwell, Derbyshire

Interpretation method – audio guide

The family experience at The Workhouse is made up of several different methods of interpretation, including hands-on activities and computer technology. The central tour of rooms is guided by an audio system,

the focus of the case study. This takes a cutting-edge approach to interpretation through imagination and leads to issues surrounding family expectations and needs.

Many of the rooms at The Workhouse are displayed without any furnishings, instead relying on the audio guide to recreate the scene. This approach was chosen because of a lack of authentic furnishings and a desire to focus on the social history of the building. However, visitor feedback during The Workhouse's first open season has shown that visitors expect furnishings at National Trust properties and that they need more than audio to feel that they have gained a true impression of a place.

Unlike Tratzberg Castle, The Workhouse has chosen not to have a children's audio guide. Instead the present audio guide is aimed at the level of understanding of an 11-year-old. This has led to a very uneven level of interpretation for the family, with children being engaged at the beginning and end of the tour through interactive activities and displays but often left to become bored in the middle of the story!

### 3. Bateman's, Burwash, Sussex

Interpretation method – guidebooks, display methods and room stewards

Bateman's, the home of Rudyard Kipling and his family, is a small Trust property using tried and tested means of interpretation. All the methods used are considered to be clear, low impact and unobtrusive.

The separate adult and children's guidebooks at Bateman's proved to work against the idea of interpretation for the family by forcing a choice to be made as to who will gain most from their visit. In truth, however, guidebook sales are low at Bateman's, therefore interpretation largely falls upon the shoulders of the room stewards and visual displays. Consequently it is impossible for room stewards to act as guides to all visitors and fulfil their role in security. Experiments and observations conducted at the property shows that room displays need to express more than their simple contents to engage the family group and that this is not being achieved through present means of display.

### 4. Schoenbrunn Palace, Austria

Interpretation method – hands-on total experience

Schoenbrunn Palace is a major historic attraction in Austria. A wing of the palace has been converted into a family-based, hands-on museum, new in 2002.

A personal guide dressed in eighteenth-century costume shows each family around Schoenbrunn's museum. The guide provides information for both adults and children. Each room contains numerous hands-on activities based around different elements of eighteenth-century life within the palace and beyond. The family has the choice of what they want to do and how long they want to spend in each room.

This approach is dependent largely on outside factors such as resources, space and time, but it could be adapted for many National Trust properties.

### The family

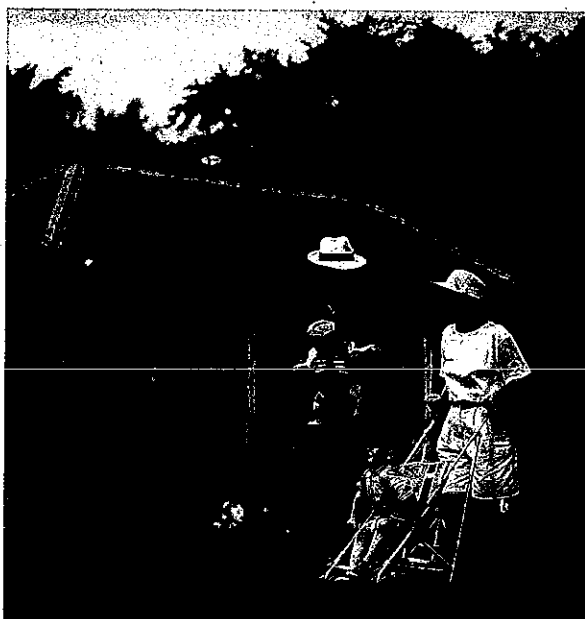
Central to my report is the concept of family. The family group can no longer be assumed to consist of the stereotypical parents plus 2.4 children, nor even the more recent average of 1.7 children. The existence of a modern neo-extended family means that heritage organisations must now cater for a wider and more diverse range of ages while simultaneously encouraging family bonding and avoiding isolation of the individual.

Expectations of visitor services are undoubtedly higher. With the rise of shopping culture as a leisure activity seven days a week and the fast pace of technological advancement, children and adults alike want more than a basic guidebook that offers a dry history and list of the objects they see before them. However, most historic properties, not least those run by the Trust, are treasured for their reflection of life past, and the absence of modern enhancements or gimmicks. The key here seems to lie in the balance of these conflicting factors.

### Family paradox

Ascertaining what makes a visit to a property and its interpretation accessible to a family means battling with what I call the family paradox. In one way, the family is a single unit in which each member's enjoyment depends on the enjoyment of the other members. For this unit a positive impression of a property is often the result of a good standard of facilities rather than the quality of its interpretation methods.

However, each member also views the property from a unique perspective shared by no one else. It is this



Modern family (parents plus 1.7 children) visiting a Trust property. © NTPL/Chris King



'... children and adults alike want more than a basic guidebook...' (Science in Trust). © NTPL/Ian Shaw

individual who can be truly impressed by a good method of interpretation. Yet the individual is naturally more open to this if the methods used ensure that the whole family is enjoying and, preferably learning, from the visit.

### Accessibility

Accessibility is of fundamental importance to good interpretation. Visitors need to feel important and to form their own personal understanding. It is this kind of experience that stays in a visitor's mind and may achieve the Trust's ultimate aim of initiating a 'life-changing experience'. To apply this to the family group is to address the paradox.

### Adult + child = family

A family arrives poised for social interaction, an experience they can share and feel that everyone enjoyed. The guidebooks and guided tours of the past are in many ways hindrances to family understanding and enjoyment, forcing an inequality of experience by making the group decide who is going to gain most from the visit, adult or child?

What a family needs are choices that can be made by each individual within the context of a shared event. The Trust must stop thinking of adult and child visitors and embrace the interpretive category of the family. In essence, whether a family is made up of two parents and 1.7 children, or three grandparents, one parent, two stepchildren and a pet rabbit makes no difference: the family should be given the means to develop their own method of understanding between themselves.

### Back to the beginning?

The Trust is a world-renowned author and, like any good author, its success depends on thorough research, popular appeal, trademark style and the courage to step to the front of the field and try out new approaches.

Copies of Emma Ward's Arkell Fellowship report, containing full details of the property case studies, are available from Catherine Leonard, Queen Anne's Gate. ■

## A Word Of Caution

Steve Slack, London Museums and Arkell Travelling Fellow 2002

### *The ever importunate murmur, 'Dramatize it, Dramatize it!'*

The Altar of The Dead, 1909 edition (preface), Henry James (1843–1916)

If you've ever thought of getting into costume to entertain visitors at your property, then good for you but, please, a word of caution.

The practice of using actors dressed in costume is currently very popular with the heritage sector in the UK. Assuming the role of a real or imaginary character from the past or present and the dramatising of events can open up a vast wealth of educational opportunities and draw in visitors and revenue to a National Trust property. This practice is known in the Trust as 'living history' or 'live interpretation'.

### Exciting and stimulating

At Trust properties this form of interpretation is particularly welcome as it can reduce the number of text panels and intrusive interpretive media necessary to get a particular message about the property across to the visitor. A person in role giving guided tours around the property or interacting with visitors is not only exciting and stimulating but also allows visitors to enter into dialogue with the interpretive media; an impossibility with the guidebook or audio guide.

Each year the National Trust Arkell Panel funds young people to carry out research into an aspect of heritage management on behalf of the Trust. This provides up-to-the-minute information on the state of the sector for the Trust whilst furthering the research and project management skills of fellows. Past projects have looked at land use, farming and agriculture, social inclusion and marketing.

I received an Arkell Fellowship early in 2002 and spent most of last year carrying out primary research for the Trust in the field of live interpretation. I undertook a survey of the current state of this method at a small,



Dramatising it – Tudor interpretation at Sutton House. © NTPL/David Levenson

but representative, number of Trust properties: Belton House, Lincolnshire; Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire; Sudbury Hall Museum of Childhood, Derbyshire; Sutton House, London, and Townend, Troutbeck, Cumbria. At each of these sites I watched live interpretation sessions, met interpreters and property staff and spoke to visitors.

My findings were generally positive. The quality of research taking place as part of the planning processes for these events is sound and audiences respond positively to them. It was good to see a number of properties exploiting the educational possibilities of live interpretation to the full.

### **But it can go wrong**

Despite all the obvious benefits of using live interpretation at Trust properties, there are some potential pitfalls to look out for.

This method can be intimidating and off-putting for some. Remember, there are many people who simply do not like it.

There is also potential for the dramatising of historic characters and events to go horribly wrong; the possibility of misinformation and the reliance on the quality of the actors used are both factors that need to be addressed well in advance of the project going 'live'. These can also be very costly projects when costumes, venues, actors' fees etc. are taken into

account. There are some imaginative ways round these problems, the involvement of volunteers, for example.

Currently, Trust personnel are treating this art form with caution, quite rightly, and are only considering launching live interpretation projects when there is a clear need for it at properties. One must remember that it is not necessarily a good thing for a property and the path to the final performance can be rather fraught.

### **Extremely rewarding**

The populist call to '*Dramatize it*' may be strong and the option of handing out costumes to property staff and volunteers may be tempting, but please do exercise caution. It would be unfortunate if the immense cultural and historic heritage of the Trust were turned into a series of sentimentalised re-enactments.

Live interpretation should be resorted to only when it is a necessary means of bringing a certain aspect of the property in question to life. It can be a very risky activity. Despite these caveats, live interpretation can be extremely rewarding for visitors and the Trust alike and the possibilities for future development are almost endless.

For more information or a copy of the project summary, please contact Steve Slack at: [steve.slack@londonmuseums.org](mailto:steve.slack@londonmuseums.org) ■

# PROPERTY MATTERS

## CONSULTING THE BADGERS

Edward Morton, Structural Engineer, Morton Partnership

I have been lucky enough over the past ten years to have worked for the National Trust on numerous projects, including many significant buildings, particularly in Kent and Sussex.

One of the most interesting projects, just completed, comprised the consolidation of two scheduled ancient monuments in the historically significant town of Winchelsea on the south coast, close to Rye.

Edward I established new Winchelsea between 1281 and 1292, when the previous port and town was being destroyed by the inundation of the sea. Set on high land with cliffs to the south, east and north and the marshland below, it was an easily defensible settlement with an impressive wall rising at the cliff edge, with associated gates and bastions.

### The ruins

The ruins of the old town wall in Rookery Field were only identified in recent years, when David Martin of Archaeology South East was commissioned by the Trust to carry out an archaeological and landscape survey in Winchelsea. This was a mammoth task with the resulting report identifying in excess of 100 significant features in an area of 150 acres.

The defences in the fourteenth century were described by Thomas of Walsingham as being of clay, and in 1380 as being inadequate. Certainly by 1414 a masonry wall had been constructed. The ruins of the old town wall run at the head of the steep escarpment,



Ground mats laid over the old town wall where only one or two fragile courses survive. © Morton Partnership



General view along the town wall. © Morton Partnership

in places comprising some of the original facework at low level, with exposed wall core above, and elsewhere consisting of perhaps only one or two visible stones.

The second monument was a freestanding gable set in a field – the last standing part of St John's Hospital which is probably the oldest of the three recorded hospitals in Winchelsea.

Our initial assessment of this gable was that it had a factor of safety against windloading of one, that is, it could potentially be blown over in high winds. However, structural engineering theory and reality are often some way apart. I indicated that if this gable had remained as a freestanding structure for several hundred years, providing it was well consolidated, there was no reason why it should not continue to survive.



We found that there had in fact been a lean-to building to one side of the gable, used by a local farmer for live-stock, which may have been offering some additional support to the gable. However, this was blown down in the 1987 gales, while happily the gable survived.

### Health and safety

As the project developed I realised that, for the town wall, communication and coordination would play the most significant part in trying to achieve a successful project. The factors which needed to be considered included:

- the health and safety implications of working at the top of a steep escarpment
- an SSSI at the base of the escarpment
- the field behind the ruin with its own significant buried archaeology was registered as organic
- the tenant farmer possibly needing to have live-stock in the field during the course of the works
- a number of self-propagated trees damaging the wall which would need to be cut down.
- the need to record archaeologically the wall prior to any works being undertaken
- and, most significantly, a number of active badger setts on the escarpment and in places running below the wall.

### Badgers are special

Badgers are a protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Works in and around setts are strictly controlled and licensed. Our first step was to have a survey of the area. Dr Julian Brown, badger consultant, undertook this, demonstrating you can normally find a consultant for any specialism.

The survey identified active setts including over twenty entrances; annexe setts, badger latrines and associated trails. The Act requires that all works by hand within 10 metres of sett entrances, by machinery within 20 metres, and by larger machinery within 30 metres must be licensed. The licence allowed Archaeology South East carefully to strip back the vegetation around the ruins of the old town wall and carry out an initial assessment and recording of the remains.

Our initial thoughts were that the badger setts causing damage to the wall should be relocated further down the escarpment. However, the cost of this work was likely to far exceed that for the actual consolidation, so it was decided to monitor the wall once the work was complete. This would establish the degree of damage caused by the badgers, allowing an informed decision later about possible relocation.

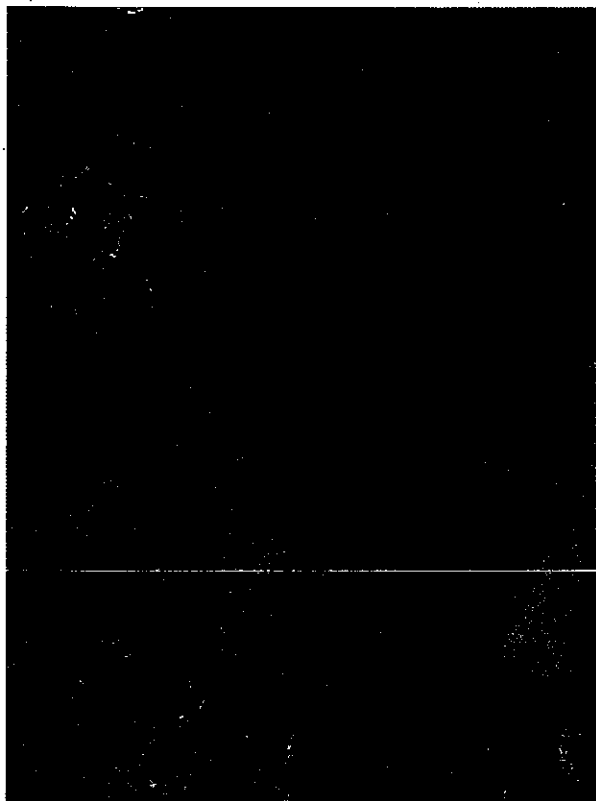
### Neat lime and little sand

The investigation work established that the wall was apparently built with an earth mortar and a lime rendering to the face, comprising almost neat lime and only a marginal quantity of sand. This was curious to us, but perhaps makes sense in an area where sand would have had to be imported, especially as the mud mortar when dry becomes very durable, with the lime rendering protecting it from the elements.

This raised the question of whether we should be repairing on a like-for-like basis. We would have preferred to use an earth mortar if at all possible. However, the exposed aspect of the site, the loose, almost rubble-like construction, and frequent overhangs would have made repairing with earth mortar impractical. To have done this would have meant taking the wall down and reconstructing it, so destroying the integrity and the significance we were trying to preserve.

The other option would have been to re-bury the wall. Indeed in many places this was done. However, this would have been impractical where the wall formed a steep scarp. After consideration we agreed with the Trust and English Heritage that lime mortars and grouting were the best way of consolidating the monument for long-term durability, but on the basis that the archaeological record and as-built information clearly identified this change and the philosophy for the decision.

A number of repair types were specified, including pointing the exposed core and face, under-building



Grout cup to voids of St John's Hospital gable.  
© Morton Partnership

any significantly hanging sections and, where only one or two stones were exposed, covering these with earth with a ground mat cover, to help reinforce the bank and prevent damage. Other works included vegetation removal and biocide treatment bearing in mind the organic field.

In the case of St John's Gable, an impulse radar survey was undertaken to identify the extent and nature of voiding. The information was marked on rectified photographic elevations. The voids were grouted and repointed in places following vegetation removal. Various previous phases of repair work were identified with the use of phosphor bronze supports and various styles of mortar. At one corner of the end there was some localised rebuilding where the fabric was missing, using a stock brick to identify the new work quite clearly.

### Discouraging humans and livestock

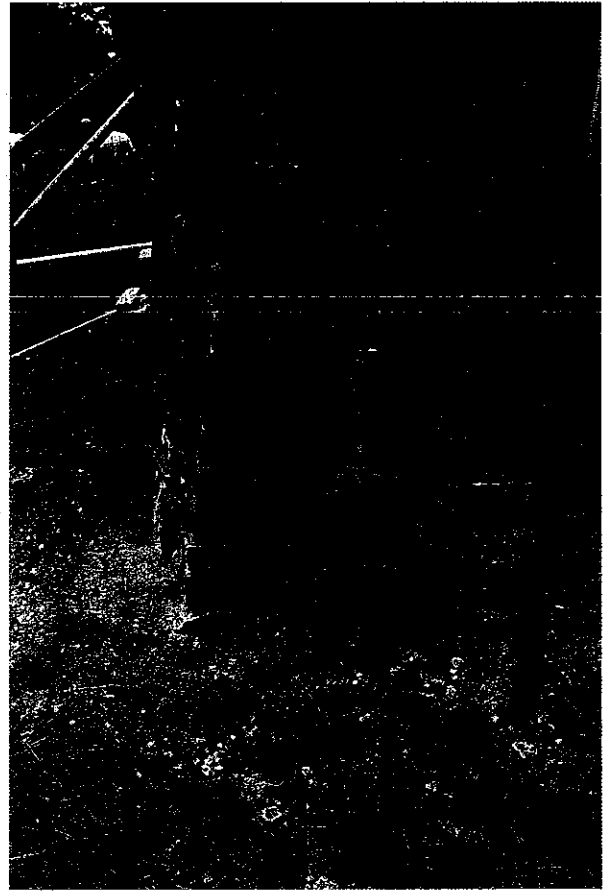
We were lucky to have Adam Stone, a gifted masonry conservator with Cathedral Works Organisation, Chichester, working on the project. I relied very much on Adam's experience and recommendations. In the case of the town walls, he suggested a number of modifications, including rolling the ground mat back on itself over some short sections of low remains, to create a large step down from the field. That should discourage both humans and livestock from venturing over these sections and damaging the wall.

The trees that were removed, with local authority approval, have stumps and root systems remaining in many places within the wall. Consolidation works were carried out around them.

It is accepted by the Trust that further consolidation works will be necessary as these decay but this was felt to be a better approach than trying to remove roots now, which would inevitably have caused areas of collapse to the wall.



Town wall following consolidation. © Morton Partnership



Lost masonry to St John's Hospital gable filled with brickwork. © Morton Partnership

Adam's light hand and practical approach in carrying out the works has resulted in a stable ruin, in which it is difficult to see the intervention unless you inspect carefully. Grass is already growing through the ground matting, which will eventually degrade, and the vegetation root system will be sufficient to stabilise the embankment. We felt that undertaking thorough archaeological recording and analysis, followed by careful repair in a sympathetic, if unauthentic, material offered the best compromise for the conservation of the monument.

### A great success

The Trust accepts that there will be future maintenance obligations along the monument, which will be inspected twice yearly by the local warden, and thereafter assessed more formally on a quinquennial basis.

The project, funded partly by an English Heritage grant, has been a great success. And I now know the restrictions and costs likely to arise from working in close proximity to badger setts.

Edward Morton is managing director of the Morton Partnership. This article first appeared in *Context*, Issue 77, November 2002 (Institute of Historic Building Conservation). ■

## WHAT HAVE WE GOT HERE THEN?

Simon Probert, Archaeological Investigator, English Heritage

### Archaeology of the Upper Plym Valley

The Upper Plym possesses one of the largest aggregations of archaeological monuments on Dartmoor. With very few exceptions the full range of man's activity on the moor is represented: from later Neolithic stone rows to slit trenches attributable to First World War activities.

In all, the National Trust's 1,350 hectares contain nearly 1,200 archaeological features. The holding is recognised by English Heritage (EH) as an outstanding archaeological landscape and has long been assigned Guardianship Area status.

The management of an area as large and, if anything, as overpopulated with archaeology relies heavily on a detailed record of the resource. In this respect the Upper Plym has not been ignored by archaeologists. Over the past 25 years at least seven surveys have taken place either concentrating specifically on the Plym or including the area in a wider evaluation.

One, an outstanding study undertaken by postgraduate and undergraduate students from Edinburgh University, investigated the entire watershed and supplied details of each monument. This provided the basis for the National Trust's Sites and Monuments Register and exists in its own right as an exemplar in terms of scope, detail and sheer dedication.

### Something even better?

As much state-of-the-art as this piece of work may be, the relatively recent explosion in digital technology has highlighted not so much the problems as the drawbacks of the traditional recording and archive management techniques.

Two particular examples spring to mind:

- How many people haven't been out on site on a wet and windy day with paper maps because the bit they needed to look at fell on the edge of several sheets?



A member of the survey team guards the tor cairn at Shell Top. Immediately beyond is the Lee Moor clayworks and Plymouth Sound is in the distance. © English Heritage.



DGPS in action at Grim's Grave, a prehistoric kerb cairn in one of the more distant parts of the Upper Plym. This equipment makes light work of the survey despite the remoteness of the area and the lack of OS detail. © English Heritage.

- How often has the whole archive been turned over in an effort to find all features of a particular type, period, form etc?

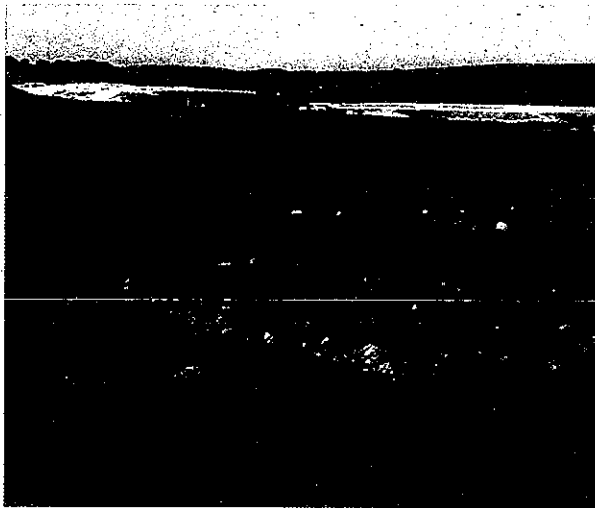
The seamless nature of digital plans does away with the former; it is possible to print out each site in the centre of a sheet thus avoiding a great mass of sodden paper – just one piece instead. Digitisation solves the latter at a stroke. But useful as it may be, the electronic world can't do anything about the weather.

While it is a relatively easy task to convert text to digital form, the accompanying plans are a different matter. A decision has to be made whether to carry on with a hybrid system, digitise the existing drawings or resurvey with a digital product. None of these options was particularly appealing given the size and complexity of the Upper Plym holding, but several factors tipped the balance in favour of a resurvey:

- New sites in the area were still being added by the Trust's Archaeologist, Shirley Blaylock, Assistant Warden, Steven Holley and volunteers; all of which had to be added by hand to the existing plans.
- The depictions of some monuments were confusing or incomplete leading to misleading interpretations.



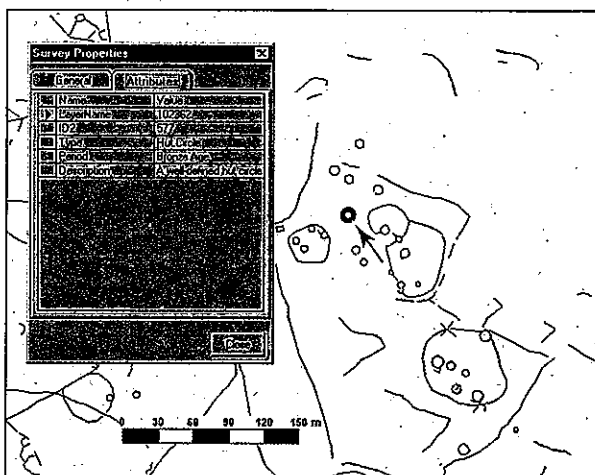
Around 200 hut circles were surveyed. This one sits above Trowelsworthy Warren at the southern end of the valley. © English Heritage.



One of two stone rows in the Blackbrook Valley, probably the oldest above ground remains in the holding.  
© English Heritage

- Recent work by EH on land adjoining the Trust holding showed a creeping discrepancy in the Ordnance Survey (OS) base mapping on which all the other surveys had been based.
- The sheer number of surveys, each conducted with differing techniques, had resulted in a variation in metrical accuracy which had led to the duplication of some sites.
- As part of its continual assessment of the nation's archaeological resource EH was also committed to updating its records for the area.

Added to this was the ability and willingness of the Trust's Geographic Information System staff to collate and curate the final plan and instigate the links to the Trust's database of archaeological features. It was envisaged that the finished product should be a map



Point and click interrogation. Part of the completed survey with a sample of the attached text data. The OS base mapping has been omitted for clarity. © English Heritage.

of the archaeology that could be interrogated at the click of a mouse button.

Such an outcome complements developments in EH's core record systems, Archives Monument Information England (AMIE) and the Heritage Spatial Information System (HSIS) and that being implemented by the Dartmoor National Park Authority. In effect the resurvey was to be a one-size product to fit all systems.

**Survey 2000-2002**

This was undertaken by Archaeological Investigation staff from EH's Exeter and Cambridge offices. It started in late January 2000 and was almost immediately halted by the restrictions imposed by the foot and mouth outbreak. Some ten months later it restarted and fieldwork finished in April 2002.

The need for metrical accuracy was addressed by the use of Differential GPS (DGPS). This technique does away with many of the drawbacks of traditional survey methods, for instance, it can be used over long distances with no need for inter-visibility between base and roving stations. It provides highly accurate three-dimensional points on the Earth's surface to which the field surveyor attaches codes describing the graphical form of the feature. The slowest part of the whole operation is the speed at which the surveyor can walk.

The points are processed and transformed to the National Grid automatically while the attached codes are read and turned into lines and symbols by a CAD package. After correcting the inevitable mistakes made in the field by cold fingers and frozen brain, an attribute – in this case a unique number – is attached to each feature enabling a link to be made to the appropriate database.

**Beyond the Upper Plym**

This work has clarified a number of issues relating to the format and transfer of digital surveys and will be used to create a data standard for future cooperation between EH and its partners in the heritage sector. The transfer worked first time when the data was passed to Jason Siddall, the Sites and Monuments Records Officer at Cirencester.

The Upper Plym resurvey also has a role in the wider world. One of the lesser-known duties of EH's Archaeological Investigation Section is to provide heritage information for inclusion on OS maps. The supply of digital information to MasterMap™, the latest generation of OS products, is still under development but, once finalised, the Upper Plym will be one of the first areas in the country to appear in the Heritage Theme. ■

## WATCHING OVER THE PLYMOUTH PEREGRINES

Gus Fergusson, Warden, Lower Plym, Devon and Cornwall

A pair of nesting peregrines on the outskirts of Plymouth, Devon, has become a local tourist attraction with large numbers of people turning up to see them and so helping to safeguard their survival.

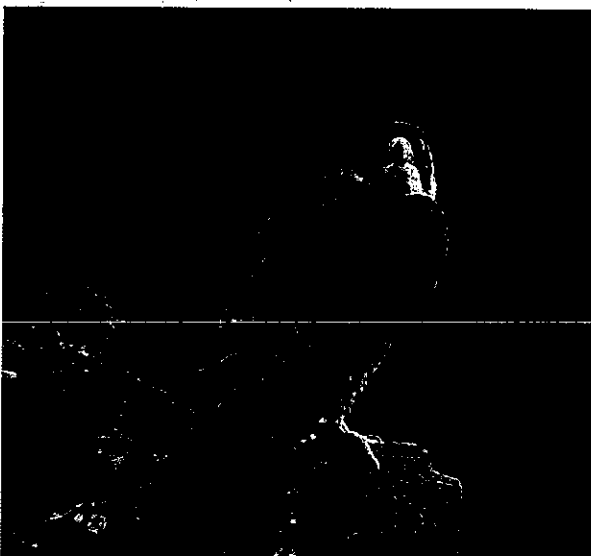
A round-the-clock watch using volunteers and CCTV cameras has been organised to safeguard the pair who regularly nest on the cliff face of Cann Quarry, Plymbridge Woods, in a position highly visible from the Sustrans National Cycleway which cuts through the woods.

Peregrine falcons are the fastest animals in the world, reaching speeds of up to 180mph (290km/h) when they dive to catch their prey. They even have special baffles in their nostrils that allow them to breathe at these breathtaking speeds! It is thought there are approximately 1,350 pairs of peregrines in the UK – one in five of the European population – although the results of a 2002 survey have yet to be seen.

### Taking no chances

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 peregrines are listed as Schedule 1 birds, specially protected at all times. Sadly, a few years ago, peregrines breeding in Plymbridge Woods were found dead after bait, laced with poison, was lowered into their nest. After this terrible incident, the National Trust was taking no chances and so set up a joint scheme with the RSPB to watch over the birds, using covert surveillance cameras and a team of local volunteers.

The whole project is a great example of community involvement and sponsorship. The first local companies to be involved in 2002 were the London Camera Exchange of Plymouth and Plymouth Caravan Centre. With the help of just these two businesses, the pere-



Male peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*).  
© NTPL/Simon King/NatureL

grine scheme was launched and a volunteer warden appointed. Local support grew within the community and word spread. I recruited an enthusiastic band of watchers who, at the critical periods, were on site 24 hours a day.

With the reward of only a couple of barbecues and a film show at the end of the season, volunteers braved all weathers and helped nearly 4,500 people learn about the habits of peregrines from a superb vantage point. The success of the scheme last year has encouraged everyone to do even more for 2003.

### View from the platform and the web

The scheme has snowballed so successfully that Plymouth College of Further Education wants to be involved in the design and setting up of a web camera. If all goes to plan (and that's a BIG if) the world could see the first live webcam on peregrine falcons nesting in the wild. There are several other nests on man-made structures around the world that are monitored with a webcam, but Cann Quarry is believed to be the first peregrine nest site that will show the birds in a totally natural setting.

Although the site is not far from 'civilisation', several problems concerning power generation still have to be dealt with. The plan is to have a combination of solar panels, wind generator and batteries to power a camera that will then feed the video signal, via a microwave transmitter, to a nearby factory. From there it will be beamed to the city of Plymouth, where the college has created a link to the World Wide Web. The site will be linked to several other websites, including those of the National Trust, RSPB, BBC, Devon Wildlife Trust. The web address is [www.plym-peregrines.co.uk](http://www.plym-peregrines.co.uk). Leigham Junior School, with which the Trust has set up a Guardianship scheme, is planning educational activities relating to peregrines and the environment on a linked website.

A special peregrine viewing platform, with several telescopes, will be open at Cann Viaduct most weekends between Easter and the end of July. This will be manned by volunteers, coordinated by a Trust seasonal warden, who will welcome the visitors and provide the latest information on the birds. Special facilities for people with disabilities and for children will be available.

### Their woods

The Wrigley Company, the chewing gum manufacturers, whose factory adjoins the woods, has made a generous financial contribution and its buildings will be used to site radio equipment for the video transmissions. In total nearly twenty commercial organisations will be involved. As the quarry was used for the

extraction of aggregate, we applied – and were successful – in our application to English Nature for an award under the Aggregates Sustainability Levy Fund. The award will enable the purchase of a better camera and help to finance several other items.

The most amazing thing that has arisen from all the sadness of seeing those dead birds three years ago is the overwhelming support of the local people for what they see as 'their' woods. It stands as a proud example of all that the Trust stands for. ■

## HEATHLAND RESTORATION PROJECTS IN PURBECK

Angela Peters, Purbeck Ecologist, Wessex

Although a large area of lowland heathland has been lost in the last century due to agricultural intensification, Dorset remains a stronghold for this habitat and consequently the National Trust, with large tracts of heathland on its land, is responsible for maintaining, restoring and recreating heathland wherever possible.

The Trust own several farms that are adjacent to heathlands and with help from Countryside Stewardship agreements it has been able to commence two important restoration projects.

In January 2000 a three-year contract was drawn up between Bournemouth University and the Trust to carry out a large-scale heathland restoration project on the Purbeck Estate, Dorset, the biggest of its kind in the UK. Before the restoration began, the Trust contracted Bournemouth University to carry out a baseline botanical and soil survey in order to determine which fields had the highest probability of returning to heathland.

The results selected Newline and Hartland Farms and Greenland's Farm as suitable candidates. The two projects are described below.

### Hartland Project

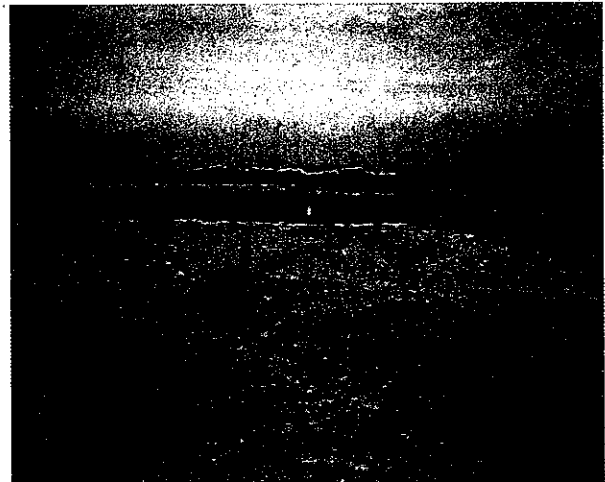
The land under restoration is a nutrient-enriched, ploughed dairy farm of about 140 hectares that was taken over by the Trust in 1981. It is surrounded by Hartland NNR and SSSI and was heathland itself 50 years ago. The land consists of two farms, Newline and Hartland, which were treated separately in the study because they have received different agricultural treatments over the years.

**Treatments and monitoring:** The project has involved chemical treatments with elemental sulphur and ferrous sulphate. Both chemicals produce sulphuric acid as a by-product when they react with soil water and this consequently lowers the pH of the soil, a characteristic of heathland sites. Another treatment set up in the second year of the project involved stripping the top layer of the soil which received no chemical application.

To monitor the effects of these treatments, chemical analyses of the soil in each plot were carried out at the start of the project and throughout. Initially, the analyses showed that the pH and nutrient level was

much higher in the farms than the surrounding heathland, and the eastern area of Hartland Farm had the highest pH, calcium and phosphate level. Both treatments have successfully caused a drop in the pH, and it was envisaged that the ferrous sulphate would have the added effect of removing some of the free phosphate in the soil.

However, the sulphur treatment has created better soil conditions for heathland restoration, as it lowered the pH further than the ferrous sulphate, although this treatment did have a scorching effect on the vegetation – an undesirable but short-term effect (see below).

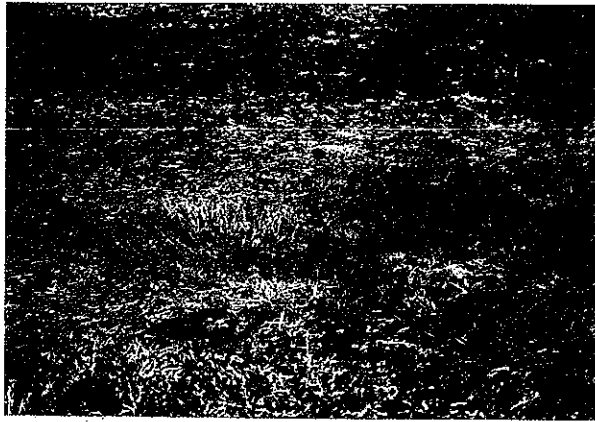


Scorching effects of sulphur treatment. ©NT

**Establishing heather seed:** In 2001 half of each experimental plot was scattered with heather cuttings from a fire break cut on Hartland Moor, at a rate of one cut hectare spread onto two hectares. This supplied the soil with fresh heather seeds, as well as a mulching layer of heather cuttings.

Heather seeds germinated in 2002 but only in areas where heather cuttings were scattered, indicating that heather needs to be sown in order for it to grow. Heather has been found growing almost exclusively in the sulphur plots and not in the ferrous sulphate plots which were still grass dominated. Within the sulphur plots, however, heather grew mainly in the grassy

edge areas where less sulphur had been received. From these results it appears that perhaps a lower rate of sulphur application may be better for heather establishment and needs to be tested (see below).



Heather regeneration on edges of sulphur plot. ©NT

**Future survey and monitoring:** Although the current contract was due to expire in January 2003, the project has been extended for a further year and will, we hope, be funded for a further two years after that in order to monitor further vegetation changes. In 2003 some further soil surveys and vegetation surveys on the current plots will be undertaken. These will investigate the optimum application rate of treatment, depending on original soil status, and soil mycorrhiza abundance in farmed soils – mycorrhiza have a symbiosis with heather plants that is essential for their growth.

The final report summarising this year's results and the project's outcome after three years is now available from Anita Diaz, Senior Lecturer in Ecology, School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University, Talbot Campus, Fern Barrow, Poole, Dorset BH12 5BB.

**A new method for heathland restoration?** The most important aspect of this project is whether it is a feasible method for heathland restoration on intensively farmed land on a large scale. The two chemicals used as agents for reducing pH are both readily available and used widely as methods of lowering the pH in agricultural systems.

If the heathland communities return for the long term to these experimental plots then the methods could certainly be used nationally and even internationally to restore lowland heathland on a large scale. The sulphur, although it currently seems to be the best agent, had an unsightly effect and also had a short-term detrimental effect on the invertebrate fauna. These effects, if it were used on a large scale, might not be acceptable.

However, with the experiments to be carried out next year to determine the application rates of each chemical required for successful heather establishment, it

may prove that if a lower rate of application were feasible, the sulphur might not have such a drastic short-term effect on the vegetation but might be equally successful at lowering the pH enough for heather establishment.

### Greenlands Farm

This project has developed independently of Bournemouth University and is monitored in-house by the Purbeck Estate ecologist. The farm is surrounded on three sides by Godlingston SSSI and NNR. The approximately 50-hectare farm has been ploughed and improved for the last 50 years and is subsequently a species-poor pasture.

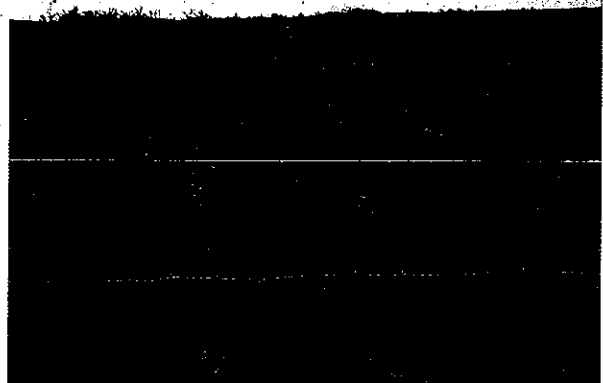
Experiments commenced in 1998 and were based on previous trials on the estate involving ploughing, scraping and applying heather cuttings within small experimental plots.

This experiment differs from the Hartland Project in that no chemical agents are used to lower pH, but results could be compared at some point in the future when this project is more advanced in its development to assess the pros and cons of the chemical agents in heathland restoration.

**Soil sampling:** Soil samples have been collected annually since 2000 and sent to ADAS, the land-based research organisation, to test for pH, nitrogen, phosphate, magnesium and potassium. Over the three years of sampling the pH, potassium and magnesium levels have decreased overall, whereas the other nutrients have fluctuated showing no patterns of overall decrease or increase. The average pH in the improved fields has decreased from 6.6 in 1998 (Bournemouth University data) to 5.6 in 2002, which is substantial.

**Experimental plots:** The plots have involved:

- stripping the top layer of soil to remove high pH and nutrient-rich soil and spreading heather cuttings in 1999
- deep ploughing and heather cutting spreading on half the plots in 2002.



Heather growing within soil-stripped plot on Greenland's Farm. ©NT



Warden spreading heather cuttings on one half of the ploughed plots on Greenland's Farm. ©NT

So far the results of the soil-stripped plots have been very successful as there is already good cover of mainly ling but also cross-leaved heath and bell heather in some plots. The success of the ploughed plots will be reported on next year, but it will be interesting to note if the heather seedbank in the soil is still viable – tested by deep ploughing and not covering with heather cuttings.

Some monitoring of the improved fields will be undertaken to monitor the natural changes. It is expected

that with the natural leaching of nutrients and lowering of pH, the grassland will take on an acid grassland character over time. The eastern edge of the grassland adjacent to the heathland already appears to have some encroaching heathland which will be monitored.

#### **Non-chemically assisted heathland recreation?**

So far, the project has proved that soil stripping and application of heather cuttings is very successful at recreating heathland on a previously ploughed and improved site. Soil stripping may not always be a practical method though as there is an issue of where to put the top soil. If there is a local demand for this product then it may be feasible. Heather cuttings are usually available from cut fire breaks.

If the deep ploughing experiment is successful, this may prove a more practical method, as there is no issue of where to put the topsoil. Also, if the heather seedbank is proved viable then there will be no need to spread heather cuttings. If successful, larger parts of Greenlands may be ploughed up, depending on the success of the natural reversion being monitored.

On site visits in 2002 no heather was found in the fields although there was some sheep's sorrel, an acid-loving plant, indicating that the fields are already showing floristic changes towards acid grassland, as this plant was not noted in the Trust's 1982 biological survey. ■

## SAFEGUARDING OUR RICH GARDEN PLANT HERITAGE

Bill Malecki, Gardens & Parks Adviser (West), Cirencester

Collectively, National Trust gardens hold one of the most important collections of cultivated plants in the world.

Over hundreds of years, amateur and professional plant collectors have introduced many thousands of exotic species to British gardens. In addition to these, there are the tens of thousands of hybrids and cultivars (distinct, named garden varieties) that have been bred or selected by gardeners over the years.

These plants are significant at several levels: they are an essential part of the rich palette of colour, scent, shape and form with which gardens are created; they are cherished for their individual qualities and beauty; and they are loaded with associations with people and places. In short, they are part of our cultural heritage.

#### **Threat to diversity**

The diversity of this rich heritage is inevitably threatened by the fact that plants are living things. Some, like trees, endure for centuries, others like annuals, are ephemeral. But none survives forever.

A further threat to the conservation of garden plant heritage is fashion. Old favourites die out or end up on the compost heap to make way for the new; and worthy garden plants, with all their individual qualities, stories and associations, are steadily lost from our gardens.

#### **Conserving the stock**

To safeguard this horticultural heritage, there are various schemes to ensure that the genetic stock is conserved and renewed through propagation and cultivation. It can happen on a routine and informal basis with gardeners taking cuttings, dividing herbaceous perennials, or saving the seed of their own old vegetable varieties, for example.

The Trust also runs the Plant Conservation Programme nursery at Knightshayes Court, in Devon, to offer a more specialised service to ensure the propagation and redistribution of important, rare or threatened plants throughout the Trust. Many gardens also collaborate with other organisations' schemes, such as the Heritage Seed Library, run by the Henry



Doubleday Research Association (HDRA), the organic research association, or as holders of National Plant Collections® with the National Council for the Conservation of Parks and Gardens (NCCPG).

The NCCPG was founded 25 years ago and describes its mission as 'to conserve, document and promote Britain and Ireland's great biodiversity of garden plants for the benefit of horticulture, education and science'. The principal way the charity works is by enlisting the voluntary participation of gardeners, both amateur and professional, to care for a group of related plants. There are 630 collections, 32 of them held in the 21 participating Trust gardens.

### Enthusiasms and traditions

In the case of private collection holders, the group of plants they choose to conserve is often decided by matching their own personal enthusiasm for a particular genus with the NCCPG's 'Missing Genera' list of unadopted groups of plants.

The participation of Trust gardens tends to be guided more by the existing traditions of a property, rather than personal preferences. Nevertheless, the personal commitment of the head gardener remains vital to the success of the arrangement. Most of the National Collections in Trust gardens are integrated

into the garden as a whole rather than displayed together in a botanical garden style bed. Care is taken to ensure that extending the collection to include more taxa does not steadily distort the character of the historic garden.

Among the collections in Trust gardens, Mount Stewart in County Down, Northern Ireland, is home to three National Collections: *Phormium*, *Libertia* and *Dianella*, all southern hemisphere plants that thrive in Mount Stewart's favoured climate. At Antony in Cornwall the collection of 610 cultivars of Day Lilies (*Hermerocallis*) established by Lady Cynthia Carew Pole, now has National Plant Collection status.

### A network of expertise

One of the spin-offs of the scheme is that it cultivates an impressive network of knowledge and expertise. Collection holders tend to be, or become, authorities on their chosen groups of plants.

The Trust is among the supporters of an important new NCCPG initiative, the Demeter Project. This national resource, being developed with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, will help make it easier to capture and share information about national plant collections as well as forging stronger links between participants in the scheme. ■

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## MANAGING WATER AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Colleen Schuetz, Fellow of the McLaren Horticultural Scholarship, Cirencester

The National Trust has two interesting problems on its hands at Westbury Court Garden. The immediate problem is that the yew hedges of the long canal are dying. The second is the issue of climate change and the devastating effect this may have on the garden in decades to come.

As an American horticulture fellow working in the UK for a year, sponsored by the Garden Club of America and the Institute of Horticulture, I found the situation at Westbury a fascinating and valuable project. My job for nine weeks was to research and provide recommendations to remedy this situation. Through careful research, interpretation, interviews with past and current staff and site surveying, I felt that there were viable solutions to the problem of the dying yews.

### The problem

The yews on the long canal were thought to be affected by the fungal infection *Phytophthora*, a disease which is becoming more relevant and common

in today's gardens and is a problem at Westbury. *Phytophthora* is often associated with waterlogged plants or abnormal water levels in gardens. Given that Westbury Court lies in the flood plain of the River Severn, there is the suspicion of a relationship between flooding and the state of the yews, which is of immediate concern.

### Understanding *Phytophthora*

*Phytophthora* is a fungal disease that can affect many different woody plants. It is a soil-borne organism which causes root rot, resulting in the death of the plant. Early symptoms include wilting, yellowing and retention of dried foliage. The fungus grows through the root, destroying the tissue which is then unable to absorb water and nutrients.

The disease requires moist soil conditions and warm temperatures to be active. Damage occurs most often in summer when plants become drought-stressed. The temperature most favourable for infection is 15°C



Yew hedges bordering canals, Westbury Court. © NTPL/Stephen Robson

to 28°C. Sporangia form under nearly saturated conditions in four to eight hours and zoospores are released in ten to 60 minutes. They can infect neighbouring plants, especially those down-slope from a site of infection. Eventually, the swimming zoospores infect the feeder roots and decay begins. The deadly combination of poorly drained soil and wet sites favours this fatal disease, stressing the plant and providing conditions suitable for multiplication of the organism.

From a gardener's point of view, spreading the disease is an easy thing to do. The spores move in water, on contaminated soil and tools, footwear and vehicles. These spores are capable of surviving for extended periods of time and, when conditions become favourable, they germinate and renew their life cycle. This trait allows *Phytophthora* to survive in dead plant tissue for years.

### History of the garden

Westbury Court is a rare example of a Dutch-style water garden acquired by the Trust in 1967 when the 3.2ha garden was in a neglected state. It has a long history of flooding – the earliest record was made in the first decade of the eighteenth century – and lies in the flood plain of the Westbury Brook which in turn is in the flood plain of the Severn, only 9m above sea level.

Westbury is well known for its historic yew hedges, an important part of the original planting. As you enter the garden one of the first views you see includes the 150m-long yew hedges bordering both sides of the long canal. These were replanted in the 1970s during the garden restoration and are now just over 30 years old.

During flooding, water covers most of the garden but

those yews located in the most western and higher part of the garden are least often affected. Ironically, these trees are the least healthy while the remaining yews, which are subject to flooding, show little signs of stress despite being some of the oldest specimens, dating to around 1850.

### Testing the soil

We needed to find out whether *Phytophthora* existed and where, the particular strain, and the severity of the problem.

The most accurate method of testing is to perform soil tests, taking soil and root samples from designated areas. We decided to perform four different tests:

#### Identifying *Phytophthora* and the specific strain

A broad spectrum test for macro and micro nutrients and pH levels

- Cation exchange capacity which measures the nutrient holding capacity of the soil and electrical conductivity measuring salinity.
- Organic matter

### Results

Our soil results showed that *Phytophthora citricola* exists in the long canal as well as in other parts of the garden. The soil, surprisingly, had a high organic matter content and was not excessively saline. The results provided us with invaluable information and will allow the garden team to manage and care for Westbury more effectively.

However, the results did not explain why the problem affects almost exclusively the long canal. How did the yews there get this disease and why are the other yews not showing signs of it?

### Canal water levels

For the past 30 years the pattern of managing the canal water levels allowed for the balance of aesthetics and continuing yew health. The water levels were accurately controlled in the past by lowering and raising them according to the open and closed seasons of the garden. With a canal depth of 54in, at no point in time was the level allowed to rise over 3 feet. This pattern of management allowed the yew roots to breathe.

However, from 1999 to 2001 the water levels in the canals were kept abnormally high, nearly flush with the ground level, about 15in above previous levels. As the canal walls are not waterproof, the yew roots growing along the edge of the canal were literally sitting in water during this period. They were faced with a high stress situation combined with existing poor drainage and aeration, along with the presence of a potentially infectious agent in the soil water.

Today, in the spring of 2003, over 65% of the long canal yews are dying or dead. After extensive soil tests and research, the culprit has been identified as the fungal disease *Phytophthora citricola*. This is linked to a specific period of time when the yew roots were overly stressed and waterlogged. The dying yew hedges at Westbury are not due to climate change – they are an example of what can happen when water is mismanaged in a garden.

### What we learnt

- There are no problems with nutrient deficiency or abnormal salinity.
- The significance of communication. The passage of information and record-keeping are essential for the health of the garden and the sanity of the garden team.

### Controlling *Phytophthora*

At present, there is no simple method for controlling *Phytophthora*. Our experience indicates that control of soil moisture is vital. Soil with too much water both threatens the plant and provides favourable conditions for the growth of the disease. A combination of sanitation measures, good horticultural management, selective use of some fungicides and the addition of organic matter to soils can be used to inhibit its activity.

If replanting is an option, large quantities of organic matter such as mulches, manures and composted material should be added to the area. These specific

components increase the level of soil micro-organisms which suppress the activity of *Phytophthora* and slow disease development. Mulches also minimise the contact between soil and footwear so there is less potential for the transport of the disease.

### Future management

The Trust is faced with important decisions but now has the research and evidence on which to base its decisions. My final recommendations are to:

- Remove both yew hedges bordering the long canal.
- Improve the efficiency of drainage under the hedges.
- Improve the soil structure within the hedge planting area. Add large quantities of organic matter.
- Replace the grass path adjacent to the most western yew hedge with the historically accurate gravel shown in Kip's 1702 design.
- Be consistent with the water levels in the canal and maintain levels below 3 feet.
- Once all construction and soil improvements are complete replant with healthy, *Phytophthora*-free English yew.
- Continue to strictly monitor the remaining yews in the garden.

Westbury is fortunate to have learnt that its specific yew health was a localised problem with relatively feasible means of correction, but there is no doubt that *Phytophthora* is a serious threat to the world of gardening and plant health.

With such questionable times ahead of us, this case study proves why it's going to be more important to maintain records but, most importantly, to continue the flow of communication between gardeners and management. As seen at Westbury, the passage of information could have saved the lives of historic yews. These history trails may someday answer many questions for the future gardeners of the garden and perhaps even save a few plants.

### About the author

Colleen Schuetz began her fellowship in the UK in September 2002 after spending three years as Garden Manager/Horticulturist of Gibraltar Gardens, a six-acre, public estate garden designed in 1916 and located in Wilmington, Delaware, USA. ■

## JUBILEE LAWN DESIGN AT POWIS

Richard Davys-Jones, Grass/Machinery Supervisor, Powis Castle, Wales

The idea of a lawn design to celebrate 50 years of National Trust ownership of Powis Castle was born from one created as a surprise for Hugh Trevor when we cut his name in block capitals into the Great Lawn to mark his retirement after 50 years of working in the garden.

This rectangular lawn, set below the terraces, covers approximately a hectare, and was the backdrop for last year's design. Armed with bamboo canes, red and white tape and the longest tape measure we had, Head Gardener Peter Hall, Supervisor Kevin Grice and I ventured out to create something 'gobsmacking' for our jubilee.

Basically it had to have or be:

- Large enough to be seen from the terraces (or outer space!)
- Not too complicated or intricate to create
- Convey the jubilee message to visitors
- Something associated with the Trust within the design
- Easily maintained, with subsequent mowing time kept to a minimum.

### Where to start?

Finding the centre of the great lawn and setting up a base line was the obvious way to go, but how long and how high? After a bit of measuring, we set out bamboo canes and joined them up with the red and white tape, checked the alignment and retired up to the terraces to ponder the scale in the setting.

Things appeared to be fairly straight and central and, at 100 metres long, seemed about right. We adjusted the height at 20 metres to fit the dramatic scale of the lawn. Peter disappeared off to his computer and Kevin and I returned to our normal mowing duties. He later presented us with two dates on a sheet of A4. 'Use this as a basis - 1952-2002,' he said, 'Oh, and sort it by the time I come back,' and promptly took two weeks' holiday.

We needed some brains to pick so I phoned Linemark UK who do the designs on rugby and football pitches to ask for some advice. When I told them the size of the design, 100m x 20m, they said that to paint it onto the lawn would cost a small fortune - £6000 - but that would not include marking it out. We promptly ordered some cans of spray lawn paint from them, they wished us luck and we proceeded to do it ourselves.



Aerial photograph of the Great Lawn. © NT

It was decided that to get everything square and equal a grid pattern was needed so Peter and Edwin van Hulzen, Gardener, worked out the design on the Autosketch CAD system we use for garden planting records. They set out the two dates in italics onto a scaled grid pattern with each square representing 2 metres square, but we still needed something to link together the dates and emphasise the Trust element. By pasting the oak leaf on to the CAD design we finished up with a scaled version fitting between the date figures.

We marked out the lawn with cane and strings set at these 2 metre gridlines from the agreed base line and proceeded to measure out the points of each intersection from the scaled drawing, outlining the pattern with the green spray grass paint. This colour was clear enough to be seen close to but did not stand out at a distance just in case mistakes were made.

### Getting the logo right

The Great Lawn is normally cut at a height of 30mm so once all the canes and strings were removed, a

small cylinder mower, set at a 20mm cut, could follow inside the marks and so clearly emphasise the pattern. The Trust logo was created as a central feature initially by spray painting the outline in black onto the grass, but this was later cut out, too, and to better effect, using a strimmer for the intricate leaf shapes.

After the initial planning and design stage, it took about a day and a half to mark out the area, and four hours to cut the first pattern into the grass. Once completed, the effect was easily sustained by a routine cut taking about three hours once a week and the whole lawn continued to be overcut to 30mm.

The effect has been an outstanding success and many thanks go to all the garden team who helped in developing this idea and particularly to those who covered the usual duties of Kevin and I whilst we were working on this project. The pattern was kept going from mid-August until the end of September and the lawn returned to its normal appearance two weeks later. ■

## GO WILD AT KEW GARDENS AND WAKEHURST PLACE

Peter Bennett, Festival Coordinator, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Kew Gardens has a reputation as one of the world's finest showpiece gardens and as an internationally respected centre for scientific research. Much of the work undertaken at Kew and at Wakehurst Place, which is owned by the National Trust and managed by Kew, relates to global botany and biodiversity.

Kew has a long history of contributing to global botanical research with specimens from overseas being brought back to be studied and conserved. It has also acted as an oasis for city dwellers, providing a much needed green space where Londoners can escape from the stresses of urban living. Wakehurst Place is now home to the Millennium Seed Bank, an international focus for the conservation and research of wild plants.

### Exciting new festival

This summer, Kew Gardens and Wakehurst Place will be holding an exciting and ambitious new festival to bring the general public's attention to the diversity of life on their doorstep. This festival, called Go Wild, will celebrate the rich biodiversity of the British Isles and runs from 24 May to 28 September.

British trees, plants, mammals, birds and invertebrates found at both properties will be highlighted and the diversity of wild habitats throughout the UK

explored. As well as focusing on wild plants and animals, Go Wild also looks at sustainable practices in traditional agriculture and land management.

Visitors will be able to climb into the canopy of a magnificent oak tree, explore the tracks of small mammals living in the wilder areas of Kew, discover the medicinal value of native wild plants or listen to the rustling of a traditional wheat field. Go Wild demonstrates the interdependence of plants, animals and humans, and shows the irreplaceable beauty of Britain's wildlife. Through special features, exhibitions and art installations, Go Wild conveys the conservation message at the heart of Kew's work.

### The varied range of exhibitions and activities taking place at Kew Gardens include:

- **Treetop Walkway** A 100m walkway winds through the canopies of oak and redwood trees – a rare chance to view trees from a bird's-eye perspective and to explore the lives of the many creatures that make their home in Britain's treetops.
- **Field Hospital** An evocative collector's pavilion in the Gardens illustrates the traditional medicinal uses of native species. Presenting the science behind folk remedies, the Field Hospital also demonstrates why plants, leeches and maggots are finding a new role in modern medicine.



Holly blue. © NT. Taken by Matthew Oates.

- **Wild Ideas** Six showcase gardens illustrate ways of creating a wildlife-friendly haven in a small domestic garden. The plots are designed by Kew final year Diploma of Horticulture students to inspire urban gardeners.
  - **Self-raising Flowers** Modern agricultural methods, pesticides and herbicides have created uniform fields of wheat, instead of the rich mixture of flowers and wild plants of 70 years ago. The traditional wheat field shows how fields looked in the past and how they supported insect life and wild flowers. Majestic shire horses will pull the equipment to harvest the crop in the late summer.
  - **Vegetarian Option** Kew's diploma students present their vegetable plots using traditional methods to improve soil condition, encouraging beneficial wildlife and producing healthy crops using methods like companion planting. The plots illustrate the benefits of growing vegetables without the use of pesticides, herbicides or artificial fertilisers.
  - **Blooms, Birds, Bugs and Bees** A huge floral plantscape highlights the importance of domestic gardens as havens for wildlife. The plants used in UK gardens (some native, many non-native species) support a vast range of butterflies and bees, birds and small mammals. This links with the Trust's theme at Chelsea this year.
  - **Flying Pollen** A series of beautiful microscope images illustrate the complex structure of wind-borne pollen from UK native plants and their relationship with plant reproduction. The images are presented as banner installations in the landscapes of Kew.
- Wakehurst Place also has various activities and events, including:**
- **Francis Rose Reserve** With their intriguing survival mechanisms, lichens and mosses are some of the oldest living plants and fungi. Their role as indicators of air pollution has given them new prominence over the last three decades. The Sussex Weald contains many hidden valleys and crevasses known as gills which have preserved these ancient plants in their unique habitats. The Francis Rose Reserve is a new initiative at Wakehurst focusing attention on these extraordinary organisms which play such an important role in the web of life. Visitors can discover how to decode the hidden evolutionary clues concealed in the landscape.
  - **Loder Valley Bird Monitoring Scheme** The dramatic decline of farmland birds in recent years has led to new concern about the future of woodland birds. Visitors can see the work of the Loder Valley Bird Monitoring Scheme, which will help provide a health check for bird populations.
  - **A Bird's-Eye View** An intimate insight into the secret life of birds, with webcam links to bird boxes in the Gardens, including kingfisher nests on the banks of the Ardingly Reservoir.
  - **Charcoal Burner's Encampment** An authentic charcoal burner's encampment illustrates a form of sustainable woodland management that can reduce the impact on threatened forests of the world.

For details about visiting Kew phone 020 8332 5655 or for Wakehurst phone 01444 894066. Visit Kew's website at [www.kew.org](http://www.kew.org) or see details for Wakehurst on the Trust's website – [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk). For Kew, entry is £7.50 for adults, £5.50 for concessions. For Wakehurst, entry is £7 for adults, £5 for concessions or free to National Trust members. Children of 16 and under are admitted free at both places. ■





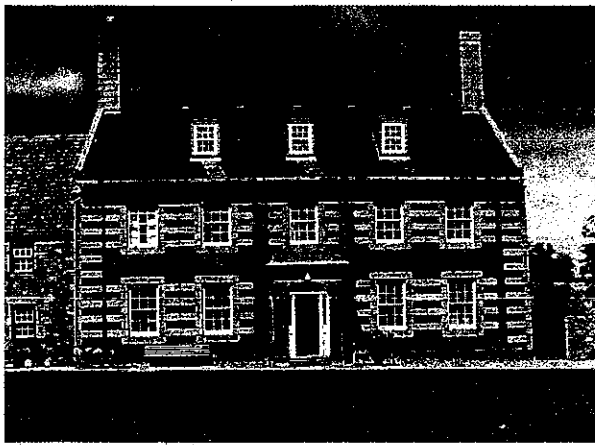












The Elms. © NT for Jersey

### Sense of ownership

With only 1,600 members and limited resources, the majority of the Trust's properties are let out on long-term tenancies in order to maximise rental income. This in turn has resulted in access to our properties being severely restricted and the benefits of membership being somewhat less tangible than in the UK.

However, increased efforts are being made to increase the benefit of our land holdings through improved interpretation and guided walks, as well as launching a website through which people can enjoy virtual tours of the tenanted properties. We are also hoping that more people will identify with the concept of the Trust as an organisation that belongs to them, ie the people of Jersey, as opposed to simply perceiving it as another conservation organisation. By promoting this sense of ownership we in turn hope to generate greater support and income.

### Threats and solutions

Despite the Trust's successful growth and increasing portfolio of properties, we still face many challenges. As Jersey is home to an extremely successful finance centre and a growing economy, the pressures for



Le Rat. © NT for Jersey

increased development are undoubtedly greater than they were in 1936. Agricultural land which accounts for 53 per cent of current land use is being continually re-zoned for housing and a creeping urbanisation is beginning to pervade our rural parishes. In addition, many of Jersey's farm complexes are being converted into multiple residential units, whilst some of its smaller Victorian hotels are being demolished to make way for apartment blocks.

With the high development value of sites and the complete absence of lottery funding or government grants, acquisition is no longer the solution it once promised to be. For example on Jersey's north coast, a site of just under ten acres currently occupied by a derelict holiday camp, is subject to a planning appeal for 117 houses.

The site is adjacent to an extremely important habitat for the UK's southernmost colony of puffins, as well as fulmars, razorbills and peregrine falcons. The proposed development would be detrimental not only to these species but have a devastating impact upon the surrounding landscape. The site is currently owned by Scottish & Newcastle and its current value is estimated to be in the region of £5 and £8 million. When one compares this to £4 million for Mount Snowdon, one begins to appreciate the incredibly high value of development land in Jersey.

However, as our original founders looked to the National Trust for inspiration we are now hoping to launch a Jersey Coastland Appeal which will, hopefully, echo the success of the Neptune Campaign. We are also seeking to exert influence by commenting on relevant government policy, advocating by example and campaigning on issues which directly threaten the island's natural environment or built heritage. It is a difficult line to tread as we are keenly aware that in a small island such as Jersey an overtly political role could easily alienate our core membership.

### Isolation and working with the community

Located on a small island within the English Channel one can sometimes feel isolated and slightly envious of the wealth of support and professional expertise that is available on the mainland. By contrast, however, we are fortunate in having a lower level of bureaucracy and a distinct area in which to work. Also, given our small size and ease of communication, there is a real opportunity to develop a Trust which is truly reflective of the hopes and aspirations of its members and the wider community.

Of course the irony is that on an island renowned for wealthy immigrants and financial success, the Trust is currently projecting a deficit of nearly £1 million over the next ten years. The challenge that lies ahead is not simply to cover this deficit but also to ensure that Jersey's community understands the relevance of the Trust and ultimately agrees that there is a need for an independent organisation to counter the increasing threat to the island's natural environment and built heritage. ■









# THE NEW COLONIALS: LIVING WITH METAPOPOPULATIONS

Matthew Oates, Nature Conservation Adviser, Cirencester

The concept of metapopulations is one of the most important theories currently being developed in conservation biology. The term may be off-putting to anyone not directly involved in the science of nature conservation and, like biodiversity, is the sort of word that does not easily win converts.

A simpler term, such as population clusters, may have sufficed. Nonetheless, the concept is likely to be fundamental to species conservation, at least within the animal kingdom. Metapopulations are nature's equivalent of island archipelago communities, whose existence largely depends on the exchange of resources over a sizeable area, something like the Scilly Isles.

## Different interpretations

Much of the pioneer work on metapopulation dynamics in Europe is being undertaken by scientists working on butterflies, whose populations often occur within metapopulation structures. One difficulty here is that, in keeping with academic scientific fashion, much of the research effort is being directed into computer modelling, which leaves those of us in the front line trench of nature conservation feeling somewhat cold and unsupported. Different interpretations of the concept have developed, particularly between academic research scientists and people directly involved in nature conservation on the ground.



Marsh fritillaries. © NT. Taken by Matthew Oates.

Strictly speaking, a metapopulation is a collection of local populations (or colonies), connected by occasional dispersal, in which there are local extinctions and colonisations (Gilpin & Hanski, 1991). In English the reality is that we are realising that many species can survive only within clusters of colonies situated over sizeable areas of landscape. This principle seems fine but, as always, the devil lies in the detail.

## Good news

The good news is that individual colonies may not need to be connected permanently, for many can survive for a time without the exchange of individuals, depending on factors such as population size, habitat size and quality, and genetic integrity. Better still, the theory means that not all habitat patches that could support a species need to be in a suitable condition for it at any one time; indeed, habitat patches may alternate in and out of suitability, according to factors such as grazing regimes and the impact of weather.

This aspect of metapopulation thinking realises the value of potential habitat, not just habitat that is currently in good condition. In effect, many species 'track' the habitat conditions they require over landscapes, colonising as conditions permit and dying out locally when adverse changes occur. Best of all, the theory means that we can accept a degree of local extinction – for extinction can be a perfectly natural process – provided it is balanced by colonisation, recolonisation and perhaps a degree of stability.

## Key problems

On the debit side, metapopulation thinking means that it may be inappropriate to seek to conserve individual species on small isolated nature reserves from where there is little real chance of spread to form new colonies. Mobility is clearly essential for metapopulation dynamics to function, and many species appear unable to move around modern landscapes with the necessary ease.

Worse, it is steadily dawning upon us that the key problems we are facing in species conservation are how to mend shattered metapopulation structures and assist species mobility in fragmented modern landscapes. These are certainly two of the main problems facing the conservation of butterflies and, doubtless, many other terrestrial animals, and may rather beg the question of whether we should be thinking in terms of species conservation at all.

If we accept it, the importance of re-establishing habitat connectivity becomes obvious, though experience to date suggests that 1980s green corridor thinking was several orders of magnitude short of what is actually necessary – the Dutch nature conservationists think in terms of huge ecological corridors.

## The Big Picture

The metapopulation concept suggests that we are dealing with situations wherein the dynamics are massive and change is almost a constant, which renders monitoring extremely difficult. This is worrying, as monitoring is already one of the weakest points in

















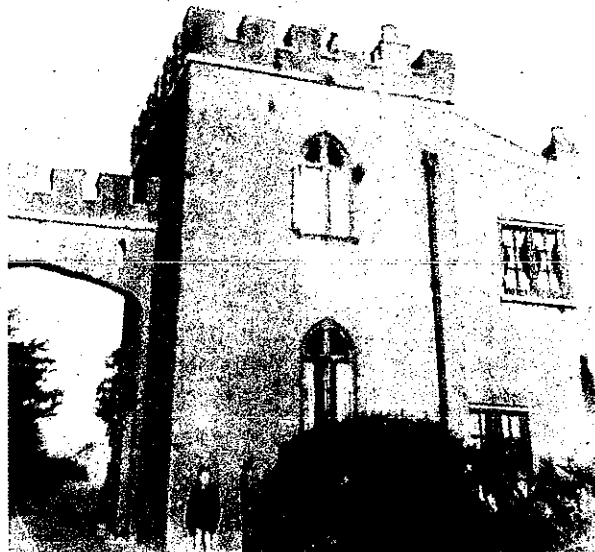


Tyntesfield: island or oasis? © NTPL/Andrew Butler

They will work alongside industry professionals, developing skills in interviewing, filming, editing and archiving. It is hoped that there will be some kind of a ratification process through which the skills attained could be recognised by the relevant industry media and lead to possible future employment.

The estate once provided some of the only regular paid employment for many people within the local community. It is my understanding that Tyntesfield will, once more, provide a route into employment and community building based on tried and tested techniques used during the property's colourful history.

I think it is crucial to retain and renovate as many aspects of the history of Tyntesfield as possible. I see this being successfully implemented by updating the approach to interpretation and by making that as interactive as possible. The use of a video archive, created in part by members of the local community, will provide opportunities for access on many levels.



### The future history of Tyntesfield

The picture to date of this aspect of my research is of a house still very much alive with the memories and stories of hundreds of people connected to the property through work, family and friends. Tyntesfield has been a treasure of an island rarely glimpsed in the community. Those lucky enough to get a boat to its shores have discovered an oasis of opportunity, beauty and tranquillity; a doorway into a period in history that is in many ways increasingly removed from our own.

It is great to see the Trust opening up the old ways of working to create new paths of access and interpretation and, most importantly, to see that there will be a new and fully revived sense of place for the property within the community. Tyntesfield will need to back up

its ambitious new community vision with competent and sensitive action. The local community is very cautious and does not necessarily see the world through a National Trust lens. The Trust is clearly an important and effective organisation but will need to include the visions and ideas of the wider community to overcome its longstanding reputation of elitism that has made many of the people that I have spoken to, wary.

### Links to great achievements

In a wider context to the history of the house, there have been suggestions that the Gibbs family was closely linked to Isambard Kingdom Brunel; that the family once, in fact, owned the SS *Great Britain* and had a key role in setting up the Great Western Railway.

And so the connection and influence of the estate and the Gibbs family could have far-reaching relevance as a key link to some of the greatest achievements of the Victorian era. These achievements, stemming from a small community in the Somerset countryside, ended up affecting the rest of the world.

### Footnote

Caspar Walsh was commissioned as a research consultant by Tyntesfield's Project Director, John McVerry, in October 2002. The project is now in its final stages. Caspar has asked us to point out that the opinions expressed in this article are strictly his and are not intended to represent those of the National Trust or Tyntesfield. ■

Part of the estate's history: Ivy Lodge once spanned the drive. It was thought that the ivy was damaging the lodge, but when this was removed the problem turned out to be damp, which destroyed it anyway. For a time it was thought that the lodge had been blown up by the last Lord Wraxall so that he could drive his combine harvester, too large to go under the arch, on to the road! © Irene Gould







## STOWE – CAPTAIN COOK'S ISLAND

Richard Wheeler, Gardens & Parks Curator (South), Thames & Solent

That part of the gardens at Stowe now known as the Elysian Fields actually encompasses a wider area than was originally conceived, and could more nearly be seen as a representation of a greater part of Hades, or the Underworld, than merely Elysium, the 'islands of the blest'. This is where dwell those warriors who died fighting for their country, the priests who prayed for their country and the bards who sang for their country. 'Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi...' <sup>1</sup>

We are told by Virgil in Book VI of the Aeneid that before anyone worthy enough could get near to Elysium they had to be ferried by Charon across the black river, Cocytus (the river of wailing) where it joins the Acheron (the river of woe) with the swamp of the River Styx at their junction. At Stowe the river passing through the diminutive valley of the Elysian Fields is divided into three parts, the upper part emanating from the Grotto being the Alder River, the next part beginning at the Shell Bridge, the Worthies River, and the last part before entering the Octagon Lake, the Lower River.

Within the first of these, the Alder River, perhaps intended for those rivers of the Underworld and made to appear the more stygian by being lined with black sand, is a small island upon which was erected in the 1780s a monument in memory of Captain Cook, the British naval hero who died in 1779.

### The original intention

Cook's monument was moved in the 1880s, probably because of perilously insecure foundations on the edge of the island. In its new position on the edge of the Alder River, it was, by 1990, again tilting precariously, and the opportunity was taken, with the benefit of micropiles, to return the monument to its original position in June 2002.

The occasion of deciding on the exact site for the re-erection of the monument set in train an exploration of the original intention for the structure and how it was supposed to be understood. The Trust's archaeologist at Stowe, Oliver Jessop, had already uncovered the foundation of the plinth, on the edge of the island looking towards the Season's Fountain, confirming the depiction of the monument in engravings by the family's drawing master, John Claude Nattes<sup>2</sup>. As with most things at Stowe the siting and inscription are more complex than at first sight.

The monument is first described in the 1788 guide book to Stowe published by Benton Seeley<sup>3</sup>:

'From hence we return by the stone bridge to a stream terminated by several small islands; upon one of them is a monument to the memory of Captain Cook: The pedestal of it supports a Terrestrial Globe, upon which are delineated the Aequitorial, Tropical, and other lines, together with the following inscription: "Te maris et terrae numeroque carentis arenæ [sic] mensorem..."

"Twas thine to track the Ocean's endless round, Each distant shore, and earth's extremest bound."

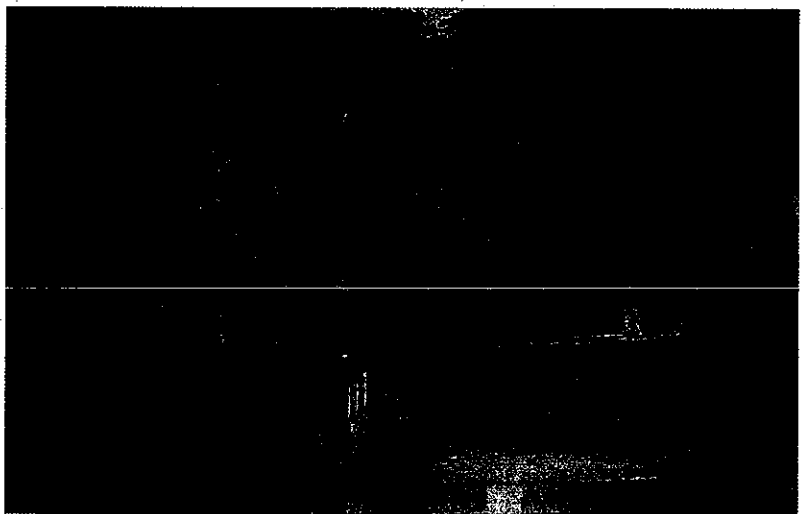
In the die of the pedestal is a medallion of Captain Cook in marble, and under it in a tablet – JACOBO COOK, MD–CLXXVIII.'

This seemingly innocuous sentiment appears to be a straightforward and simple aphorism delineating James Cook's achievements in the South Seas in the 1770s. However a little investigation into its origins gives a more profound and considered source. It is taken from Horace's Odes, Book 1, no. 28, in which the ghost of the astronomer, Archytas, is talking to a sailor. The whole poem is a dialogue between the two of them:

[The sailor]

'Te maris et terrae numeroque carentis arenae mensorem cohibent; Archyta, pulveris exigui prope litus parva Matinum munera, nec quicquam tibi prodest aérias temptasse domos animoque rotundum percurrisse polum morituro...

'Archytas, thou, whose spirit, sea and land with unobscured gaze hast wandered o'er, lies mouldering 'neath a scanty heap of sand in unknown burial, on Apulia's shore.



View of Captain Cook and Captain Grenville's monuments taken from the fountain. J.C.Nattes delt.1805



## THE ISLE OF WIGHT COAST – THE REAL CHANGE PROGRAMME

Tony Tutton, Property Manager, Isle of Wight, and Caroline Thackray, Territory Archaeologist, South, Cirencester

### Background

The Isle of Wight coastline is, at present, 60 miles (97 km) in circumference, of which 17 miles (27km) are owned by the National Trust. It offers a great diversity of geology and geomorphological processes within a comparatively small area. The many active landslips, together with the everyday grind of the sea against the soft cliffs and beaches change the island's coastline on a daily basis. For these reasons it is internationally recognised and has become an important study area for those wishing to gain a greater understanding of coastal processes.

The island was originally linked to mainland England by a chalk ridge, which extended westwards to the Dorset coast. At the end of the last Ice Age the sea level rose as the great ice sheets melted. At a period thought to be around 10,000 years ago the sea flooded the many river valleys that now form the Solent and the chalk ridge was breached creating an island.

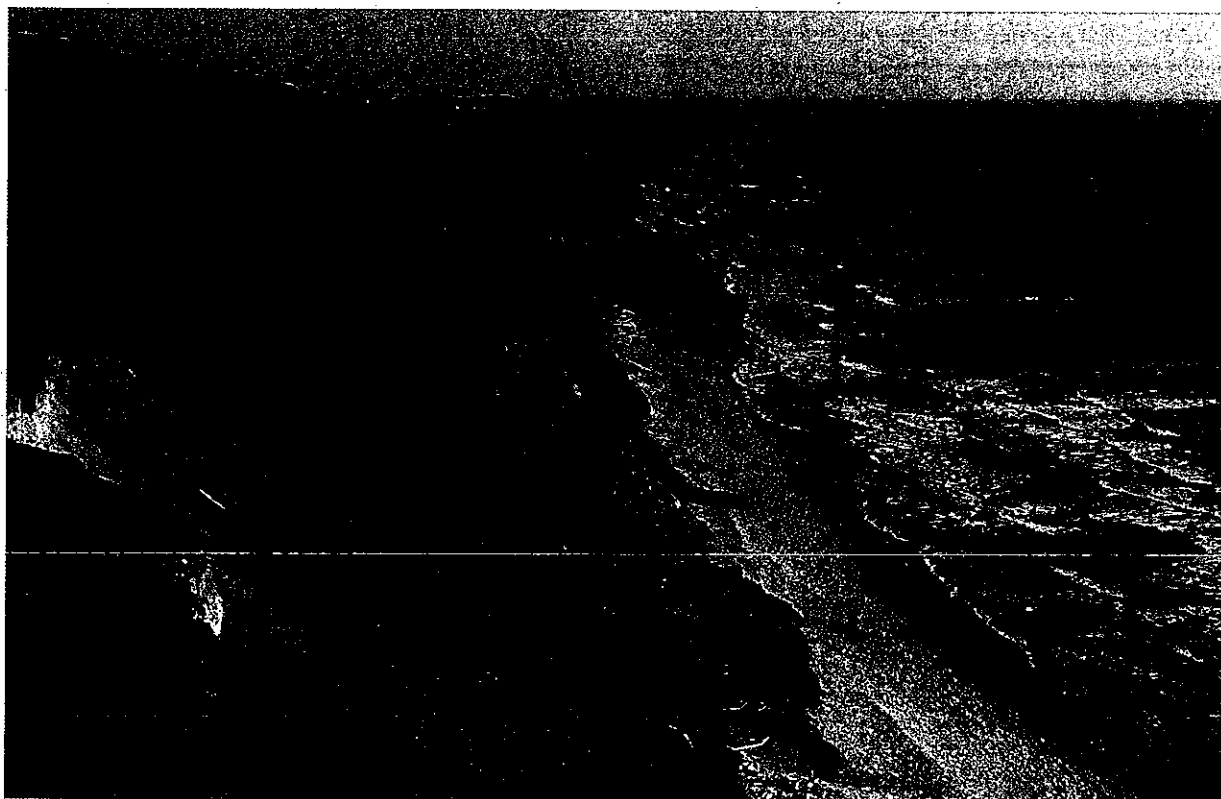
The oldest formations on the island are from the Cretaceous period dating to a period 120 to 60 million years ago. In fact the cliffs on the south-west coast, between the Wealden clays of Blackgang and the chalk of Tennyson Down and the Needles, are the

largest unbroken sequence of Cretaceous exposure in the world. This is an area famous for its dinosaur fossils. Another feature of this coast are 'Chines' – streams which have cut through the soft sandstone, from the cliffs, to form ravines.

The geology on the north side of the island is of more recent origin, from the Tertiary and Quaternary periods, and the exposed cliffs are of soft, slumping clay. This side of the island is far more wooded.

### The threats

Chalk is the hardest substrate found on the coast. The rest of the coastline is made of soft material, which is being constantly eroded through the actions of the sea and the effects of landslips when porous substrate slip over underlying clays lubricated by ground water. This means that land is being lost daily to the sea and during wet and stormy winters this process is accelerated. These are processes that have always gone on but are accelerating with climate change. Nowhere is this more pronounced than the farmlands of the south-west coast where English Nature is currently involved in a proposal to re-notify the St Catherine's Point to Freshwater Bay SSSI. This was last re-notified in 1986 but the coast has receded significantly since then and much of the area is now in



Compton Bay looking east – a rapidly eroding coastline. © NT. Taken by Tony Tutton.





Hanover Point car park where erosion is an ongoing threat. © NT. Taken by Tony Tutton.



excavation and recovery. With their help, speedy arrangements were made for conservation, storage and, for some finds, public display at the Guildhall Museum, Newport.

### The benefits

The population of the Isle of Wight enjoy their island status and if it were not for the processes of coastal erosion it would not be an island. The outstanding and varied coastal landscapes, together with the beaches, are also an attraction for many visitors who come to the island every year. An increasing number are drawn to the southern coast because of the current popular interest in dinosaurs. It has been widely acknowledged by experts as one of the great fossil collecting sites in the world. With high profile films, coverage in the media, and the recent opening of the 'Dinosaur Isle' exhibition, many more visitors are coming to the coast to see where the fossils can be found. In fact many species have been found in recent years that are new to science.

The sea cliffs and slopes frequently support specialised plant and animal communities, many at the northern limit of their range. The combination of friable substrates and open conditions maintained by cliff slippages are ideal for specialist invertebrates, like bees and wasps, who are able to burrow in the bare ground. There are also many small ponds and wet areas created by springs and seepages. These are transient in nature and important for the survival of many species in this hostile environment. All of the species living on these sites are able to respond to the ever-changing conditions.

### Managing change

A long-term view has to be taken on issues created by a changing coastline. Here are some things we have done:

- On cliff-top farmland we have worked with tenant farmers to create grassland buffer zones.

Mitigations of this sort should be identified in whole farm plans.

- Every spring beach access is looked at to see if realignment is necessary. We do this in conjunction with the council's access department.
- We have a joint Isle of Wight 'code of conduct' for fossil collection, which needs to be simplified. We can achieve this by working closely with the council, other landowners and collectors.
- We are working with the County Archaeologist and her team to devise a strategy for dealing with incremental loss of archaeological material from cliff erosion. Using existing records from the recently completed English Heritage coastal audit, and the work of the shoreline management plans, we can highlight the most vulnerable areas, and identify the levels of risk. This will help us prioritize survey in these areas and work together on monitoring programmes. It is also hoped that this might provide a means of identifying funds for artefact analysis, conservation and interpretation. We are already working with university departments and English Heritage on research projects to assess archaeological significance of coastal sites, evaluate the rate of loss and provide programmes of recording and mitigation. We hope to extend our partnerships in this direction.

As the Trust owns such a large portion of the island's coast we need to continue to further our work with the Isle of Wight Council, the Environment Agency, English Nature and English Heritage to ensure appropriate strategies are jointly adopted and implemented. We need to create better understanding with local communities about our coastline policies, explaining their context, their vision and the underlying processes that guide them. Finally, we must continue to be light on our feet and able to react quickly to changing natural events. However good our strategies may be, the natural world will always surprise us! ■







### Excellent study area

With human impact minimised as much as is practicable, the marine reserve provides an excellent area to study natural environmental change. It is evident that many of the species have declined since the area was first discovered by divers in the late 1960s. Sea fans in particular are in a poor condition with many dead and dying, and the rare sunset cup coral has also suffered a decline in recent years.

With the distance from the mainland it is unlikely that anthropogenic contamination is to blame and, hopefully, natural environmental cycles will lead to their recovery in the future<sup>1</sup>. With continued research we hope to learn more about this small patch of sea, the life it contains and in the process reveal a little more of the bigger picture.

### References

<sup>1</sup> Hiscock, K. *Corals Gone*, Marine Conservation (Marine Conservation Society, in press) ■

## REDUCING THE DRAIN AND THE STRAIN

Paul Roberts, Lundy Island General Manager, The Landmark Trust

My connection with Lundy Island started in 1996 when after five years of restoring Crownhill Fort, a Victorian fortress in Plymouth, for the Landmark Trust, I was asked by the Director to visit Lundy. My remit was to write a report on how to reduce the financial drain on the Trust and enable the island to achieve financial sustainability.

The one-week visit confirmed that the island required substantial capital investment on items such as:

- A new landing jetty
- New infrastructure, ie water and electricity
- Rescue and repair of the only service road, more of a track than a road, up to the island's village
- Substantial repairs and improvements to the main link to the mainland, the passenger and supply ship *MS Oldenburg*.

### Daunting task

Getting the grants and donations was the easy bit compared to the daunting task of carrying out substantial building projects on an island surrounded by England's only statutory Marine Nature Reserve, and on land that is an archaeologist's dream and has more conservation designations than you can shake a stick at.

I think it is fair to say that a great deal of concern was expressed by many of the naturalists, archaeologists and those who though not natural history experts have an affinity with the island, that the environment and character which made it so special would not be affected.

In the early days I asked myself the question – can nature conservation and the progress that the island so badly needs in order to survive financially, go hand-in-hand? The answer is a definite 'Yes' and the proof is in the pudding for all to see now that the projects have been completed.

### Tourism and conservation

The first principle we all had to accept to make all this work was that tourism, which provides the main income of the island, is intrinsically linked to the nature conservation of Lundy. If we were to spoil one, we would spoil both. The tourism income pays for the island's upkeep. This includes conservation and it is this conservation and uniqueness of Lundy that attracts the tourists.

Once the principle was accepted it turned into an exciting challenge for the engineers and the conservationists to agree a design for a jetty that would not be aesthetically intrusive nor affect sediment movement that could alter the ecology of the marine reserve. Fortunately for Lundy the designers and engineers associated with all the projects not only fell in love with the island during their first visit but also appreciated its special ecological assets. In the end their conversion was so complete that they were suggesting solutions to problems that we had not even highlighted.



A special ecological asset. © The Landmark Trust



A further proviso emerges. The construction of a single fixed link, normally a bridge or tunnel, may create 'pseudo-islands'. The fixed link is not quite an adequate land transportation network, but it is a significant change from no land-based connection. Characteristics may lie in the transition zone between islands and non-islands.

Canvey Island, in the Thames Estuary downstream from London, and Skye, in Scotland, have fixed links to mainland Britain. Canvey Island has two roads into Essex, but they both pass through the same roundabout just before going off-island. The sense of island community and island spirit are strong in both locations, making it difficult (and rather rude) to claim that the fixed link makes them non-islands or pseudo-islands.



Canvey Island's main beach. © Ilan Kelman 2000

In debating the construction of fixed links, fears are often expressed about the expected loss of island characteristics. Working out how much 'islandness' has been lost due to a fixed link is difficult. Islandness could be gained, with the fixed link bringing the island community closer together and emphasising the value of island communities and characteristics.

On Orkney, many islands, such as Burray and South Ronaldsay, are connected to the mainland, Orkney's main island, by causeways with a road. Have the outlying islands changed due to the connection with the island mainland? Has the mainland been affected? Could contrasts be made with Shetland where few islands have land connections to Shetland's mainland?

#### **An answer?**

In the end it is perhaps best to answer the question 'What is an island?' with an intuitive concept of a comparatively small land mass, generally without strong land-based connections to a larger land mass. This statement is

not a definition but an attempt to pull together some ideas, even though ambiguities will emerge.

The fairest way of dealing with these ambiguities is to recognise the importance of people, communities, and their heritage, rather than focusing on an external, academic, abstract label. If a location or people feel that they are an island or wish to become involved in the island community for a specific issue, then they should not be excluded. The onus is not on the island community to legalistically and irrefutably define itself or to include and exclude members at their whim.

Instead, the onus is on any physical or human geographical entity to decide to be part of the island community. Islands may then be defined by their physical geography, such as surrounded by water or mountains, but might also be a unique cultural or linguistic group. Galicia could be considered an island as much as Corsica or Jersey. An island, perhaps, refers to the experience of isolation and smallness which may derive from various causes.

#### **Island vulnerability**

The importance of such experiences especially transpires for risk and disasters. The physical and psychological isolation of islands tends to give them disproportionately low priority in comparison with their importance. Reasons for neglecting islands include small size, lack of resources and relative inaccessibility, yet these same characteristics make islands 'more unique', more valuable and more vulnerable.

Small size, for example, could result in a minor volcanic eruption threatening the viability of living on an island. In 1973 a volcanic eruption on Vestmannaeyjar, an island off the south coast of Iceland, forced the population to evacuate without knowing whether or not they would be able to return. They were, in fact, able to go back and they continue to thrive as a small island community.



Damage from a 1973 volcanic eruption on Vestmannaeyjar, an island off the south coast of Iceland. © Ilan Kelman 2001







# PRODUCT UPDATE

## THE HONDA F720 ROTAVATOR AND PLOUGH

Ian Wright, Head Gardener, Trengwainton, Cornwall & Devon

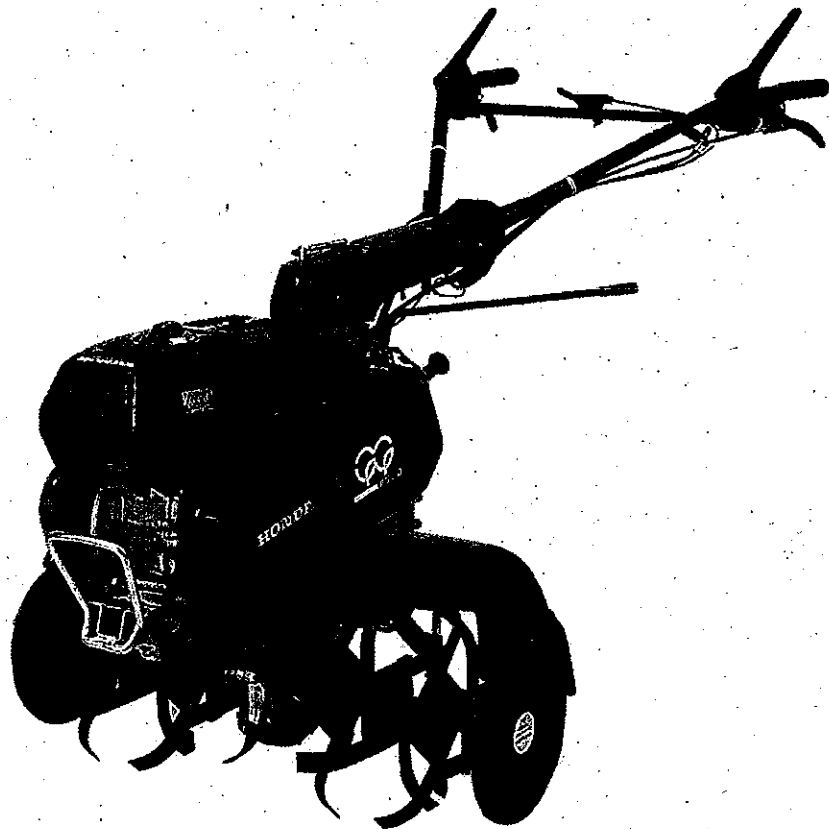
We identified a need at Trengwainton for a deeper depth of cultivation within the productive walled gardens. With very limited access, we had to bring in a pedestrian-operated machine – enter the Honda F720.

As we all know, rotavating any area continuously soon forms a pan within the soil structure, hence the need for the chosen machine to be easily adapted from cultivator to plough. The single furrow reversible plough is allowing a gradual breaking of the underground pan

formed after many years of rotavating and/or inactivity – we are now breaking ground below a spit deep.

We were impressed by the thought given to health and safety in the machine's design. The independent brakes are particularly good for ease of use and, after practice, changing implements gets quicker and easier. So far we have been very pleased with the results achieved by this versatile machine.

Cost: Honda F720, £1,531; rotavator attachment, £485; plough attachment, £323. ■



## COTSWOLD OUTDOOR CLOTHING TRIALS

Cotswold Outdoor, an outdoor clothing and equipment retailer, generously kitted out a few National Trust wardens to test some of their ranges. Here is their feedback on the field trials:

### **Jim Key, Park Forester, Ashridge**

Back before Christmas I was lucky enough to be selected (from an elite group I'm sure) to try out some outdoor clothing. Working as a Forester on the Ashridge estate I jumped at the chance to acquire any clothing which would help keep me dryer and warmer through the winter as even this far south things can get pretty nasty in the depths of winter.

I received a North Face waterproof coat and trousers, a Mountain Equipment fleece, Craghoppers trousers and Meindl walking boots. All of this equipment has coped admirably with the kind of work they probably weren't designed for although there were a few drawbacks.

#### **Meindl boots**

The boots are superb walking boots but they lack the steel toecap which would make them equally useful for a manual job.

#### **Other clothing**

The coat too was a little too bulky for comfortably chainsawing and the like, however, the fleece and waterproof trousers were a revelation as I didn't think they'd hold up to the demands placed on them. Not only did they hold up, they kept me warm and dry whilst doing it.

I must admit I haven't worn the other trousers much as they're a summer trouser and it's not that warm yet.

All in all I have to recommend the clothing I was given; it surprised me how well the clothing coped with working outside its designed environment.

### **Granville Nicholls, Area Warden, Basildon Park**

#### **Overall**

Cotswold Outdoor have a good camping shop, used by me on a regular basis. I've had the clothing since early November, with some 'to-ing and fro-ing' to get the right sizes, and am so far very pleased with the gear I am trying out – it makes a good change to be wearing smart clothes for work. I very much like the lightness for ease of working and the clothing is comfortable. I've been able to try them out in most weather, including prolonged rain, gales and freezing cold.

#### **Lowe Alpine Borah Jacket and waterproof trousers**

These keep out a day's rain and the wind doesn't get through. They also dry quickly afterwards. Zips and poppers work okay and you can zip in a fleece – probably needs to be Lowe Alpine though! Trousers fit over boots, but one small problem – waist fastener on trousers comes loose.

They come out well after washing too. Mine became filthy through painting and chainsawing. No internal condensation as yet, but I wonder if this might be a problem in summer! Jacket has good stowaway hood and Velcro fasteners.



Jim Key of Ashridge modelling his new apparel. © NT 2003

**Mountain Equipment fleece**

Comfortable, very lightweight, excellent and pretty windfast. Good in combination with jacket and with two T-shirts underneath; still warm in recent freezing weather. Slight disadvantage is no zips for pockets, and it is very easy to burn holes in the material.

**Craghoppers Trousers**

Again comfortable and very light, with many handy pockets – will wear more in the summer. Still prefer to wear moleskins, especially in the winter. Hope we will be issued with two pairs.

**Meindl Burma Boots**

Very comfortable, good leather, and I like the Gore-Tex lining. Good to have choice of ½ sizes. Are wider than a lot of other makes which is good for my feet. So far they have kept my feet dry; and have stood up to a lot of stomping.

All in all a good choice of equipment and for the most part, you get what you pay for.

**Doug England, New Forest Project Worker, Mottisfont Abbey**

The clothing supplied to me was a welcome addition to my winter work-wear this year. All the clothing supplied was lightweight and durable. The most useful items to me this winter were the Lowe Alpine jacket and over-trousers, being a hundred per cent waterproof and very comfortable to work in.

**Rosie Edmunds, Archaeologist/Warden, Avebury Estate**

I visited the South Cerney branch of Cotswold Outdoor to pick up my trial clothing. I came away with a pair of Zamberlan Trail Lite GTX (Gore-Tex lined) women's boots; a pair of Lowe Alpine waterproof trousers; a Lowe Alpine Borah waterproof jacket; a Mountain Equipment Ultrafleece Base Camp jacket; and a pair of Craghoppers Lady Kiwi trousers.

**Zamberlan boots**

I was really impressed with the service, which was friendly and helpful. The staff really knew what they were talking about. They actually measured my feet (both length and width) and checked that the boots fitted by testing them on different surfaces and slopes. My feet are quite narrow so the choice of styles was limited, but I was happy with the GTX trail boots. I usually wear TUF steel toecapped, GTX Forester work boots all year round. I don't think I have ever spent more than £40 on a pair of walking boots before so this was a whole new experience, and I have given up wearing my steel toecapped boots when they are not necessary. The Zamberlan boots have stayed waterproof and provide proper support when walking over rough terrain. I had not realised how much I had neglected my feet but this is the first winter for a long time that I have not had chilblains!

**Lowe Alpine trousers and jacket**

In a similar way, I have never invested in expensive waterproof clothing, mainly due to the nature of my work and my inability to keep clean. I usually get extremely muddy when carrying out archaeological excavations and I like clothing that can be hosed down easily. I have been wearing cheap rubber water-proofs from Countrywide Stores for the past year and have been quite happy with these. I was, however, particularly pleased with the Lowe Alpine waterproof trousers. They were both very warm, wind- and waterproof, and unlike cheap waterproofs, did not become damp on the inside from condensation. They fitted perfectly and I managed to wear them until eight months pregnant! I was not so keen on the Lowe Alpine Borah waterproof jacket. Although this kept the rain out, I didn't like the bright orange trim and felt that such an expensive coat was not really suited to hard practical work. I was scared of ripping it on barbed wire or getting it too muddy.

**Mountain Equipment fleece**

The Ultrafleece Base Camp jacket was very lightweight compared with my Polartec fleece from High Peak which I normally wear. I presume the Ultrafleece is designed to be as warm but lighter, but I was not convinced. What I liked was that it is shorter in length and not so bulky under a waterproof jacket. The annoying thing about it was the pockets which had no zips and things fell out of them.

**Craghoppers trousers**

The last item I tried were the Kiwi trousers for ladies. These were quite lightweight for winter clothing, and although they dried quickly when wet, I wore my waterproof trousers over the top to keep warm. I was not keen on the style of them as they had quite a high waistline. I am quite fussy about trousers and when digging, ie kneeling or bending, I prefer fabric with a bit of give in it.

On the whole I was impressed with the quality of the service at Cotswold Outdoor and with the quality of the clothing. I would definitely choose the walking boots and waterproof trousers again (if my clothing budget would allow), although perhaps not the Kiwi trousers or Borah jacket. I felt that some of the clothes were designed more for walkers and ramblers than for people carrying out dirty manual work.

**Contacting Cotswold Outdoor**

Cotswold Outdoor Ltd offer a huge range of clothing and equipment for walkers, workers and fresh air fiends. The company has nine stores in England and others at Betws-y-Coed, north Wales, and Glasgow. It also offers an online service from its website at [www.cotswold-outdoor.com](http://www.cotswold-outdoor.com) and a catalogue – email [catalogue@cotswold-outdoor.com](mailto:catalogue@cotswold-outdoor.com).

National Trust staff are offered a 15% discount on their purchases. ■

# BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

## Old House Care and Repair by Janet Collings

Reviewed by David Shelley, Deputy Head of Building, Queen Anne's Gate

This book focuses on the care and repair of old houses. For me, it presented its own review on the very first page:

If you have never been involved with looking after an old house, or have only experienced it from the perspective of mainstream, conventional, modern building methods, then this book will introduce ideas and challenge a number of commonly held assumptions. These ideas are not designed to make life difficult for you, they are common sense procedures rooted in centuries of experimentation and development by skilled craftsmen and women... This book introduces the old house owner not only to conservation philosophy but also to legislative matters such as planning, listed building consent and tax.

The book recognises the need for old buildings to be able to breathe and recommends the use of traditional materials as long-term solutions that are sympathetic to its original construction, that do not seal the various surfaces and allow for movement.

There are chapters on the legal responsibilities of owners for listed structures, professional assistance, possible sources of grant aid and the complications of VAT. It also covers maintenance and repair, alteration and extension, environmental conditions, wildlife and buildings, plus some of the reasons for decay.

### A good read

The book would not be one for the professionals working within the Conservation Directorate but it would be a good read for newly appointed property managers and other staff as an introduction to the conservation repair approach.

Regional building departments receive many enquiries, particularly from National Trust members, a high proportion of whom may have recently acquired an old house. This book could be recommended with confidence and would answer many of the questions raised. For those wishing to dig deeper into a particular area of concern the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and English Heritage guides are still valuable tools.

As mentioned, the book touches on the subject of alteration and extension. I am not sure every one of us or our own Architectural Panel would fully agree with some of the principles proposed, but such topics are the subject of ongoing discussion and debate.

At the end of the book there are a number of pages devoted to website addresses for amenity societies, government agencies and departments, and professional bodies among others – even bats are mentioned. Sadly there is no mention of the Trust.

### Reference

Collings, Janet, *Old House Care and Repair* (Donhead Publishing, 2002), £25.00, 208 pages, hardback, ISBN 1 873394 61 6. ■

## Annual Archaeological Review 2001–2002

Reviewed by Martin Hyde, Assistant Archaeologist, Cirencester

The tenth Annual Archaeological Review, recently issued, covers examples of the diverse and broad-ranging work of the National Trust's archaeologists over the past year.

There is the usual summary of regional projects, as well as articles that deal with some of the major issues currently faced by the archaeologists.

This year the focus is mainly on archaeology in gardens, including a look at the recent archaeological investigations and interpretation at Croft Castle and the environmental archaeology of the Elizabethan garden of Lyveden New Bield (featured on p54). There is also a review of the ongoing archaeological work at Croome Park and Stowe Landscape Garden in advance of their restoration projects. (The inspiration for the location of one of Stowe's monuments is the subject of an article on p61.)

The Review also includes an insight into oral history and the Trust's sound archive, with a look at the recordings of discussions with former asparagus farmers at Formby. Finally, recent development of the Trust's Sites and Monuments Record is reviewed in 'An evolving resource'.

Copies are available from the Archaeology Section at Cirencester, or see the Environment and Conservation web page on [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/environment](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/environment) for a PDF version. ■