

Only eight years of George Fothergill's long life were spent in Banbury. He lived in Winchester for 38 years, and became a distinguished figure in the city. He made a notable contribution to the development of Banbury School, and the Banbury Historical Society has reason to be grateful for the high standards that he set. Nevertheless those who knew George in his Banbury years will remember him most vividly as an ever-cheerful friend and a stimulating companion.

We extend our sympathy to Jenny, George's widow, and to his sons Lloyd and Gavin whose early years were spent in Banbury. A memorial service at which the Society was represented by Dr Barrie Trinder was held in the Guildhall at Winchester on Sunday 6 March.

[George Jackson Fothergill, b. High Stennerskeugh, Westmorland, 14 November 1933, died Winchester, 28 January 2011]

B.S.T

Lecture Reports

Brian Little

Thursday 9th December 2010

Archaeology and the Restoration of Stowe Landscape Gardens

Gary Marshall

The National Trust guidebook to Stowe Landscape Gardens describes Stowe as 'the most important landscape garden in Britain', so members were eager to hear about the ambitious restoration project undertaken by the Trust. The story began with a century of growth and change during the period from 1700 when its owners were the Temple and Grenville families. The formal terrace garden of the 1680s gradually became a more naturalistic landscape especially after the appointment of 'Capability' Brown, head gardener from 1741. In particular the speaker highlighted a less formal main vista, the loss of some ha-has and a progressive greening of the landscape and the introduction of exotic plants from the Americas. By 1800 the gardens as we know them were complete.

By the mid-19th century the second Duke of Buckingham's debts were mounting and in 1848 all the timber was sold. We now have a second generation of trees. In 1923 the house turned into Stowe School and its contents and many of the statues were sold. Restoration work based on the 1843 estate map started in 1996 with the re-creation of 18th century shrubbery.

A section of Gary Marshall's presentation was devoted to statues. Most of these were sold in 1921 but their original locations have been traced to residual bases. In addition to human intervention Lord Cobham's monument was blown to bits during a lightning strike of 1957. In pursuit of detail about columns the role of the archaeologists has been paramount. Grotto restoration has also owed much to their efforts.