

Ymddiriedolaeth Gerddi Hanesyddol Cymru
Welsh Historic Gardens Trust
Ceredigion Branch

Chairman's Report 2007-2008

The Branch is steadily expanding its membership and now has 67 members from throughout the county. The committee have worked hard in furtherance of the Branch aims. It was hoped to recruit a further Committee member to act as Events Secretary, to complement the work of John Savidge as Minutes Secretary. This was not achieved, and for the time being these tasks have been shared among the Committee. It has held one lecture and four very successful excursions this year.

At the AGM on Saturday, 3rd March at the Waun Fawr Community Hall, Graham Rankin gave a fascinating and lavishly illustrated slide lecture on the gardens at Ninfa and the inspiration of the Aberglasney Ninfarium.

On Tuesday 24 April the Branch followed this lecture with a visit to Aberglasney. Graham Rankin was able to join us and show us the latest developments in the garden.

On Sunday 13 May members joined Caroline Palmer and John Savidge for a morning exploration of the Penglais Dingle. We were able to walk the newly cleared path network and fortunate in that the rain held off till the early afternoon.

On Wednesday 4th July members visited Llanllyr and enjoyed a conducted tour of the garden with Loveday Gee, and tea in the summerhouse.

On Sunday 9th September members joined with the Cardiganshire Horticultural Society on a coach excursion to visit Hawkstone Park and Follies.

The branch publication *Historic Parks and Gardens in Ceredigion* continues to sell steadily in small numbers, and was displayed at the Royal Welsh Show by the Welsh Books Council, as well as by the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust. It is available to booksellers through the Welsh Books Council, and also to members by application to the authors. The branch is also co-operating with the Parks and Gardens Data Services, the York based, lottery-funded project which is assembling information for the national UK website www.parksandgardens.ac.uk. Information already published in our book will be made available to the website, and the committee is planning to research a number of as yet undescribed gardens in the course of the coming year. Members keen to get involved in these research visits are urged to come forward.

Ros Laidlaw has continued monitoring planning applications affecting historic gardens. She has continued to monitor the proposals to build a Health Centre and Creche on Penglais Hill, and responded to yet another application to build a further house in the grounds of Bronpadarn mansion, on Primrose Hill. At Nanteos she has commented constructively on the application to repair the kitchen garden wall, and successfully opposed the application to site showman's caravan in the grounds nearby. The branch has also become involved in collaboration to mitigate the potentially damaging effects of an application for grant aid under the Better Woodlands for Wales Scheme for the Nanteos demesne. The essence of the difficulty is that this grant aid is designed to recreate 'native woodland' an aspiration not consistent with the diversity of a planted estate woodland.

The Committee has met twice this year to conduct the business of the Trust.