

借景



Shakkei

VOLUME 26 NUMBER 3  
WINTER 2019 - 2020



The journal of The Japanese Garden Society



# 'Shakkei'

Literally, 'borrowed landscape' – a design feature in many Japanese gardens. Indirectly, the 'borrowings' which the Japanese Garden Society seeks to promote.

*Shakkei* is the Journal of the Japanese Garden Society and is distributed free to members.

The **Japanese Garden Society** exists to bring together all those who are interested in Japanese-style gardens, whether as visitors seeking to add understanding to their viewing, as owners or curators seeking advice on their conservation, or as designers and builders wishing to work in a fully-informed and professional way. Therefore, the Society caters for amateurs and professionals, garden lovers and garden constructors – thus our membership ranges from private individuals to construction and design consortia – in fact everybody sharing a common interest in a complex and far-reaching design philosophy.

What was once an indulgent interest in exotica for wealthy patrons has today become a recognised and worldwide aspect of garden design, based on increasingly deeper understanding. It is the role of the **Japanese Garden Society** to promote this movement, particularly in Britain, but generally elsewhere worldwide not served by a similar national society, although membership is open to anyone.

The **aim** of the **Japanese Garden Society** is:

To advance the education of the public in the conservation, cultivation and propagation of Japanese Gardens through study, meetings, publications, lectures, shows, displays and visits to gardens.

Membership is open to all who share this aim.

Applications for membership should be sent to The Membership Secretary, whose address details appear on the inside back cover, or download a form from our web site [www.jgs.org.uk](http://www.jgs.org.uk)

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## Copy for Shakkei

*Shakkei* exists so that JGS members can communicate mutually.

Articles for *Shakkei* are welcomed, long or short, substantive or lighthearted.

**Please send all content to the Editor. Contact details are listed on the inside back cover.**

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# Contents

Photography: Front Cover - The Natural Garden at Portland Japanese Garden. (Kate White) Smaller image is The new teahouse built on the elevated sloping ground at Lowther Castle. (Trevor Nash) Right - A unique assemblage to welcome the New Year. (Bill Tingey).

- 1 Contents & Editorial
- 2 - 5 Beyond the Japanese Garden: Winter by Bill Tingey
- 6 - 10 An update on the Japanese features within the grounds of Lowther Castle by Trevor Nash
- 11 - 13 JGS AGM: Saturday 12th October at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate, North Yorkshire.
- 13 JGS Bursaries in 2020 to improve Japanese garden skills.
- 14 - 15 A Garden's Power to Heal by Kristin Faurest
- 16 Portland Japanese Garden Professional Training Seminars - 2020
- 17 - 25 Ghosts and Bones of Japanese gardens in NW England by Graham Hardman
- 26 - 29 Waza to Kokoro at Portland Japanese Garden by Kate White
- 29 wisteria by Paul Griffiths
- 30 - 31 Book Review - Teachings of the Garden: Conversations in Japan by Carola Platzek (editor)
- 32 - 36 Advertisements

## NOTE

The Editor is keen to reduce his involvement in the production of Shakkei, which he has been editing since 2006. If you have relevant skills and experience and you are able to regularly contribute to the production of Shakkei please contact [chair@jgs.org.uk](mailto:chair@jgs.org.uk) for further details.

# Editorial

This edition of Shakkei opens with the first of four articles by Bill Tingey looking at the Seasons within and outwith Japanese gardens. Here, we read of Winter.

We then learn from Trevor Nash about the recent refurbishment of Japanese-style garden features at Lowther Castle.

On the 12th October, in Harrogate, was held the JGS AGM. Here we have the Minutes, *et cetera*, plus details of how one may apply for JGS Bursaries this year.

Kristin Faurest, Director of the International Japanese Garden Training Center of Portland Japanese Garden, then describes their involvement in the first Japanese-inspired prison garden in the United States (at the Oregon State Penitentiary, Salem). This article is then followed by details of the Japanese garden Training Sessions being held this year.

The influence of Japanese gardens in the UK is well known and we are then treated to an article by Graham Hardman on many of these in NW England. At the end of this article, Graham emphasises the need for JGS to gather data about the history of Japanese-style gardens within the UK and asks for volunteers to further this important programme.

Last year, Kate White used a JGS Bursary (together with RHS funding) to enable her to attend a week long educational programme in Portland Garden, Oregon, USA - and here we read her report of her experience.

We are then treated to a delightful haibun on wisteria by Paul Griffiths.

Lastly, is a review of a very interesting and intriguing book by Carola Platzek.

As always, read, enjoy, then WRITE!

借景

# Beyond the Japanese Garden: Winter by Bill Tingey

*A dusting of snow highlights the elements and features of a Japanese garden. Raked gravel can resemble orderly rows of rippling waves breaking on a shallow beach. Clumps of moss may peek out from beneath a brilliant white dusting of snow until it all melts away to expose the whole garden.*

*In the mountains some drifts are four or five metres deep, and do not melt for several months. In the lowlands, however, snow is often followed by bright sunshine. This triggers a hasty melt and bit by bit a garden is once again revealed, but now sparkling from the melt.*

## **In Winter**

Deep in the mountains of central Japan it is not unusual for one metre of snow to fall overnight. The sky darkens

mid-afternoon heralding rumbles of thunder, the harbinger of heavy falls of snow. The flakes are large and fluffy and called *botan-yuki*, literally "peony snow".

Up among the peaks not far from Nagano modern dwellings and ancient folk houses can be found standing close to each other. If the reed thatch has been well maintained snow will slip and gently slide from the thatched roof of a folk house with a muffled thud as snow hits the ground. Contemporary houses may suddenly collapse, however, under the weight of snow settling on their shallowly pitched roofs. Before this happens, the snow must be removed. Nothing else for it. Get up on the roof and sweep it off.

In some communities hot volcanic spring water is allowed to dribble from a series of regularly placed

cat's-eye-like open faucets positioned down the middle of a main thoroughfare, thus alleviating the need for manual clearing of snow.

Necessity is said to be the mother of invention. This is certainly true of the way people living in the mountains of Japan learnt how to deal with the adversities of climate. Gassho houses are a prime example.

Located perhaps an hour by car from Hida Takayama, Shirakawa-go is a well-known community of UNESCO World Heritage registered Gassho houses. Their triangular form is said to have been named *gassho* because of the way it resembled how people put their fingers and hands together in prayer. To build a structure that would prevent heavy snow loading came first. It was a solution of creative intelligence.



Deep in the mountains snow is beautiful and dangerous.



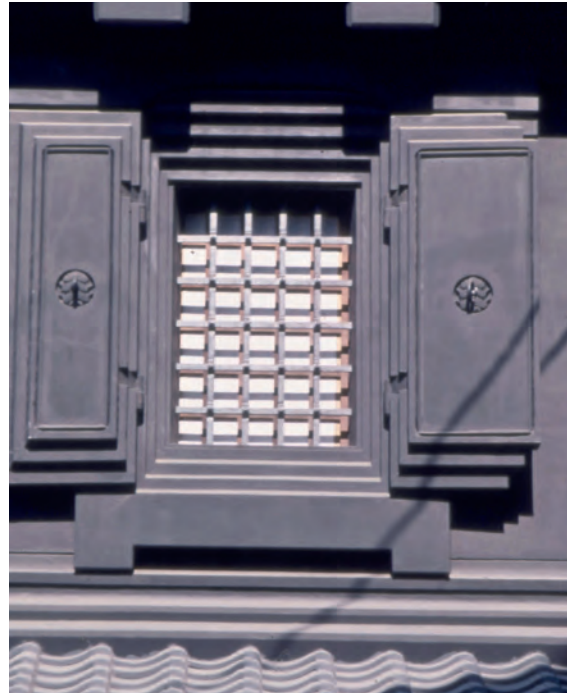
Re-thatching is done by the community *en masse*.



The walls and window openings resist the ravages of fire.

These steeply gabled roofs greatly reduced snow loading and created multi-floored attics that were often turned over to sericulture. This predator-free environment facilitated feeding silkworms mulberry leaves up under the rafters where the warmth from an open fire below kept the silkworms cosy and helped to keep wood-boring insects out of the timbers.

It is difficult for us today to comprehend just how isolated a village like Shirakawa-go was, especially when it could only be reached by narrow, well-trodden mountain paths.



The interlocking "male" and "female" shutters of a merchant's store can be closed and sealed promptly either with mud or miso paste should a wind-driven fire be approaching.

The severe climatic conditions gave rise to a unique form of folk architecture and provided accommodation for large extended families. A social system evolved from adversity in this mountain enclave and every family member was part of a focused workforce.

Stringent social conditions meant that only the eldest son of a family was allowed to become independent and build his own home. Any younger sons were forced to visit their "wives" in their father's home, with the fruits of the union being raised by the woman and her family.

While Gassho houses protected human and silkworm residents their qualities were not unique. During the Edo period (1600~1868) it was merchants and pawnbrokers who sought protection for their assets in quite a different way, using plastered walls on a structural framework of wood.

Their enemy was fire. There were so many fires in Edo - now Tokyo - that such conflagrations were called the flowers of Edo. National Fire Department records bear witness to the frequency of such fires that often occurred during the winter months, when humidity was low and strong north westerly winds fanned the flames. Historically and even in the 1970s fire-wardens roamed the streets at dusk striking two hardwood blocks together to urge the populous to be vigilant.

A shop with an attendant storehouse might both have been protected with plaster. Some storehouses were painted white but it became popular for shops and storehouses to be finished with a black or charcoal coloured finish, which some people believe was a sign of having survived a fire. (See such historic shops and storehouses in Kawagoe, Saitama Prefecture.)



In winter the lotus pond is murky and hides behind a screen of restless pines.

## Winter.....continued



A unique assemblage to welcome the New Year.

After World War II the people of Tokyo were short of many things including a fuel for cooking and warmth. It was 1947. Peat bogs on the outskirts of the capital provided some answers. While digging out peat blocks a workman stumbled across something most unexpected: a very ancient dugout canoe. Amongst the assemblage were some oars and some seeds. Just three, found by a middle school student working under the supervision of Dr. Ichiro Oga. He managed to get just one of the seeds to germinate; what became known as the Oga Lotus. The seeds had lain dormant for some two thousand years. But now lotus plants from this one seed can be found all over Japan as well as overseas.

Lotus flowers, leaves and stalks wither and die back in winter behind a screen of trained pines at Yakushi-ike Park on the edge of Greater Tokyo. They rise from turbid waters and bloom in summer with flowers so perfect. Such circumstances throw light on the path of enlightenment, which is so precious to the Buddhist faith.

Although Christmas is celebrated by some in Japan, it is the New Year which is special. Hundreds of thousands of people return to their homeland to enjoy seasonal foods, to bond with family members, and to visit temples and shrines in the hope that their prayers for peace, health and success in the coming year will be granted.



Spirits of wealth in plastic.



This locally made kimono evokes the many guises of winter in Kyoto, Japan's ancient capital.

Placed either side of an entrance, each component of this distinctive New Year decoration has meaning. Bamboo for consistency and virtue. The hardy pine denoting long life; a smooth bark pine representing female and a rough bark one for male. And a sprig of blossom for good measure.

Although the Pacific seaboard is often blessed with fine weather at the New Year, grey skies and even a light frost does not spoil nature's party atmosphere. The blossom of *Prunus* trees is a sign that spring is really on its way. Winter is ready to slip away as spring beckons.

太郎を眠らせ、太郎の屋根に雪ふりつむ。  
次郎を眠らせ、次郎の屋根に雪ふりつむ

三好達治 (1900-1964)

SNOW

Making Taro fall asleep, it is snowing thick and fast  
on his roof.

Making Jiro fall asleep, it is snowing thick and fast  
on his roof.

Tatsuji Miyoshi

#### Notes

Poem by Tatsuji Miyoshi - This is a well know poem which is used in the Primary School curriculum. It is simple and yet full of meaning, very much in the way a haiku works.

It may refer to the eldest son and a sibling but one might also imagine that the named individuals could be dogs in their kennels!

Photographs: Bill Tingey

Research: Kaori Yamaki



White Prunus aptly named Touji, the Winter Solstice.



A glorious pink Prunus, Yae-kanko.



A "double" variety which flowers early enough to be used in New Year decorations. Ground frost completes the picture.

# An update on the Japanese features within the grounds of Lowther Castle by Trevor Nash

In the autumn 2014 edition of *Shakkei*, Graham Hardman wrote a short summary of the history of the Japanese Garden within the grounds of Lowther Castle which is situated in the north-eastern corner of the Lake District.<sup>1</sup> The article contains two early photographs from around 1910 which feature an array of artefacts, lanterns and plants - many of the latter growing in pots and bowls. Paths follow the edges of the water features with their islands and bridges eventually leading to shrines or gateways. (Figure 1). Note the building on the extreme left edge of the photograph which could be a teahouse or shrine.

The third, more recent, photograph, was taken about 2014 after a team of volunteers and helpers had cleared away most of the surface vegetation from the relevant sections exposing once again the footpaths but not disturbing the moss covered islands within the water basin features. (Figure 2) There was no evidence on this photograph of any building such as Pavilion or Tea House.



Figure 1: Japanese Garden about 1910 showing shrine or tea house and a curved wooden bridge (Martin Ogle).

In the summer of 2019, a friend wrote to me suggesting I should visit the gardens<sup>2</sup> as a new Teahouse /Pavilion was about to be completed and would be open in 2020 for visitors who would be able to enjoy the views eastwards across the newly developing rose gardens to the lawns and woodlands beyond. I understood that a Japanese teahouse had once existed in the garden but had been removed and sold in 1947 when virtually all of Lowther Castle and its contents plus features from the garden were put to auction. Consequently, the construction of a new teahouse was a good reason to visit Lowther Castle and discover where the location might be and if some of the gardens might be reborn.

The old stable yard is now the service area with a shop, café and reception. Visitors now pass from reception into the ruins of Lowther Castle emerging by the recently created Parterre gardens. (Figure 3) To visit the areas of interest, turn westwards down the steep flight of steps and follow the path between the Countess garden and the Countess Summerhouse, cross over the yew walk



Figure 2: The Japanese Garden about 2014/15 after clearance (Martin Ogle).

and arrive at the newly planted orchard. Here, turn southwards along the track which passes alongside both the Rock and Japanese gardens with minor footpaths leading into both areas.

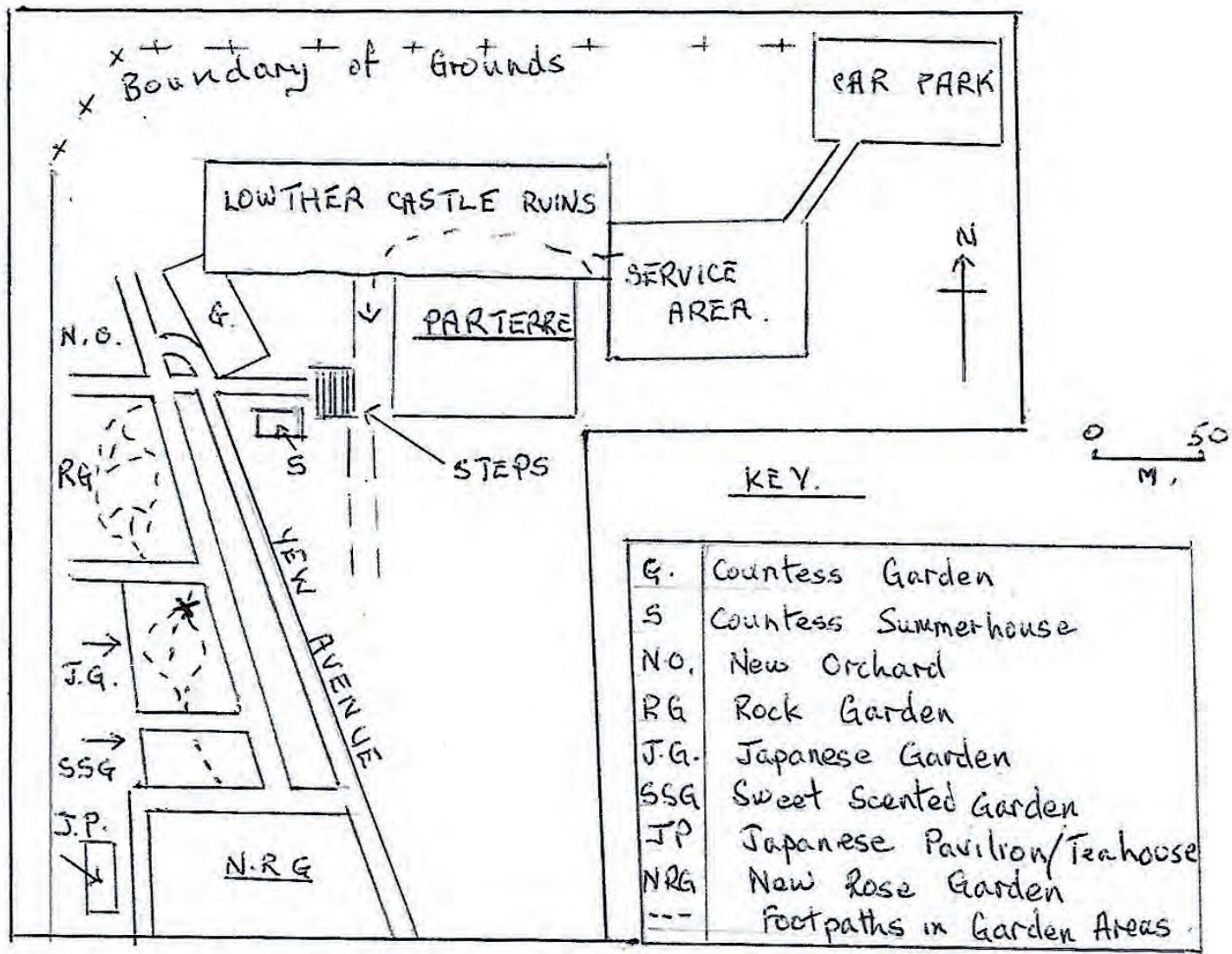
I wished to see the new teahouse first and was very surprised to discover it was NOT in the Japanese garden but had been built some 200 metres away (see map) at the base of a ridge near the western edge of the gardens. (Figure 4) I could appreciate why it had not been built in the Japanese Garden surrounded by trees and with few attractions while its new location overlooks the newly developing rose garden plus the garden lawns and woodlands beyond. The ridge is part of a low limestone escarpment which marks the western edge of the gardens and so the teahouse is in an elevated position with good views but also the balcony faces east and south so has direct sun through till early evening.

From the adjacent track / rough road, irregular stone steps lead onto a short wooden staircase with handrails



Figure 3: The new Parterre garden outside Lowther Castle ruins.





SIMPLIFIED MAP TO SHOW LOCATION OF RELEVANT ARTICLE FEATURES.

# Lowther Castle.....continued

through to the full length balcony. The teahouse should be able to seat 20 or more people in comfort - more if the balcony doors are open.

The teahouse has an irregular roof covered in cedar shingles and appears to rise up at the four corners so that rain is directed towards the two gutters which run forwards to feed two superb copper water chains. (Figure 5) These chains are cemented into two large round boulders with the idea that roof water will be spread out over the sloping bank. I was told by a gardener that this gentle bank will eventually be planted with Japanese plants. However, I wondered if maybe two or three large rocks might divide it into perhaps three areas where beds of topiary and pruned azaleas could be grown as commonly used overseas in front of pavilions and teahouses. Being on a base of limestone soils, any plants would have to be carefully chosen.

At present, the teahouse looks rather spartan but will presumably have suitable seating and furniture when opened for meetings next year... Perhaps worth noting



Figure 4: The new teahouse built on the elevated sloping ground.

that a short walk away southwards is a café and toilets open during the main tourist season.

Workmen were busy with the teahouse so I returned to study the Rock and Japanese gardens passing through the Scented garden on my route. Examining the two main gardens, it rapidly becomes apparent that there is great similarity in both their rock type and structure and also the stream which originated in the centre of the new rose garden fed the water features in the



Figure 5: Cedar shingle roof and copper water chains cemented into boulders.

Japanese garden but flowed onwards through the Rock garden suggesting they were once one unit.

Where the vegetation was cleared in 2014, it is possible to see the outline of the underlying rock structures despite them being under a layer of moss often 10cm deep. (Figure 6) There is little doubt that most of it is limestone - with a typical clint and gryke structure as found on the weathered pavements. The surrounding landscape belongs to the Carboniferous era and

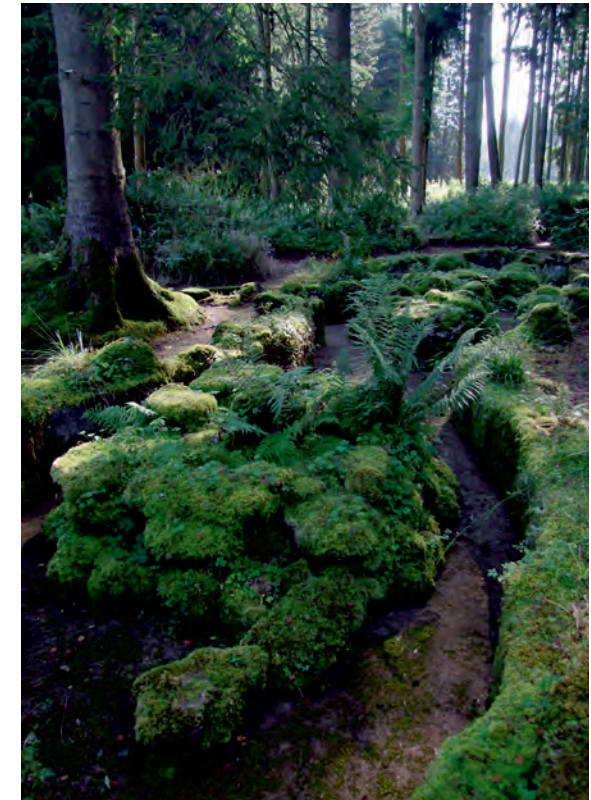


Figure 6: Rock structure beneath a layer of thick moss.

outcrops of limestone are common in the vicinity. As mentioned, the western edge of the garden only some 50 metres away is a low limestone escarpment and with the substantial rainfall would have developed such features. So, it would have been easy for the estate to lift large areas and move them the short distance and create their own Rock garden. (Such activity was common in the 19th century but has been strictly prohibited for about 40 years). Thus the Lowther Estate created a large Rock garden during the latter half of the 19th century and it was described as a 'pretty Alpine Garden' in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* in 1893. It was also large enough and considered sufficiently important to

feature on the Ordnance Survey map of 1897. So, at its peak, the Rock garden had a stream with waterfalls, a bridge, summerhouse and rocky seats with regular visits from the local gentry.

During the second half of the 19th Century, it became common for wealthy members of the United Kingdom to tour Europe or overseas returning with paintings, sculptures, vases and rare plants. It is thus not surprising that Lord Lonsdale, who owned the Lowther Estate, should decide to take his wife on a world tour in 1902. At the time, the Estate owned coalfields along the Cumbrian coast with coal being exported to Ireland and also France providing a ready income.

The voyage took the Lonsdales around Eastern Asia especially Formosa (Taiwan), the coast of China, present day Korea and Japan. Steamship journeys made regular stops for water and coal as well as trading goods so it was inevitable that Lord Lonsdale would visit Chinese, Korean and Japanese gardens. There, he would see the use of religious shrines, rocks, streams, waterfalls, bridges, artefacts, lanterns, pavilions and summerhouses plus the wide variety of conifers, plants and bonsai in the construction of gardens. It appears certain that artefacts and plants would be bought and form deck cargo allowing plants to be watered and pruned over the next few months on the return voyage,



Figure 7: Japanese Garden about 1910 showing curved stone bridge, potted plants and lanterns (Martin Ogle).



Figure 8: Former side stream entry with flat stone bridge.

## Lowther Castle.....continued

Once back at Lowther Castle, the southern third of the Rock garden was transformed into a Japanese-style garden but without the touch of a Japanese landscape expert. The result can be seen in Figures 1 and 7 with as many plants, pots, bowls, lanterns, and other features as possible packed into the available space. The Japanese garden probably reached its zenith about 1910 to 1914 when friends of Lord and Lady Lonsdale were frequent visitors. To create waterfalls and cascades it was necessary to extend lead piping into specially built cairns and such side streams were crossed with stepping stones or small flat bridges. (Figure 8) The main water features constantly lost water as this was

before the use of plastic while flattened lead and cement were never watertight for long. So, the gardens were very costly to build and maintain.

Lord Lonsdale vastly overspent and the outbreak of war in 1914 was disastrous as many of the coalfields lost their workforce to the Army, the collieries ceased production as export of coal overseas halted and the income to the estate was greatly reduced. The interwar depression followed by the Second World War prevented the estate from recovering and a workforce of 40 gardeners had now become just three. It was thus inevitable that, by 1947, the estate was no longer viable so the sale of virtually everything of value continued

for 17 days and all the Japanese features disappeared. Some ash and spruce trees were planted among the rocks and have reached maturity and are being felled with the hope that they might be replaced with Japanese-style plants or trees.

During my visit I sat in the garden while the sun was setting on an autumnal day and contemplated what might be done on a limited budget. I thought it might be possible to have an entry gate with a cedar shingle roof - possibly with a bamboo handrail leading from the track. (Figure 9)<sup>3</sup> Along the eastern edge of the garden by the track maybe a row of Japanese flowering cherry trees which might be used for hanami and spring colour. Along the western edge of the garden which is in more shade, possibly a row of Katsura trees to provide autumnal colour and the burnt sugar aroma at sunset.

The Japanese garden will never return but a few reminders may be possible.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Japanese Garden at Lowther Castle, Cumbria by Graham Hardman, *Shakkei* 21-2 (Autumn 2014) pp. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> Current information on Lowther Castle (opening times, *et cetera*) may be found at <https://www.lowthercastle.org/>

<sup>3</sup> An article "Creating the Emperor's Garden" at Eastby, written by Trevor Nash, appeared in *Shakkei* 18-3 pp 10-14.



Figure 9: Stepping stone path with low bamboo hand-rail leading to Japanese-style gate at the entrance to the Emperor's Garden. at Eastby.

# JGS AGM: Saturday 12th October at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate, North Yorkshire.

## Minutes of the 26th Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 12th October 2019 at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate, HG1 2RZ.

The meeting was opened at 10.30 a.m. The following Trustees were in attendance: Sarah Moore (Treasurer) Robert Ketchell (Acting Chair), Graham Hardman, Ann Dobson and Linda Barber.

### 1. Apologies

Prior to the meeting apologies were received from Graham Bowyer (Trustee) and Committee Member Ioan Davies. Apologies were also received from twelve members (Full list available)

One member at the meeting had not received the notice of the meeting sent out 3 weeks beforehand. The distribution list was checked after the meeting and the member had been included in the circulation list.

### 2. Minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes of the 25th AGM had been published in Shakkei Volume 25, Number 2 (Autumn 2018). Further copies were made available at the meeting. There being no issues or matters arising acceptance of the minutes as a true record was proposed by Diane Crawford and seconded by Marion Reeve. There were no objections.

A copy of the minutes was later signed and dated by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the 25th AGM.

### 3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reviewed his report, previously circulated. He confirmed that fresh faces had come forward but volunteers were always needed to maintain the viability of the JGS. There were no questions.

That the Report be adopted was proposed by Alison Blake, seconded by Tom Peters and accepted with no objections by the meeting.

### 4. Treasurer's Report

Copies of the Accounts for 2018/2019 (incorporating 2017/2018 accounts for comparison) had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting along with the full text of the Treasurer's written report. It was noted that the level of reserves was down on last year due to an increased level of activity regarding the charity's aims. The two main areas being the creation of the Gardeners' Network and a restoration programme at the Botanic Garden of Wales.

The treasurer asked for questions from the floor; there were three:

It was queried why the advertising revenue was zero for the year. The Treasurer explained that the committee were aware of this and that this area was being looked at and acted upon to ensure all due revenues were received.

Secondly, the expenditure for Shakkei was much higher than in the previous year. The treasurer reported that approximately £3,000 was paid out although it related to an issue from the 2018 period.

There was also an extra cost of producing a special 25th anniversary edition in 2019.

Thirdly, the present number of the membership. The membership secretary confirmed that this stood at 698, a slight increase on this time last year.

The report thanked Colin Ellis for acting as Independent Examiner of the accounts.

That the Report and Accounts be adopted was proposed by Graham Hardman and seconded by Marion Reeve and accepted with no further queries.

### 5. Appointment of Committee members and Trustees.

Two committee members stood down during the year: Roger Harris and Gerald Walker and Ann Dobson was retiring as trustee.

Those seeking election for 2019/2020 were as below:

Trustees: - Diane Crawford (Chair), Adrienne McStocker (Honorary Secretary) Sarah Moore (Treasurer), Linda Barber, Graham Bowyer, Graham Hardman and Robert Ketchell.

Committee Members: - Ann Dobson (Membership Secretary), Andy Bolton, Ioan Davies, Moyra Hughson and Nick Tovey.

Photographs and job titles of the Trustees and Committee Members were displayed, by way of introduction, on the boards at the back of the hall. There was a request from the floor that they should also stand and introduce themselves prior to voting. This was duly done.

A block resolution was proposed to elect / re-elect the Trustees and Committee Members. This was proposed by Hywel Edwards, seconded by Marion Reeve and was accepted with no objections.

### 6. Any Other Business

No questions had been received prior to the meeting. Several points were raised and questions asked from the floor:

It was pointed out that the Society Website was out of date and had missing information regarding national meeting and regional activities that might engage outside interest. The outgoing Chairman reported that currently there was a team looking into the website and associated IT applications and reports were awaited.

# AGM.....continued

When asked if there was a JGS Forum it was explained that it was possible to ask questions via Shakkei and Facebook, but that this came under the remit of the website review above. However, the Chairman asked if any member present would be prepared to run and oversee a forum. There were no volunteers.

Heidi Potter of the Japan Society informed the meeting that under the Cherry Tree Planting Project there were trees available for schools and if any members were interested in details they should speak to her after the meeting.

Jill Raggett of Writtle College asked if members present would complete a questionnaire on English style Japanese gardens in support of a Kyoto University PHD student. Members were more than helpful in completing the forms.

Diane Crawford, the new Chair, thanked Robert Ketchell with words and gave him a gift on behalf of the Society for acting as chair during the time since Anthony Austin's death. She then gave a brief introductory talk explaining that she is honoured to take on the role and outlined her initial plans: to visit all regional groups to learn what was happening on the ground and to reach and educate as many people as possible.

The meeting closed at 11.20.

Ann Dobson  
Membership Secretary

## Chairman's Report for 2019

This will be my final Chair's report, as I have taken the step of deciding to step down from my role as Chairman. I informed the National Committee earlier this year that I intended to step down from the

beginning of August. I took on the role after Anthony Austin's passing with the intention that it would be a temporary situation until someone else was willing and able to step into the role.

I am very happy to report that Diane Crawford, currently SW Chair, has offered to take on the role of Chair. My feeling is that Diane will make a more than capable Chair to lead the Society forward. It is an indication of fresh faces coming forwards with fresh ways of thinking and seeing. In that light it feels like a very positive indication of the viability and strength of the JGS. There are challenges, there are always challenges, to be met and I have every confidence that the JGS will continue to develop into the future and remain a vital and active society. I would ask all JGS members to support Diane and support her adoption as the next Chair of the JGS.

Ann Dobson who has been a stalwart of the national committee for many years is also stepping down from her role as Hon. Sec. Ann is an example of the extraordinary people that the JGS is blessed with. People sharing a passion and interest, bringing their energy into a collective whole to make something work, and work well. I would like to offer Ann a huge vote of thanks for the tireless work she has put into the JGS. Adrienne McStocker has come forward to take on some of Ann's role.

It reminds me that above all the JGS has always been a creative force, sustained and developed by the energy of the members of the society. Recognising the society as a creative force that lives and grows feels like a privilege, and I shall continue to work within the JGS to foster and develop our shared vision and aims. The JGS is both a provider of a service, but also a matrix by which individual members can take an active part in

developing and fostering new ideas. In this light I feel the JGS will sustain itself as a living organism.

With many thanks.  
Robert Ketchell  
September 2019

## Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

I am pleased to present the accounts for the Japanese Garden Society to 31 March 2019.

Membership subscription income was slightly below the income for 2018. Advertising income needs to be a priority area for the forthcoming year to ensure that we are maximizing the advertising opportunities for Shakkei. Donation income was significantly lower than in 2018, as we received large donations in the previous year to support the 2-day conference in Cambridge. The primary donation in the current year was for £1,500 donated to support the set-up of the Garden Network, which has been included in the income for that project.

The National Committee has been mindful of the need to use the financial resources of the society towards the charity's aims i.e. to provide education to the public on Japanese gardens and culture, provide events for members and promote the activities of the society to like-minded organisations. The accounts for 2019 reflect an increased level of activity and associated cost in all of these areas, including:

- Launch of the garden network with a number of meetings organized bringing together professional gardeners across the UK with an interest in Japanese gardens
- Work on a garden restoration project in partnership with National Botanic Garden of Wales

# JGS Bursaries in 2020 to improve Japanese garden skills

Other items to note:

- As the accounts are prepared on a cash rather than accrual basis, they reflect only costs, which have been invoiced or expended in the relevant year. The 2019 accounts reflect the production cost of 5 issues of Shakkei whereas the 2018 accounts reflect the cost of 4 issues. An additional cost of approximately £3,000 has therefore been included in the 2019 accounts although it relates to the 2018 period.
- The society awarded 2 bursaries during 2019 under its bursary scheme, totaling £1,500
- Work has been started to improve the society's website and social media feeds to ensure that we are presenting an attractive outward-facing online presence for the public as well as for members. The initial costs of this work are included in computer expenses

The society's reserves reduced from £53,354 to £44,450, as a result of expenses exceeding income by £8,904. The society's finances remain sound and reserves are adequate to support our charity for the foreseeable future.

I would like to thank Colin Ellis for acting as independent examiner of the accounts.

Sarah Moore  
Honorary Treasurer  
September 2019

In pursuit of our charitable aims the Japanese Garden Society is pleased to announce the availability during 2020 of a limited number of educational bursaries. The intention is to assist successful applicants to acquire or enhance their Japanese garden related skills. It is aimed at UK landscapers / gardeners and those on a gardening-related course of study. The bursaries may be used, for example, to contribute to travel or course fee costs and must assist in acquiring new or additional skills in Japanese garden design, and / or construction, and / or maintenance.

## Background and Purpose

There has long been a pressing need for greater expertise among the UK gardening community in the care and maintenance of Japanese gardens, especially those open to the public. This is partly due to a lack of suitable training, leading to a skills shortage among existing gardening staff, and the increasingly important body of volunteers who help maintain gardens. There is also a need to nurture the successor generation of Japanese garden experts.

The bursaries are targeted towards improving knowledge, especially amongst the younger generation, and raising the level of expertise needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of Japanese gardens in the UK

## Amount of Bursary

Bursaries are in the form of a grant of up to £1000 designed to assist towards meeting part of the cost of attending an educational programme.

## Eligibility

Bursaries are intended for UK residents who are either:

- working in or associated with a Japanese garden in the UK;
- following a gardening-related course of study / training and who are intending to pursue future

work with an emphasis on Japanese gardens / garden design.

## Application Conditions and Criteria

Applicants are required to:

- provide full details & project plan (if appropriate) with a detailed budget;
- confirm that an education partner/affiliate/host is firmly in place (letter required) and/or details of the educational event;
- demonstrate the extent to which the experience will not only enhance their own knowledge of Japanese garden design and skills but how they will apply/use them on their return to the benefit of the wider UK Japanese garden community;
- write a report on their return which would be suitable for publication as an article in the Society's publication Shakkei (eg including relevant high quality images);
- give a talk (or talks) at the Society's national and/or regional meetings;
- agree to share the learning and skills they have acquired with others in the UK Japanese gardening fraternity and provide evidence of this to the Society (email to: [chair@jgs.org.uk](mailto:chair@jgs.org.uk)).

## Application Process

Applications should be made using the bursary application form ([www.jgs.org.uk/jgs-bursaries/](http://www.jgs.org.uk/jgs-bursaries/).)

Applications can be considered throughout the year and results will be announced within 6 weeks of the date of submission.

We regret that we cannot make retrospective awards.

Payment of bursaries will be made in advance of applicants undertaking the Educational Programme.

Applications should be made by e-mail only to: [enquiries@jgs.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@jgs.org.uk)

# A Garden's Power to Heal by Kristin Faurest

*The mere act of making a garden implies a future in which plants will reach fruition and results will be enjoyed. Gardening is inherently hopeful as a series of affirmative, assertive acts—the seeds will germinate, the plants will enjoy adequate rain and sunshine...and we will survive to see all that.*

--Kenneth Helphand, author, *Defiant Gardens*

Gardens aren't a luxury, not a mere decoration to be enjoyed only in the most perfect of times. In fact, it's the opposite – gardens are something that meet a fundamental human need in the worst of times. The

act of enclosing a space and cultivating life in it implies strength, hope, optimism, a sense of community, and the will to be the best possible version of ourselves.

During World War II in the western United States, gardens played a transformative role at camps where Japanese-Americans were incarcerated, like Manzanar. There, amid barren and inhumane conditions, detainees built gardens that the National Park Service - which now maintains Manzanar as a National Historic Site - describes as "small oases of beauty and serenity within the harsh prison camp surrounding. Remarkably, internees asserted and emphasized their Japanese

heritage in the gardens precisely when they were being confined for that heritage."

That same enduring and beautiful heritage and its ability to help humans find solace in the bleakest of hours is now lending itself to the first Japanese-inspired prison garden in the United States at the Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem, Oregon. The project, five years in the making, opened in early November and was led by prolific Japanese-American designer Hoichi Kurisu in collaboration with several inmates of the maximum-security facility.



Figure 1: The garden's ornamental gate, with, L to R, Toshio Takanobu, Johnny Cofer and Hoichi Kurisu. (Courtesy of Kurisu International)



Figure 2: Ceremonial ribbon cutting, with Colette S. Peters, head of Oregon Department of Corrections, and Japanese Consul General in Portland Takashi Teraoka. (Courtesy of Kurisu International)



"This garden has given me a sense of meaning and purpose," said Johnny Cofer, one of the inmates leading the garden team. "Some of the guys here who volunteered said that they had spent more than 50 years never doing a single meaningful thing. It was something we could call home. And a way that maybe we could become the people our parents wanted us to be."

Kurusu, who early in his career was director of Portland Japanese Garden, is known for his transcendently lovely hospital healing gardens and public Japanese gardens like Morikami in Delray Beach, Florida. Kurisu himself contributed not just as a designer but gave material support and hands-on labor to the project.

The garden, with features including a gate, pine trees, a sand and stone garden, a koi pond, and a bridge, is maintained through privately raised funds at no taxpayer expense. About 200 volunteers including the prison community worked for 96 days, clocking 12,000 hours and raising \$200,000 for the construction.

What will this garden change? Ninety-five percent of the inmates at OSP will, at some point, be released back into society. It matters not just to them but to all of us



Figure 3: The garden, designed in collaboration between Kurisu International and the inmates, includes several classic Japanese features. (Courtesy of Kurisu International)

how they rejoin us – as damaged souls with no options but to return to crime, or as changed people with newly acquired skills and ideals who have something to contribute.

The Japanese concept *mitate-mono* means to see an object anew – for a thing to gain a new meaning and purpose. There is such a thing as *mitate-mono* of human beings. The same hands that once visited terrible harm on another person can become the hands that plant and carefully prune a pine tree. The mind that once decided to commit acts of violence can become the mind that chooses to make a place of tranquility and restoration. And the heart that once harbored uncontrollable rage can become the heart of the gardener: patient, humble, and selfless enough to see itself as only a small part of something greater that will outlast it.

*Kristin Faurest is the director of the International Japanese Garden Training Center of Portland Japanese Garden. The Garden is proud to have helped support the OSP garden project through hosting Kurisu as a guest lecturer, hosting a documentary film crew, providing learning materials, and advocating for the project in online media.*



Figure 4: The garden is visible from much of the prison, including several cellblocks. (Courtesy of Kurisu International)

### Healing aspects of Japanese gardens

Every garden has the potential to have a therapeutic effect on the one who tends or visits it. But the Japanese garden tradition has particular qualities that make it ideal for healing or therapy:

**Sense of enclosure:** Paths, gates, fences, and other elements guide and shape the visitor's experience, focusing attention and directing energy at strategic points and granting the visitor a strong sense of arrival. The garden's edges are well-defined, with techniques such as hide and reveal and borrowed scenery contributing to the effect of being in an enclosed space with views.

**Seasonality:** Nature is never finished. Ephemeral changes mark the passing of the seasons in the garden: snow on the top of a lantern, stone paths gleaming with spring rain, the first flowering of the cherries or azaleas. The sense of constant change and the cyclical nature of life is reassuring and keeps the visitor engaged.

**Sensory stimulation:** A Japanese garden embraces the senses and spirit. The sound of water, a path whose flow changes to slowly shift focus to a beautiful view, the smells of gravel, water, plants and moss that subtly change through the year can all help evoke peaceful memories.

**People-plant interaction:** Learning traditional pruning and other techniques can offer rewarding results over time as the gardener and garden shape each other. The garden is always in a state of becoming – thanks to nature and the constant presence of skilled hands and heart.

# Portland Japanese Garden Professional Training Seminars - 2020

The Garden's International Japanese Garden Training Center offers these programs for landscape professionals in 2020:

## **Waza to Kokoro: Hands and Heart, Level 1**

This intensive, hands-on educational seminar is an immersive learning experience in Japanese garden arts, framed in the Culture of Tea and the art form of the tea garden. Come to Portland to learn stone-setting, plant care, design, history and other related subjects directly from Japanese garden masters. The course is designed for landscape practitioners from all disciplines.

Location: Portland Japanese Garden and off-sites

Dates:

June 8-14 (application opens Jan. 10, 2020)

Aug. 24-30 (application opens March 10, 2020)

## **With an Eye Towards Nature: A Japanese Garden Design Intensive**

This three-day course created for design professionals focuses on the Japanese

tradition of designing with nature, using the spectacular landscape of the Columbia Gorge as an outdoor classroom. Marc Treib, professor of architecture emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, and a noted landscape and architectural historian and critic, takes part in the last day's design critique and gives a public talk the next day.

Dates:

April 25-27 (application opens Feb. 1, 2020)

Application platform and all other information on tuition, conditions and program content at [japanesegarden.org/thecenter](http://japanesegarden.org/thecenter) or from [kfaurest@japanesegarden.org](mailto:kfaurest@japanesegarden.org)

The Training Center is a recipient of the 2018 American Public Gardens Association award for program excellence.



Waza to Kokoro 2017 Smith Rock. (Jonathan Ley and Kristin Faurest)



Waza to Kokoro 2019 Hugo. (Jonathan Ley and Kristin Faurest)



# Ghosts and Bones.....continued

the Pulham Company to realise his vision of the garden, requiring a huge amount of rockwork, for which they were duly famous at the time.

## The Pulham Company

The Pulham Company, with four generations of James Pulhams, were widely known in the UK from the mid 1800s to the 1930s for their ability to arrange rocks of all sizes into grottoes, waterfalls and other large garden features. These are still to be found in dozens of large country house estates across the country as well as in many public parks and spaces. Examples are at Sandringham, Friar Park (including a Japanese garden), The Water Gardens at Kingston upon Thames, among many others.

James Pulham 2<sup>nd</sup> made it his business to visit natural water courses and rock features around the UK, carefully

noting the interplay between rocks and water around pools, waterfalls and streams. Having absorbed what he saw in nature, he was particularly skilled in reproducing naturalistic scenes in his designs for watercourses, rockeries and rocky grottoes in private gardens and public parks.

The Company took advantage of the growing interest in Japanese gardens, manufacturing a range of lanterns and other ornaments (Figure 1) as well as fabricating pavilions in oriental style (Figure 2), three of which were installed at Rivington.

They famously developed a way of manufacturing a form of artificial sandstone called 'Pulhamite', "*which was used to join natural rocks together or crafted to simulate natural stone features. It was so realistic that it fooled some geologists of the era*".<sup>5</sup>

## Ghosts and bones of Japanese gardens in the North West

From North to South these are (see map page 17):

1. Lowther Castle, near Penrith, Cumbria
2. Giggie Alley in Eskdale, Cumbria
3. Ashton Gardens in Lytham St Annes, Lancashire (Japanese influence)
4. Fairhaven Lake and Japanese garden, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire
5. Rivington Terraced Gardens near Bolton, Lancashire
6. Avenham Park in Preston, Lancashire

## Lowther Castle near Penrith

Although abandoned with the rest of the gardens at Lowther Castle in 1935, the bones of the Japanese garden still exist. It is interesting to compare the current scene with photographs of the original garden, as reported in a separate article about recent developments at Lowther written by Trevor Nash in this edition of Shakkei (pp6-10).

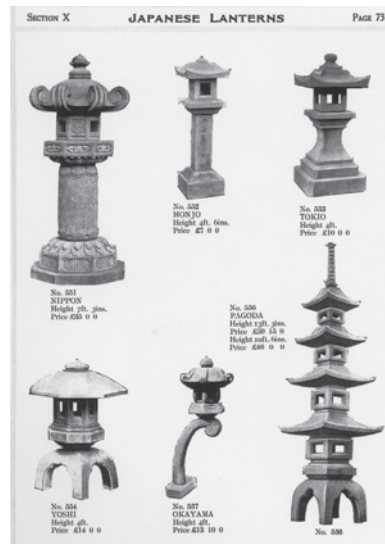


Figure 1: From the Pulham Company Garden Ornament Catalogue circa 1925.



Figure 2: Construction of a Japanese tea house at the Pulham manufactory. (Pulham Legacy p251 - 'reproduced from the Hoddesdon Journal, February 1967')



Figure 3: A rock ravine fashioned in Pulhamite in Ashton Gardens, St Anne's. (Pulham Legacy p256 - 'Photo by Brian Turner')

This is one of the gardens attributed to Thomas Mawson who was engaged to design a series of gardens (Rose garden, Lily garden, Scented garden and Japanese garden) by the Earl of Lonsdale for the family estate at Lowther Castle.

A local landscaper, Thomas Richard Hayes, was employed to construct the garden, and "made some outstanding contributions to horticulture. He especially excelled in the field of rock and water garden design. Amongst his many commissions was



Figure 4: Postcard purchased in 2002 showing the Giggie Alley garden soon after construction.



Figure 5: Second postcard purchased in 2002 showing the Giggie Alley garden soon after construction

*the creation of a Japanese water garden for Lord Lonsdale at Lowther Castle in 1904. For that, he had trees imported from Japan. Pools, curving bridges and statues of water birds also creatively graced that garden.*"<sup>6</sup>

#### **Giggie Alley, Eskdale**

Set in woodland on a hillside in Eskdale, Cumbria, the site, formerly part of the Rea family's Gate House Estate, still contains the ghost of a former Japanese garden built in 1913, designed by Thomas Mawson. The



Figure 6: A view of the Giggie Alley garden in 2011 (GH)

site of the garden and surrounding woodland is now owned by the Forestry Commission.

Despite invasive Sasa bamboo taking over much of the area, a few large Acers survive, together with a small pond and associated rock-work. There are signs of earlier attempts to renovate the garden begun in the late 1990s by local volunteers led by Chris Jones.<sup>7</sup>

The work had initially been to fight back the invasive bamboo, *Rhododendron Ponticum* and *Gaultheria* which between them, as well as 50 years of neglect, had made the site impenetrable. Once uncovered, further work cleared the pond and surrounding stone-work. On a visit in 2002 I purchased two notecards at the local shop in Eskdale Green (Figures 4 and 5) along with another that showed a proposed view the year later, with the Japanese pavilion replaced. Sadly this was not to be.

On a later visit in 2011 further clearing had been done and two or three new curved bridges had been placed



Figure 7: Part of the information display about the Giggie Alley garden in the church at Eskdale Green in 2011 (GH)

# Ghosts and Bones.....continued

in the original positions shown in early photographs. A very interesting display was presented in the local church hall (Figure 7) and an informative notice had been installed on the walk up to the garden from Eskdale Green.

From the notice board in 2011:

*"At the top of the flight of stone steps is an historic*



Figure 8: One of the remaining Acers in the Giggle Alley garden in 2017, (GH)

*Japanese garden. In its day it was one of the finest Japanese gardens in Britain, but it rapidly declined when the estate was sold in 1949. Fifty years later the garden was almost impenetrable and the pavilion, lanterns, bridges and many plants had already been sold.*

*It was John Rainbow and his artist son Frederick who planned the garden's watercourses and who gave sketch ideas to Mawson. It seems very likely that the garden's*



Figure 9: Nature taking over again at Giggle Alley in 2017. (GH)

*conception was a marriage of James Rea's vision and passion, his team's expertise and Mawson's ability to create a cohesive whole from these elements."*

In 2012 the Forestry Commission produced a paper advertising a 'Giggle Alley Japanese Garden 2014 Centenary Project' outlining plans for the restoration of the garden, including an estimated cost of £37,450.<sup>8</sup> It appeared that the garden's future was looking very positive.

However, it seems that the money was not found as on my last visit in 2017, the situation had deteriorated. There was no local display and no notice board on the ascent to the garden. The bridges were beginning to show signs of rotting and bamboo was taking over again. Some attempts had been made to cut it back in places, but the overall feeling was that the garden was returning to nature.

It is only to be hoped that this was a temporary situation, as undoubtedly this was once a fine garden in a magnificent setting.



Figure 10: The impressive waterfall constructed by Pulham in Promenade gardens, St Anne's, taken in the 1930s. It is still there today. (Pulham Legacy p254 - Photo provided by Fylde Tourism and Leisure Department)

### Ashton Gardens and South Promenade gardens, St Anne's-on-Sea

In 1913 the Pulham Company were engaged to remodel the lake area within the existing gardens. In doing so they used their skill and expertise in the naturalistic use of rocks and their proprietary 'Pulhamite'.

The Lytham St Anne's Express newspaper of 4 Feb 1916 said: "*The whole design of the Rock and Water Garden is more admired the more it is seen. Messrs Pulham and Son will ever be associated with this remarkably fine piece of landscape gardening.*"<sup>9</sup>

There is no evidence of Thomas Mawson being involved in Ashton Gardens, but he was involved with the Pulham Company elsewhere in St Anne's in the design of the South Promenade gardens, where again Pulham rockwork is in evidence. He was also involved in the design and landscaping of a new marine lake in Fairhaven, a few hundred metres south of the St Anne's Promenade gardens.



Figure 11: The waterfall in Ashton Gardens. (Elaine Taylor-Gill)

### Fairhaven Lake, Lytham St Annes

In 1926, Mawson submitted a very ambitious plan to enlarge a small marine lake at Fairhaven, between the coastal towns of St Anne's and Lytham on the Fylde coast south of Blackpool. The plan included an extension of the Promenade gardens (already referred to, including the impressive waterfall and cave - Figure 12), a doubling in size of the lake, some impressive new buildings and a Japanese garden.

In Mawson's own words:<sup>10</sup>

#### THE JAPANESE GARDEN.

*One portion of our work which will undoubtedly attract special attention and which could hardly fail to possess the very desirable quality of individuality to a very exceptional extent is the Japanese Garden. This delightful feature is one to which the nature of the site lends itself extremely well, for here we can contrive with the greatest ease the broken bank, the quaintly piled rocks, the traditional arbour or tea-house, the water with its stepping-stones and stone lanterns, and that sense of seclusion which is not only necessary to*



Figure 12: Fairhaven Lake. 'The Mawson Japanese Garden'. It is thought the garden remains buried under the present landscape. (From Blackpool Gazette - see footnote 8)

*the design, but which will isolate it sufficiently from other features to avoid any suggestion of clashing of styles.*

An article in a local newspaper in 2017<sup>11</sup> outlined the Thomas Mawson plan and its acceptance by the Council. Of the Japanese garden it has the following to say: *This former feature is fondly recollected by many residents who are familiar with the lake and its gardens. There is the strongly-held belief the feature was simply "covered over" in the mid-late 1960s, as it required repair.*

*This firmly held view seems all the more credible as there is archaeological evidence, in the form of stone protrusions, which are visible and directly coincide in location and appearance to the former garden rockery.*

### Avenham Park, Preston

Avenham Park and the adjoining Miller Park were constructed in the mid 19th century. The visitpreston.com website<sup>12</sup> contains the following interesting quotation:



Figure 13: The Japanese rock garden in Avenham Park under construction. (Preston City Council)

# Ghosts and Bones.....continued

*At the time of the parks' creation, American civil war was raging and the cotton towns in the Northwest were experiencing a cotton famine. Preston was one of these towns affected and was under threat of economic and social problems brought on by high unemployment. In order to prevent these problems the parks were built by out-of-work cotton workers.*

The Japanese Rock Gardens were added to Avenham Park in the 1930s, being officially opened on 12 November 1936. Images show a huge amount of large rocks on the hillside (leading up to an old railway goods yard screened by suitably planted trees), a curved lake and ornamental bridge.

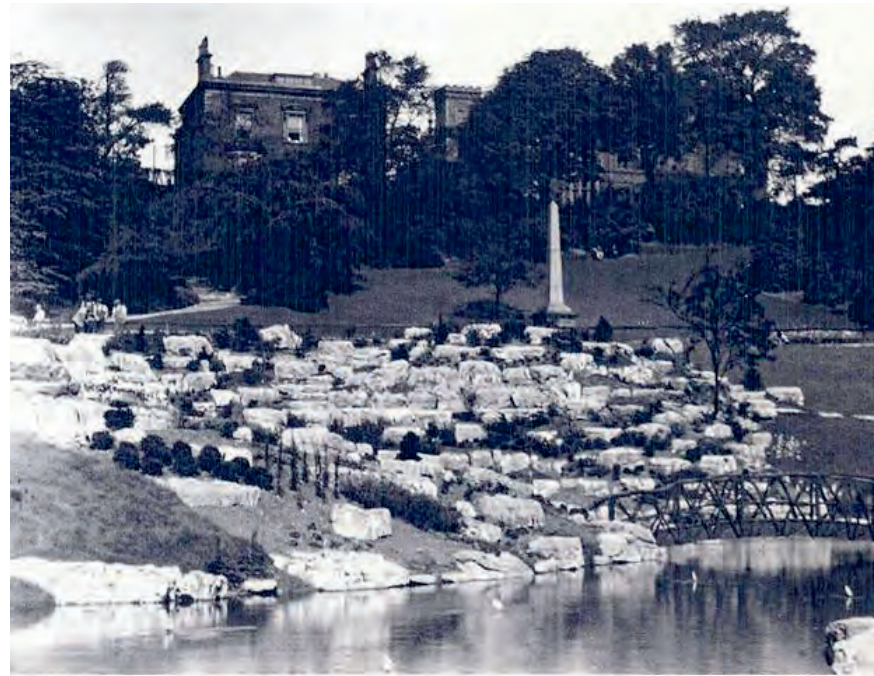


Figure 14: A view of the completed Japanese rock garden at Avenham Park, late 1930s. (<http://www.visitpreston.com/welcome/preston-s-history/history-of-preston-s-parks/avenham-and-miller-parks-history/>)

## Rivington Terraced Gardens

These gardens on a hillside near Bolton were designed by Thomas Mawson for Lord Leverhulme, including a large Japanese lake, with impressive rock-work by the Pulham Company. The gardens, constructed between 1905 and 1925, covered approximately 50 acres of hillside, terraced in many places with paths criss-crossing the slope. It is an intriguing site to visit as although the house has long gone, many of the garden structures remain as well as a restored Italian lake and recently renovated Japanese lake. (See previous issue of Shakkei – volume 26 no 2 for an article covering the current major restoration works on the whole site.)

## JGS involvement in the Japanese garden at Rivington

In my article about the restoration at Rivington in the previous issue of Shakkei, I promised more details about JGS involvement. In late 2017 I received a request from the Friends of Rivington Terraced Gardens for advice on 'restoring' elements of the Japanese garden. Groundwork staff were just starting work on the rest of the site, leaving the area round the Japanese garden for treatment later in the project.

Following a couple of visits in 2018 to establish if and how we could help, it was clear that little remains of original garden features other than small parts of the



Figure 15: The Japanese Garden at Avenham Park today. (TripAdvisor)



foundations of the tea-houses and the platform of a curved bridge, its balustrades long gone. With no apparent rock arrangements, all that remains is the dramatic landscaping, the lake and some original trees, now with 100 years of unchecked growth.

A group of us from JGS North West region visited to advise on how best to deal with the planting, particularly the numerous mature trees. The major issues are an infestation of Gaultheria and self-sown trees amid what is now established woodland around the lake.

Since our discussions, volunteers from the Friends have been working on identifying and cataloguing the

planting and dealing with those aspects that can be dealt with manually, leaving a plan for the Groundwork tree specialist to tackle the larger trees in spring 2020 based on the advice we gave.

The Friends also asked us in 2018 if we could help to add a new feature in keeping with the spirit of the garden, specifically a turtle stone arrangement using stone available on-site. While I am not in favour of simply adding an artefact or feature for the sake of it, there was support from everyone involved for something that would not be too obvious or obtrusive.

Suitable stones were identified on a freezing cold day in December 2018 when I was taken to various piles of excavated stone around the hillside. I had in mind a turtle from Meigetsu-in in Kamakura (Figure 18) but adapted to a north of England setting in an unsupervised public space.

It was June 2019 when we were called back as the Groundforce staff had time to work with us. With their help and volunteers from the Friends, Steve Wright and I created a turtle under the trees close to the side of the lake. The Friends had allocated a tiny space for the turtle, which was quickly more than quadrupled in size when Steve and I arrived!



Figure 16: The Japanese lake at Rivington, illustrating a 'tea-house' constructed by the Pulham Company and the impressive rock face, which shows a similarity with the Pulhamite ravine in Ashton Gardens shown in fig 3. (Leverhulme's Rivington by M D Smith published by Nelson Brothers ISBN-0950877212)



Figure 17: A similar view of Rivington during restoration - the stream and waterfall were completely shrouded in vegetation before work started, and more clearing has been done since this photo was taken. (GH)

# Ghosts and Bones.....continued

The Groundforce team were superb, providing a machine and driver who with great precision moved the stones into position, flipped them over when needed and very quickly all the stones were in place. Meanwhile another dumper truck and driver was bringing soil to create the body of the turtle – 12 tons in all – which was to be planted with *Pachisandra terminalis* by the Friends in due course. Within a couple of hours the turtle had arrived! (Figure 19)

The restoration programme on the whole site, due to complete at the end of 2020, is making a huge difference to the appearance and safety of the whole 50 acre Terraced Gardens. It is a fascinating site, well worth visiting.

In an article for the local newspaper by Elaine Taylor-Gill of Lancashire Gardens Trust and team leader of the Friends volunteer group, she wrote about the construction as follows.

*BUILDING A TURTLE IN THE JAPANESE GARDEN - THURSDAY 20TH JUNE 2019*

*Thomas Mawson, Lancashire's Edwardian landscape architect, achieved a tour de force when he designed this*



Figure 18: The turtle at Meigetsu-in in Kamakura, inspiration for Rivington. (GH)

*fascinating part of Rivington Terraced Gardens in 1923-4. It would have reminded Lord Leverhulme of his visit to Japan: it would also provide an opportunity to display some of the lovely plants coming from there to Britain – maples, azaleas, cherry trees, lilies and hydrangeas. Old photos show us how splendid this garden used to be; 3 tea-houses, or pavilions, stood overlooking the lake, one at the water's edge and 2 high on the rocky cliff. Japanese lanterns could be lit by the water or among the trees.*

*There are no plans to re-build these fragile ornaments. Now though, a landform sculpture has been constructed as a modern-day addition, in the spirit of the Japanese garden. A giant turtle is being made by a group of volunteers led by 2 experts from the Japanese Garden Society, Graham Hardman and Steve Wright. The turtle was a symbol of long life and was a favourite feature in historic gardens; it is made using large pieces of rock to resemble the creature's head, tail and flippers, the body being made of mounded earth covered with leafy plants to represent its scales.*



Figure 19: The completed turtle structure, awaiting further planting. (GH)

*The landform sculpture will be the finishing touch to a year of research by a group of volunteers who set out to discover how this part of Lord Leverhulme's garden used to look and how he, his family and guests enjoyed it.*

## Interpreting historic gardens

Historic Japanese gardens in the UK, those created before 1940, say as much if not more about people's view of the world at the time as they do about what Japanese gardens are really like. In our own time of easy and speedy travel to Japan, of almost unlimited access to amazing colour photographs, of access to a plethora of books on the subject of Japanese gardens, including analysis of design principles and so on, it is hard to think ourselves back a hundred years to quite different times.

## Private gardens

In the early part of the 20th century, the cost of travelling to Japan was huge in comparison to today. Not only in financial terms but also in time, taking up to 20 or 30 days to travel there by sea. Only wealthy individuals, diplomats or successful business people could do this.

Some of these early travellers to Japan were sufficiently impressed by the gardens they saw in Japan to want to create their own version of what they had seen back at home. Often including lanterns and other artefacts purchased from Japan to add to the desired effect. For those unable to travel but caught up in the general fashion for Japanese gardens, the only way of finding out about them was Josiah Conder's 'Landscape Gardening in Japan'<sup>13</sup> and articles in magazines and newspapers, which may have included small black and white photographs by way of illustration.

The problem with photographs is that they rarely convey the depth of vision of a real garden. Too often photographs of Japanese gardens show buildings, lanterns, red bridges and so on in order to convey

the Japanese-ness of the scene. With none of these elements in the frame, the crucial aspect of how the space is used and the shape and disposition of rocks and plants is lost.

So in the early part of the 20th century gardens were built with relatively scant knowledge when compared with what we have available today. Often the results included what we now consider fanciful ideas or an attempt to fill the space with as many different artefacts of oriental origin as could be afforded. Also, early examples were, no doubt, shown off to all visitors, providing inspiration for others to follow. The style and any misinterpretations would potentially be copied. So when interpreting these early gardens we do need to bear in mind what people knew at the time and the social environment in which the gardens were built.

### Public Parks

With the rapid expansion of civic park construction after 1918 through to the 1940s came an interest in featuring a Japanese garden in some of them. Fuelled partly by earlier designers of large private gardens, finding that their former clientele could no longer afford garden developments, shifting their design services to public bodies and the parks they were creating. Mawson was one such designer and similarly the Pulham Company found that they had to respond similarly.

However, in many park developments the designer may well have been the head gardener, who likely had a limited experience of what constituted a Japanese garden. In Valley Gardens in Harrogate, for example, the design included many stepping stone paths (nowadays shunned for health and safety reasons), planting of clumps of bamboo and damming the natural stream to make a pond. Plus there was a liberal scattering of Japanese lanterns.

At Avenham Park in Preston the hillside was clearly seen as a suitable location for a few rocks. The result, as shown in the images (Figures 13 and 14), is effectively a huge rockery, with hundreds of tons of large stones. With the addition of a large pond and curving rustic bridge, the structural elements of the Japanese garden were complete.

Such gardens in parks and public gardens may seem to us hardly representative of what we consider to be a Japanese garden today, but no doubt in their day they were seen as sufficiently exotic and different. They will have given, and in some cases still give much pleasure and interest to countless visitors.

### Coda

What seems important for us as the Japanese Garden Society is not only to be aware of these earlier gardens but also to research and record their history. As we are increasingly perceived as an authority on Japanese gardens, a thorough knowledge of our own Japanese gardens ought to be a given. Were we able to provide a record of our gardens, both current and historic, it would provide a significant resource for the public, very much in line with our charitable aim.

Much further work is needed on this given our current very limited records. If we were to establish a group to start creating a permanent record of our gardens, would you be interested in being involved? If so please contact the author at [ghardman@btopenworld.com](mailto:ghardman@btopenworld.com)

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Shakkei 24:4 (Spring 2018) "Restoration of an Early 20th Century Japanese Garden in Harrogate's Valley Gardens (1)" by Ann Beeby and Andy Bolton.

<sup>2</sup> Further information may be found at "The Pulham Legacy" - <https://pulham.rocks/>

<sup>3</sup> "The Art and Craft of Garden Making" published by

BT Batsford, London, may be downloaded from <https://archive.org/>

<sup>4</sup> See also Shakkei 4:2 from the summer of 1997 and 26:2 from autumn 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Wikipedia (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulhamite>) retrieved 2/1/20.

<sup>6</sup> [www.hayesgardenworld.co.uk/](http://www.hayesgardenworld.co.uk/) Retrieved 29/12/19.

(Interestingly, it was at the premises of Hayes Garden World in Windermere, that Thomas Mawson first set up his design business, so would have had a landscaper 'on-hand' as it were.

<sup>7</sup> See 'Cumbria's forgotten Japanese garden (Eskdale Green)' by Chris Jones in Shakkei 7:3 (Winter 2001), in which he covers the history and the current state of the garden at the time. Chris also produced leaflets on the garden and the plans for restoration which were available locally in Eskdale Green. Also a booklet 'Discover Eskdale – The Japanese Garden, Giggle Alley Forest – Eskdale Green' published in 2005.

<sup>8</sup> 'Giggle Alley Japanese Garden 2014 Centenary Project' Author Gareth Browning. Dated 28-11-2012.

<sup>9</sup> Rock Landscapes – The Pulham Legacy, Claude Hitching, Garden Art Press (2012) ISBN-13: 978-1870673761 p255.

<sup>10</sup> From Mawson's submission of the plan and accompanying text (18 pages) in his 'Introductory Letter' to 'His Worship the Mayor and Gentlemen of the Council'. I am indebted to Elaine Taylor-Gill of the Lancashire Gardens Trust for a copy of Mawson's submission.

<sup>11</sup> The Blackpool Gazette – Friday 27th January 2017.

<sup>12</sup> [visitpreston.com](http://visitpreston.com) retrieved 4/1/20.

<sup>13</sup> Landscape Gardening in Japan by Josiah Conder and Kazumasa Ogawa (illustrations), 2 volumes, Tokio, printed by Hakubunsha, published and sold by Kelly & Walsh, 1893.

## Waza to Kokoro at Portland Japanese Garden by Kate White

Since gaining the post of head gardener at Cowden Japanese Garden in October 2016 I have been looking to increase my knowledge of Japanese Garden design theory, and practical skills specific to looking after a Japanese Garden. I had already attended practical courses run by JGS in the NE and NW of England, and been fortunate enough to spend a week at RBG Kew with Jake Davies-Robertson working in the Japanese Landscape garden. I found out about the course run by Portland Japanese Garden in Oregon at the first JGS conference I attended in Cambridge in 2017.

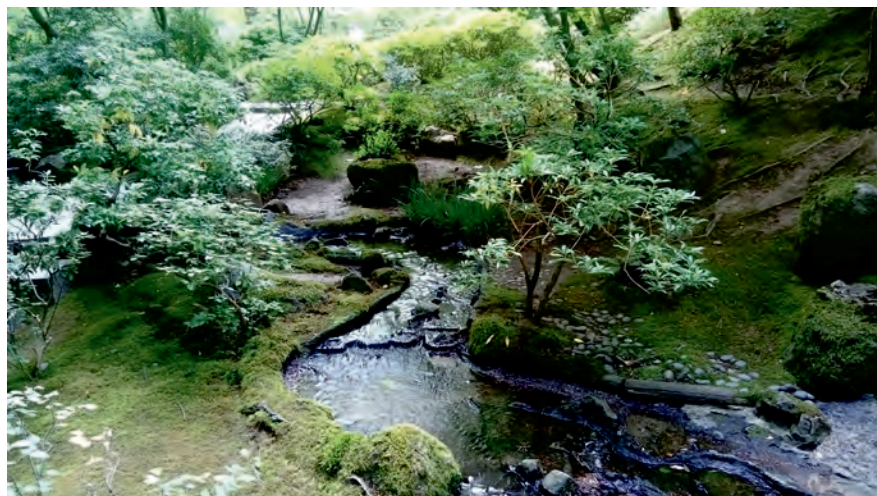
The *Waza to Kokoro* program, which translates as Hands and Heart, has been developed by Portland Japanese Garden over the last 5 years. It is squarely aimed at filling a gap in the training and education of horticulture professionals working within the sphere of Japanese Gardens, particularly those in public gardens. The course has been designed to cover not only practical aspects

of design, construction and maintenance, but also to give an understanding into the philosophy of design aesthetics and the role Japanese gardens play within the cultural life of Japan. This course combines the style of traditional Japanese apprenticeships, where you learn directly from observation, with a more western approach, where there is a formal taught element. I was lucky enough to gain funding from a JGS bursary and from the Royal Horticultural Society, which allowed me to attend a ten day beginners course in September 2018. There was a requirement to complete a pre course reading list and submit short answer essays and a drawing assignment. This equated to approximately 20 hours work and was a good grounding in some of the concepts we covered on site.

The course was attended by a mix of horticulturalists, landscape architects, garden designers, and other professionals with an interest in the area. Although the

majority of participants were from the USA, there were also representatives from gardens in Canada, the UK (Cowden Garden and RBG Kew) and Australia. The course was based mainly within the grounds of Portland Japanese garden, with four days spent off site at a tree nursery and stone yard.

One of the most impressive aspects of the whole program was the thought that had been given to how to link all the aspects of the teaching together. The teaching schedule was built around using Chadō: The Way of Tea to explain many of the concepts at the heart of garden making. These sessions, delivered by Jan Waldmann, a tea master in the Urasenke School, covered ideas used in the tea ceremony which are also used within Japanese garden design. One example was *ma*, which in the tea ceremony are the spaces between the actions of the host and guest, and which in a garden would be the physical space within a design.



The Natural Garden at Portland Japanese Garden.



Just a small selection of tools used for pruning.

During the course we covered skills such as assessing and pruning mature Acer's, construction of bamboo fences of various designs, learning about the design and use of the many and varied tools used by Japanese gardeners, and gaining theoretical knowledge into Japanese garden design and philosophy. One of the major practical sessions was on stone work. We were based in a stoneyard on the outskirts of Portland for three days, and in small groups under the instruction of a tutor we created a tsukubai arrangement.

The tutor for our group of four students was Isamu Honkawa, and it was truly a revelation watching him at work. Each arrangement included a short section of nobedan path, and the traditional rocks placed around a stone water basin. Honkawa-san initially stressed the importance of functionality in choosing and placing stones, stones need to be large enough to fulfil their designated purpose. There was a lot of attention paid

to the detail in heights and levels between stones, particularly at the start of the process. Honkawa-san spent a lot of time looking at the relationship of the stones to each other and making often quite small alterations, all the time making incremental improvements to the whole arrangement. There was also very practical lessons to be learnt such as making full use of levers to manoeuvre large stones, always making sure the holes for the largest stones were dug much larger than the stone to make it easier to rotate stones within the space.

Another key part of the course for me was simply being able to spend time in Portland Japanese Garden. Designed in 1963 and opened in 1967, this 12 acre site is set on a steep hillside. The original garden design cleverly incorporated 5 different styles of Japanese gardens, linked together by the flow of water through them. These are the; Strolling Pond Garden (*chisen kaiyu shiki*

*teien*), Tea Garden (*cha-niwa*), Sand and Stone Garden (*karesansui*), Natural Garden (*zoki no niwa*), and Flat Garden (*hira niwa*). A further three new gardens have recently been created to link the new garden entrance and visitor welcome complex. The garden welcomes over 450,000 visitors annually, a huge testament to its popularity and appeal. What was so impressive about the site was the attention to detail and level of maintenance. There is less space to hide poor maintenance when there are fewer plant species, and probably substantially less planting overall than in a typical Western garden. Daily cleaning routines of paths and veranda's set the scene for the tranquil atmosphere in the garden. Staff uniform and personal tools were also important in creating the right type of environment for both staff and visitors. Many of the garden staff wore Japanese style trousers, headwear and shoes, and all carried pruning tools on their belts at all times. This created the same sense of professionalism that we gained from the Japanese tutors on the course.



Honkawa-san at work.



Our group's finished stone arrangement.

## Waza to Kokoro.....continued

Attending the course was valuable in many regards. All the tutors stressed the importance of being on a continual path of learning. The four tutors had over 150 years of experience between them, and yet all felt strongly that they were still learning. They believed that learning encompasses being taught, practically doing and teaching others. They physically embodied what they believed in, managing to pass on knowledge acquired over many years with a gentle spirit and openness that was quite different to formally taught courses in the UK.

The notion of garden maintenance is not strong in Japan. Instead, the regular and ongoing work of maintaining a garden is valued as part of the incremental garden building or development phase. It is recognised that the changes that take place are small and incremental, over many years, which nevertheless contribute to the character and design of every garden. There cannot

be a 'finished product' because you are working with living materials. While we all know these concepts as gardeners, I don't think I have heard this expressed so strongly before.

There were many practical elements of the course that are of immediate relevance to managing the Japanese garden at Cowden. These range from the importance of choosing, using correctly, and maintaining the right tools for a job, to the knowledge of where to source information to create accurate representations of a Japanese style bamboo fence or stone arrangements. These practical tasks will only become second nature with many years of application but an understanding of how to approach them is invaluable.

Meeting and working with so many other professionals involved or interested in Japanese gardens was also a delight. The value of professional networks is something I often undervalue, but getting to know even this small

number of people working in a similar field, was exciting and rewarding, and is hopefully something that could be replicated within the UK with the JGS idea of a professional gardeners' network.

What I was not expecting to gain was such a strong insight or appreciation into the philosophical aspects of the Japanese garden. The *Waza to Kokoro* program elegantly used the principles of the Tea ceremony to introduce the concepts of art, religion and philosophy that are not readily discussed in the UK, in connection to horticulture. This truly was an immersive cultural experience, which made a deep and lasting impression. Much of this was gained from observation of the tutors, how they approached tasks, carried out the work and continually critiqued and improved their own efforts. The teaching received from Jan Waldmann on the food and tea culture of Japan was particularly inspiring.

While difficult to capture and express, this left me with a



The chequerboard pattern in the dry garden, created for the moon viewing festival.



A beautiful arrangement of seasonal food for one of our discussions on seasonality.

desire to attempt to bring even a small subset of the ideas we were exposed to into the daily working life of Cowden Japanese Garden. This could be as simple as a conscious effort to notice and talk about seasonal changes, to more



Me and tree - both of us looking slightly worse for wear post pruning.

challenging ideas of changing behavioural patterns and approach to garden tasks. Incorporating these ideas and actions will enhance the work environment for staff, and the garden experience for volunteers and visitors. It will take some thought to decide how best to do this, but I believe it has the potential to further enrich the dynamic of the garden as a safe space to enjoy the natural environment and changing seasons, whilst building confidence, skills and experience for all those involved in fostering this historic garden.

Portland Japanese Garden is running two beginner level courses in 2020. Full details can be found at <https://japanesegarden.org/thecenter/> and in this issue of Shakkei on page 16. Details of JGS Burseries are on page 13.

## wisteria

Something small arrives at and goes from my face so quickly as to leave no recall of shape or colour. The nerves of my nose begin to announce the event differently. It would be best to sit down and, looking back at the house wall, it all comes together: there must be a wasp nest there. The wisteria, overgrown and lazy, needs heavy pruning and rewiring. Françoise, called, rescues me from the nervous daze. But the job needs doing and the nest is hidden well. Again, now on my hand, but the anticipated shock passes quickly. Then they are visible: slender paper wasps guarding their fragile nest. They are as disturbed as I am. I return later to finish the work so tenderly, kindly, as to make it tolerable.

*gardening –  
at summer's end  
stung by wasps*

*jardinage –  
fin d'été  
piqué par les guêpes*

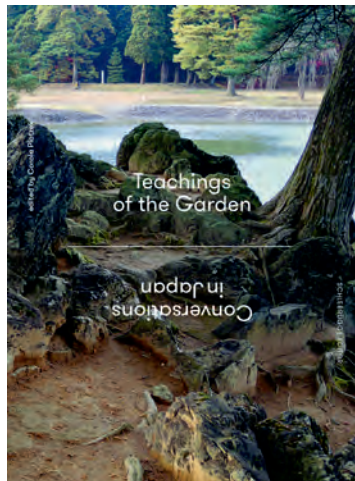
Paul Griffiths, 27th July 2019

# Book Review

Teachings of the Garden: Conversations in Japan  
Carola Platzek (editor)  
Schlebrügge, Editor, Austria (2019)  
ISBN13 978-3-903172-27-2

(First published in 2017 as:  
Die Lehre des Gartens – Gespräche in Japan  
ISBN: 978-3-903172-18-0)

The first thing one notices about this book is the structure! So, the pages comprise double sized sheets folded in two with the loose edges being bound rather



than the fold. This means that each printed page has a blank reverse. The publisher stated that "The book's design was inspired by traditional Japanese binding techniques..." and some research suggests that this particular method is termed "Fukuro toji (袋綴じ)", "bound-pocket" or "pouch" binding, employed

in some 90% of Edo-period books.<sup>1</sup>

And when one starts reading the book, one realises that the text is also very unusual – and fascinating. In essence, the author, Carola Platzek (or, rather, the editor, as is cited in the book) has studied art and philosophy and is researching the means by which gardens may be used to care for people. Her specific interest is in the Sakuteiki (the oldest Japanese gardening book) and,

once she had studied it, she visited Japan and met with a variety of "experts". However, rather than take notes, return home, and generate a "normal" book, she took an entirely different route – one I have never come across before and one that seems very risky – and has generated a record of her various interviews, allowing us, the readers, in a way to be present and "listen" to the responses to her carefully thought out questions.

I stated that this seems very risky – but it works superbly with much of that success due to the skill in devising which questions are asked and the order in which the interviews are presented. And also, I am sure, assisted by some high quality interpreters!

So who are those interviewed?

We first talk to Oguni Syuichi, a gardener from Tokyo. Then Kaji Kenji, a Shinto high priest, also from Tokyo.

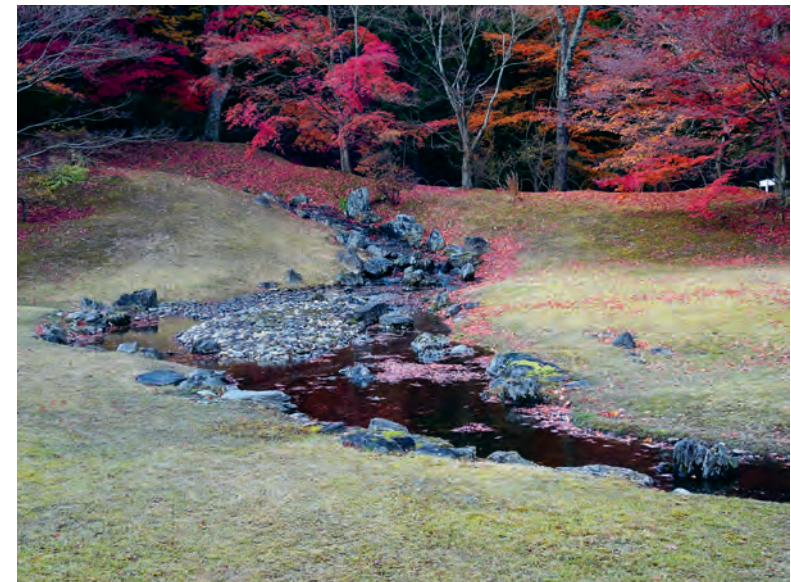
We then move to Kyoto to meet with Amasaki Hiromasa, a gardener and garden historian before moving on to Hiraizumi to converse with a Buddhist high priest and abbot, Fujisato Myokyu.

We then travel back to Kyoto and meet with Yagasaki Zentaro, an architectural historian and another gardener, Kato Tomoki.

Then, back to Tokyo to meet with a musicologist, Torigoe Keiko; a historian, Noda Eiichi; a landscaper and garden designer, Nishiyama Masatoshi; Mitani Yasuhiku, a landscape architect and gardener; and, finally, a landscape researcher, Akasaka Makoto.

So: two High Priests (Buddhist and Shinto) and several gardeners, garden and landscape designers / researchers / historians and, for me the most intriguing, a musicologist. Just imagine a JGS trip with the usual visits to well-known gardens plus being allowed access to gardens that are normally closed with the addition of talks by even a few of these authorities – heaven!

I mentioned the interview with the musicologist, Torigoe Keiko. Recently I have noted the rising interest in the importance of "sound" in gardens but have assumed this was a recent factor. But no – "...in the history of Japan, there had been several impulses to allocate the same amount of attention to sound as to landscape." And when asked "Which historical records describe sonic events" she lists Kojiki (712), Nihon shoki (720), Kokin-shu (920), The Tale of Genji, and The Pillow Book" and



Yarimizu, the only surviving feeder stream from the Heian period, built according to Sakuteiki principles, Motsu-ji, Hiraizumi, 2016. (Frontispiece)



comments that "*We encounter a multifaceted acoustic culture – the different sound nuances of various wind and weather formations, the call of birds and the chirping of insects...*" and that "*It was common to visit selected spaces within a garden, in which one might delight in particular sounds.*"

I mentioned before that I thought "sound" was a recent idea, and I now learn from Tongoe Keiko that the recent surge in interest dates from the late 1970s when a Canadian Sound Researcher, Raymond Murray Schafer CC, together with Hilderdarg Westerkamp and Barry Truax, developed the idea of "Soundscape". And I am fascinated to learn that, in the mid-1990s, Tongoe Keiko contributed considerably to a Japanese Ministry of the Environment project "*100 Soundscapes of Japan*".

So, apologies for concentrating on just one part of the book, but out of all of the interviews it was the one that interested me most. And I would think that most others reading the book would feel the same way – except that each would be drawn towards a different interview – mainly because ALL are so good!

Finally, discussing the text, I have to mention another aspect that I suspect is meant to make us feel as though WE were the interviewer, and that is that Carola Platzek has not provided any analyses or conclusions. Again, very risky, but, in my opinion, absolutely correct as it gently forces the reader to make their own.

Lastly, complementing the text we have some delightful images, three of which illustrate this review. If only they had sound!

So, overall, one of the best books I have seen for many a day. and one which will spend little time on a bookshelf because it will be being "dipped into" for some considerable time.

Definitely one to acquire.

#### Footnote

<sup>1</sup> Details of this binding method may be accessed at: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/japanese-rare-books-culture/0/steps/17244>

However, if you have the time, you might register for the complete course run by Future Learn - "Japanese Culture Through Rare Books". And it's free!



View of the garden and Higashiyama (Eastern Mountains), example of *shakkei* and *fueki ryuko*, the dialectic of invariability and movement, Murin-an, Kyoto, 2016. (pp44-45)



Shigure-tei (House of Drizzling Rain), tea-house, architecture by Sen no Rikyu, sixteenth century, Kodai-ji, Kyoto, 2017. (p41)

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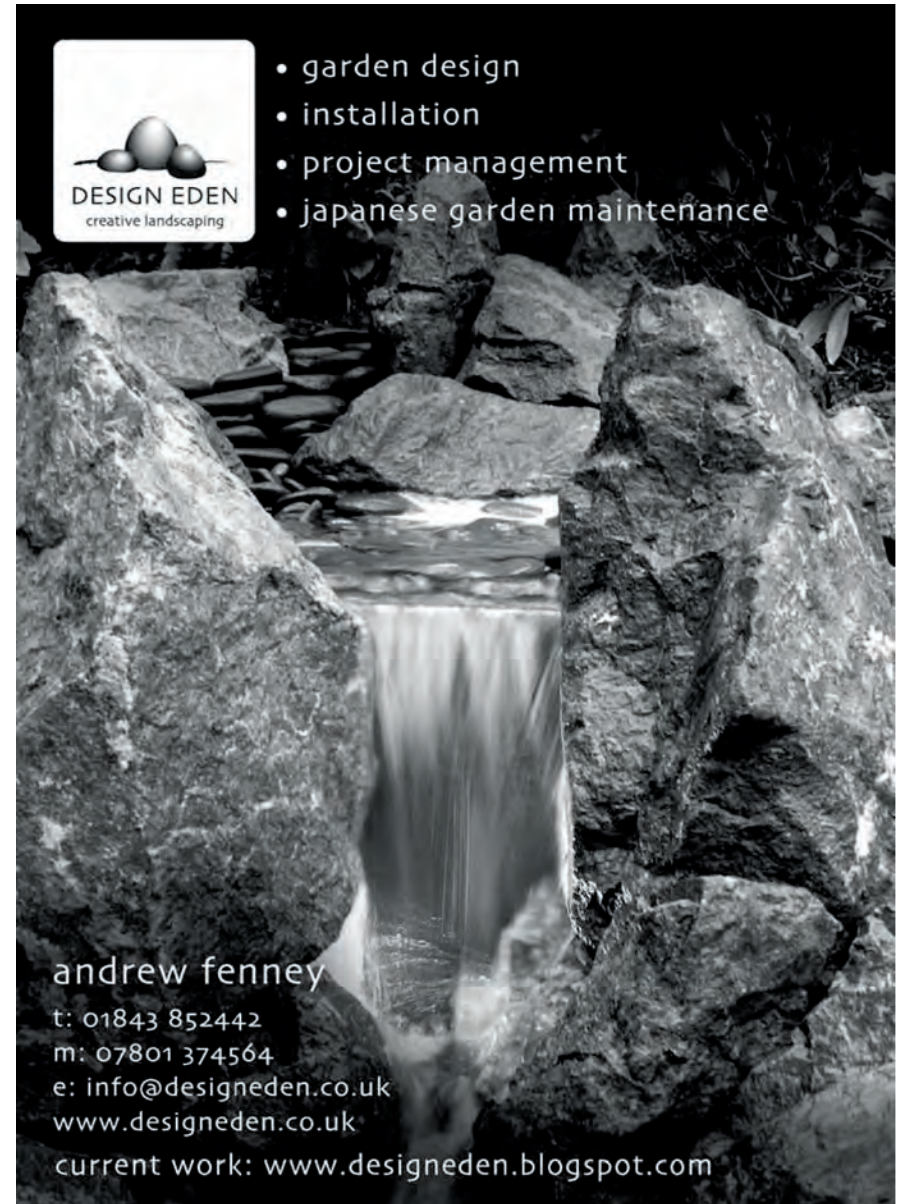
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## Regional Group Contacts

**Midlands & Cotswolds –** Roger Harris  
e-mail: midland@jgs.org.uk

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## Getting in touch

**General Correspondence and Membership.**

Tel: 0345 0944584

**General Enquiries**

e-mail: enquiries@jgs.org.uk

**Membership: Ann Dobson**

Woodzened, Longdene Road, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 2PQ.

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*Shakkei* **Editor: Ian L Chrystie**

e-mail: chrystie.ian@googlemail.com

*Shakkei* **Advertising: Linda Barber**

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e-mail: webadmin@jgs.org.uk

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