

Reflections on the EGM and Thank You



Judy Riley and Bob Luther at the GHSS EGM © Vanessa Stephen

In response to members' suggestions, we held the EGM in a venue new to us, the Stirling Smith Museum and Art Gallery. We were very well catered for in every respect and the lecture theatre was just the right size for our meeting and afternoon lecture. What follows are my reflections on our meeting and some thoughts on our way forward.

It would be impossible to summarise the proceedings here, so I will just touch on points that were made more than once or that seemed to reflect a general concern. I will not go over the background again as I think this has been well covered.

As you know, our main business involved change: should GHSS Members and Committee join the GHSS Conservation Trust and form a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) thus becoming a single body, with charitable status in Scotland (Option 1)? Or should the GHSS Conservation Trust alone become a SCIO, while members and committee retained their separate identities, as the Scottish Group of the GHS (Option 2)?

The committee and trustees recommended Option 1 and we were, therefore, very gratified to receive an unequivocal vote of support: of the 74 votes cast (postal and in person), 64 were in favour of Option 1 and 7 in favour of Option 2 with 3 abstentions. (Of the 74 votes cast, 37 were postal, with 33 in favour of Option 1 and 4 in favour of Option 2).

This might suggest that our discussion before the vote was very one-sided but this was not the case. There was some very robust questioning from well-informed members. Naturally we were (and are) concerned that we chose the best way forward for a society whose reputation is highly valued internationally and one that is very dear to all of us in Scotland. But change invariably brings uncertainty and not all of the questions can be answered - yet.

And there were lots of questions, expressions of support and one lengthy pre-prepared statement.

Several members asked about the Garden History Society/Association of Garden Trusts merger. This has been agreed in principle but the terms are still being negotiated and a final vote will take place at the joint AGMs to be held on 31st July 2015 in Newcastle. The proposed name of the new merged entity is The Gardens Trust. It is not yet clear from what is published on the Transitional Committee's website

(<http://www.agt-ghstogether.org/index.html>)

what kind of membership will be offered to members in Scotland. We have no County Garden Trusts here and do not see ourselves as equivalent to the Welsh Country Garden Trust. We have always been an integral part of the GHS. (We are now in conversation with the GHS Transitional Committee Members to see how best to proceed).

Other members commented that they regarded the EGM vote as premature. Bob Luther, Chairman of the Trustees, explained that the current exposure of the GHSSCT trustees to unlimited liability was one reason for not delaying the transformation of the trust into a SCIO. It is hoped that the SCIO will come into existence early in 2015 in order to receive from Historic Scotland the funds allocated for this financial year for the Clyde and Avon Valley and Falkirk projects. This portion of the 3-year grant of funds could otherwise lapse.

We know that the GHS is facing financial difficulties necessitating cost cutting and that no support for our conservation work is likely in the future. Bob also stressed that the SCIO and the New GHS/AGT body would both be aiming for a close association beneficial to both bodies and their members.

One member had prepared a lengthy statement that accused the Committee and Trustees of misleading the members, together with divisive and alienating behaviour. Much of this was a description of what is, in effect, 'water under the bridge' and included several assertions whose factual accuracy was questioned by Bob Luther. The queries about the Trust's effectiveness as a fund raising body were partly explained by the fact that the Trust and Committee had been working hard on setting up the new SCIO and consulting with members and were hampered by the uncertainty of our identity. Once we know that we are all travelling together in the new SCIO, we hope fund



Sarah Barron and Alison Allighan © Vanessa Stephen

raising efforts will be rewarded. But make no mistake, fund raising for core conservation work is not easy in the present climate, on either side of the border.

A former GHSS chairman commented that the GHS in London had been urging Scotland to 'sort itself out' for years. There was no reference to Scotland in the latest information from the GHS/AGT working group and he could not see where we took our place in their new entity. In this post-referendum (possibly inter-referendum) period, a specifically Scottish identity was more crucial than ever.

Another member highlighted the authority and scholarship of the GHS and was concerned that by separating ourselves we would compromise this reputation. While we acknowledge that this new move will bring us greater financial and legal autonomy, in terms of our shared scholarship, the GHS and GHSS have expressed the desire to work closely together and continue to underpin each other. The new scholarly edition of *The Pleasaunce* (see page 5) was not intended to replace *The Journal* but to be in addition to it.

I think we all acknowledge that sound scholarship is fundamental to our position. This is the base from which we reach out. We want to be successful in conserving what we cherish, and also in helping communities learn about their designed landscape and garden heritage. We would like to maintain a Conservation Officer.

Whether we have yet found 'the best way to configure ourselves so as to fulfil our mission', time will tell. We have a new constitution which is flexible and which will enable us to evolve as a dynamic body, responding to the needs of our members and underline our commitment to conservation.

And now we have chosen a new name: Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage, which we think indicates clearly our area of interest. (The name was chosen after extensive consultation with the Trustees and former GHSS Officers). It will take time to get used to it and no doubt it will not please everyone. We wanted to include 'landscape' as much of our work includes the designed landscape. (It also avoids confusion with Scotland's Gardens). Heritage replaces history, which is about the past, whereas heritage relates the past to the present and the future.



John West and Sue Hewer © Vanessa Stephen

We are now in discussion with GHS about our future relationship. They have been waiting for the outcome of the EGM, so this conversation is in its early stages.

One last heartening piece of news is that the present GHSS committee has contributed £1,000 towards the cost of our new website! I hope you will agree this is a fantastic effort over and above all the hard work they have been doing on your behalf. I would like to take this opportunity to say 'Bravo' to them. But most of all, I would like to thank you for giving us your unequivocal support. I trust you will do the same for Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage.

Judy Riley, Chairman

A Tribute to our Former Chairman, Peter Burman



Peter Burman © Peter Burman

*'Not fare well,
But fare forward voyagers'. [TS Eliot]*

It was one of those serendipitous moments; one for which we had waited a long time. Our previous Chairman had nobly served an extra two years. Then a certain Dr. Peter Burman returned to the UK, from Berlin where he had been Professor of Cultural Heritage Management at the Brandenburg Technical University, Cottbus.

Basing himself in Edinburgh's New Town, Peter was working both sides of the Border with prestigious clients such as Lincoln Cathedral and St. Paul's Cathedral where he was Chairman of the Fabric committee for 20 years, and with 'Nicolas Boyes Stone Conservation' on heritage aspects of sculpture conservation. It wasn't long before we heard of other aspects of his work: previous Director of Conservation, National Trust for Scotland, 2002-2007; the Scottish Government's HEACS (Historic Environment Advisory Council); teacher at University of York, 1990-2002 ... There seemed to be some interesting overlaps with garden and designed landscape history that could enrich and enlarge our vision and approach. Indeed, this has been just one dimension that

Peter brought to us since taking on the mantle of Chair in 2012. He was soon strengthening our links with a range of like-minded organisations and creating fresh ones with others.

Coming to us from 'the outside' has meant that Peter has been able to take a more objective overview, bringing us a fresh vision of where and how we fit and what we can achieve in Scotland. Under his Chairmanship the first steps have were to merge and recreate GHSS and SCT into a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Institution.

Peter always threw himself enthusiastically into our work, driving new ideas and generating the same enthusiasm and commitment in us. His devotion to historic landscapes and gardens meant that he personally supported each GHSS project and event and ran his own inspiring study day at Hopetoun House.

He brought an increasingly strong sense of advocacy for Scotland's gardens and designed landscapes and initiated our pro-active involvement in one of Scotland's most crucial cases - the fight against quarrying the Bonnington designed landscape which forms part of the buffer zone of the World Heritage Site of the Falls of Clyde. He also laid out the guidelines and good practice for undertaking other conservation projects.

He oversaw the launch of *The Pleasaunce*, which he saw as a means not only of informing and educating but also of encouraging a greater cohesion of members. He led democratically, always having a listening ear and looking for consensus.

Peter kindled a real feeling of team spirit, togetherness and friendship in the group. He always had time for each person, offering encouraging, thoughtful and kind support. If we want a measure of both man and Chairman, we need look no further than his lecture at the 2013 AGM on the intangible – The Spirit of Place. He took us on an inward and outward journey through inspirational places, reminding us amidst our history and analysis, never to forget simply to pause, admire and enjoy.

We are delighted that Peter remains with us as an Advisor. We wish him well in his continuing work as a member of the Hopetoun House Preservation Trust and Archivist; Chairman of the Falkland Stewardship Trust, responsible for the House of Falkland, its designed landscape, stable courtyard, and their activities; Guardian of the SPAB; Board member of BEFS, and newly: member of the Historic Environment (Participation) Group, arising from the new Scottish legislation and policy, and member of the Fabric Committee of St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

Thank you, Peter, for your Chairmanship and all that you've shared with us.

The GHSS Committee and GHSS Conservation Trust

SPECIAL SCHOLARLY EDITION OF THE PLEASAUNCE

The GHSS has recently produced its first scholarly edition of *The Pleasaunce*. The 32-page issue entitled *Edzell Reconsidered* focuses exclusively on one of Scotland's best known and best preserved 17th century gardens, and contains three articles: Marilyn Brown: *The Walled Garden at Edzell and Sir David Lindsay*, Peter Davidson: *Edzell Garden and the Lindsay Libraries*, and Thomas Dekker: *Edzell Castle: Architectural Treatises in Late Sixteenth Century Scotland*. For your copy, please send a donation of £6.00/copy either by:

- Cheque payable to: GHS in Scotland Conservation Trust, posted to c/o Bob Luther, 34/2 Moray Place Edinburgh EH3 6BX, or
- BACS payment to sort code 30-25-81, a/c 00939709

New Lanark & Falls of Clyde Quarry Hearing



CEMEX's Hyndford Quarry, whose extension would destroy the landscape around the Falls of Clyde © Steven Russell

As reported in the April issue of *The Pleasaunce*, the controversial proposal to extend a quarry into the Buffer Zone of the New Lanark World Heritage Site at the Falls of Clyde was 'called in' by the Scottish Government in January 2014. Two Reporters were appointed to consider the application and to make a recommendation to Ministers, who will make the final decision.

For the purposes of the call-in, the principal objecting parties formed the New Lanark and Falls of Clyde Working Group (the Group). Its most active participants were Save Our Landscapes (SOL), the New Lanark Trust, GHSS and ICOMOS-UK. These were joined by other community-based organisations, namely the Royal Burgh of Lanark Community Council and the Lanark Civic Trust. John Campbell QC, who had advised SOL previously, was appointed to represent the Group.

The Reporters opted for a hearing, rather than an inquiry, as the forum in which to consider the application. Parties are required to submit detailed written statements of case. However, the hearings themselves take the form of a structured discussion led by the Reporters, in contrast to an inquiry where the advocates cross-examine witnesses.

The Group was able to draw on a wide range of expertise in the preparation of its case. Having prepared the most detailed objection in response to the initial application, I led the development of this document into the Group's statement of case. Graham U'ren, a New Lanark Trustee, is a former chief planning officer and led on planning policies. GHSS members Peter McGowan and Christopher Dingwall – co-authors of the SNH Falls of Clyde Designed Landscape Study - conducted a detailed assessment of the impact on the Bonnington Designed Landscape. Susan Denyer, Secretary of ICOMOS-UK, who has a world-wide reputation in heritage, provided evidence of the impact on the World Heritage Site. Professor Geoffrey Boulton OBE provided a written statement on minerals supplies in South Lanarkshire.

The Group's written case was by far the most detailed of any party, and supported by an array of renowned and independent experts. Cemex – supported by a solicitor and Advocate – relied on two consultants; the local authority – also supported by its solicitor and an Advocate – relied on its officers. Although not formally a party, Historic Scotland – which you will recall did not oppose the application – was present and made extensive use of legal advice.

The hearing took place near Lanark over two-and-a-half days in August. John Campbell, Graham U'ren and I led the line throughout the proceedings, with expert witnesses drafted in for particular sessions. Three key issues were discussed.

Economic case for the quarry.

Unless it can demonstrate 'overriding need' for minerals to serve nationally important markets, the applicant has no case. Curiously, the applicant made no effort to establish that any such need existed. Instead it relied on estimates that suggested that the landbank of permitted reserves had fallen below the ten years indicated in Scottish Planning Policy. The applicant suggested that this shortfall provided a trigger to justify the application. We argued that a deficiency of a few months' over a ten year period came nowhere close to representing 'overriding need'. Further, we were able to draw on Professor Boulton's conservative estimate that 500 million tonnes of sand and gravel are available elsewhere in South Lanarkshire to demonstrate the absurdity of mining a highly protected area for the sake of 3.1 million tonnes.

Impact on World Heritage Site

Although South Lanarkshire's current policies make no reference to the 'Outstanding Universal Value' (OUV) of the New Lanark World Heritage Site (WHS), the impact was the subject of intense debate. As well as the statements of OUV and the WHS management plan, we were able to point to Historic Scotland's own nomination document that stated that, 'the designed and natural landscape forms the setting and ambience of New Lanark and is intimately bound up with the value of the [world heritage] site,' and the explicit assurances given to UNESCO that the area would be protected from quarrying. The applicant argued that the area did not necessarily represent the setting of the World Heritage Site – a proposition calmly dismissed by Susan Denyer, and undermined by UNESCO's intervention a few weeks previously in which it expressed concern about the impact of the quarry on OUV and described the Buffer Zone providing 'an essential setting' for the WHS.

Impact on Designed Landscape (DL)

The Applicant's case relied on exaggerating the degraded aspects of the DL, and presenting the beneficial impacts of its 'restoration' proposals in a similarly exaggerated manner. The evidence of McGowan and Dingwall flatly countered these assertions. 'What gives the Fall of Clyde and Bonnington special value is the dominance of the natural landscape in the design, whether it is the subtly modified waterfalls and the gorge or the fluvio-glacial landforms of Bonnington parkland.' Extraction would therefore damage its integrity irrevocably. SOL was able to demonstrate the widespread community support – and available funding – for its proposals to restore features of the designed landscape and improve public access. The applicant's attempts at community consultation were, to say the least, minimal.

A decision is expected in January or February.

Professor Mark Stephens is Chair of Save Our Landscapes and leads the Group. He is happy to email readers a copy of the Group's statement of case on request (markstephens64@aol.com)

Events in Scotland

Joint lecture with Friends of Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh 19 March 2015

Deborah Reid

Petticoats and Plants: Scotland's Gardening Women, 1800 – 1930

The Lecture Theatre, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5LR
7.30 pm Tickets on the door £5.00, members £6.00 non-members

Lecture to follow Annual General Meeting 16 May 2015

Bill Brogden

Stephen Switzer: 300 years - the Scottish connection

Tickets £8.00, students £5.00, venue and time to be confirmed

Friday Evening 5 June 2015

Garden Party Fund Raiser

Connie and John Byrom's Garden of the Nine Muses

Tickets Members only price to be confirmed

Saturday 20 June 2015 visit to

Tynninghame

Garden Visit and Afternoon Tea

Details to be confirmed

Saturday 5 September 2015 visit to

Dumfries House

With the Arboricultural Association

Details to be confirmed

Joint lecture with the Architectural Heritage Society Scotland 2 November 2015

Professor Brian Evans

On the Subject of the Picturesque and Sublime Landscape

St Andrew's & St George's West Church, 13 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PA

Details to be confirmed

For details of all our events please go to <http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org/events/>

Contact us

The Garden History Society in Scotland

Newsletter editor: c/o Mark Gibson, Honorary Secretary, email: markiivm@gmail.com

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