



CLWYD BRANCH NEWS

Editor Glynis Shaw

May 2010

Rosehill

The property formerly known as Rose Hill (1786), Rosynalt (1864) and Rosinallt (1871) does not feature on the 1720 Williams Williams map which shows the major estates of Erbistock. Rosehill may have originated from an amalgamation of the estates owned by Mr Salusbury and Mr Mathew in this area. Unfortunately the Erbistock Parish tithe map is missing so the earliest record of Rose Hill which can be found in the Denbighshire Record Office dates from 1777 when John Edwards signed a lease to Richard Williamson. On the following day he signed a further lease for a farm.

Lease and release of property was the standard method of conveying a freehold in England from the seventeenth century until 1841. On March 16th 1780 Richard Williamson signed a property lease to Richard Price for

"5 messuages, 5 gardens, 5 orchards, 120 acres land, 50 acres meadow, 50 acres pasture, 5 acres wood and 2 acres of furze and heath".

An agreement in 1784 transferred Rose Hill from Richard Williamson to Samuel Peploe and Hugh Hayward with further conveyances in June and August 1786. These describe:

"that capital new erected messuage and dwelling house with the gardens and outbuildings thereunto belonging...late in the tenure of the said Richard and wife (Maria Sobienski)". Richard Williamson added a tree plantation in 1791.

Following his marriage to Jane Kenyon of Gredington the estate was bought by Henry Ellis Boates in 1799 and was documented in Jan 1800 as a *"Capital messuage called Rose Hill"*

Henry Ellis Boates, High Sheriff of Denbighshire in 1841 was the son of the wealthy Liverpool slave trader William Boates 'born a beggar who died a lord'. He had married Elizabeth Bridson the daughter of Captain Paul Bridson a rich importer of Guinea goods (material that would be re-exported to buy slaves on the African coast). Their son, also Henry Ellis (born 1794) married Miss Caroline Mansfield and his daughter Gertrude Mary married Henry Girardot in 1864.

In just over 87 years Liverpool wealth and advantageous marriages had made Rosehill a substantial estate on a commanding site above the River Dee comprising a mansion, parkland, gardens, outbuild-



ings and a number of cottages each with their own gardens and orchards.

Tragically Gertrude Mary's son died young in 1868 and she lost her husband in 1871. Both are buried in the parish church nearby. St Hilary's was built by her mother Caroline in 1860 as a memorial church to Henry Ellis, replacing an earlier Georgian building. Gertrude Mary completed the church with family memorials to her parents, husband and son. She also consolidated the Rosehill estate with land exchanges and in 1913 it was valued at £10,000 (equivalent to 4 million today).

There are few details about this estate but it is recorded that a number of trees were felled in 1908 and sold for £2,656.4d. In the same year we learn that Gertrude Mary Girardot was *'exasperated'* by her gardener as he lacked knowledge in the tending of vines. Consequently Gertrude Mary advertised for a new gardener in the Chester Chronicle:

"Gardener wanted: thorough all round, industrious; walled garden: vinery, greenhouse, frames; aged 30-35; Church of England, wages £1 and small cottage; wife able to do laundrywork: at least 3 years excellent character required"

A reply from an applicant is dated April 1909. John Jones may have been appointed as he was left an annuity in her will.

When Gertrude Mary died in 1914 she left the estate to her second cousin, Sir Frederick George Kenyon, director and head librarian of the British Museum and father of Dame Kathleen Mary Kenyon. Kathleen had charmed Gertrude Mary as a young child by writing a thank you letter after a visit to Rosehill.

Kathleen Kenyon went on to have an extraordinary career as an archaeologist but eventually retired to Rosehill to publish her work on Jericho and Jeru-

Branch visit to Rosehill

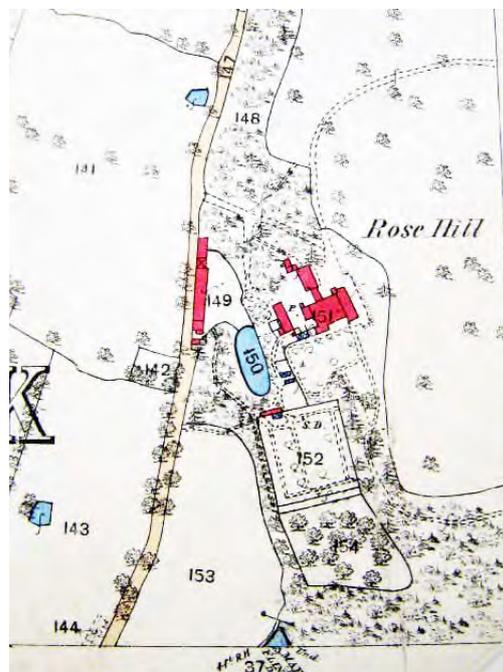
Erbistock, LL13 0DE
Thursday May 6th
2.00pm.

A talk on the trees in the park by David Toyne

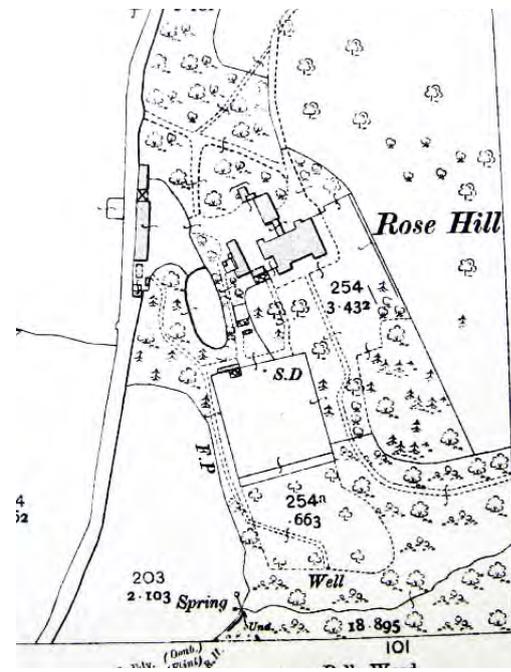
Members might like to meet at the White Horse in Overton for lunch.

Ring Elizabeth Bartlett
01352 758023 to book

Elizabeth Smart
01824 703058 or
Maureen Thomas
01978 852205



O.S. map 1879



O.S. map 1912

saalem. Much of her work was edited and published after her death in 1978.

The parkland and gardens of Rosehill were probably laid out in the late eighteenth century contemporary with the Georgian house and seem to have been maintained with little change until the 1920s. The O.S. maps of 1879 and 1912 are important historic sources of garden detail in the absence of any written or pictorial evidence. It is interesting to compare the two.

The 1879 map shows an established belt of mixed woodland north of the house and along the western perimeter boundary. The original driveway curves eastwards to the A539 through the park sited to the north and east of the house. The park has a predominantly deciduous planting. This approach to the forecourt at the front of the house has long been disused but once had a grander entrance to Rosehill set back from the park wall. The simple iron gates are set between square stone pillars and flanking curved walls of dressed stone.

The 'significant views' from the park overlook the river Dee and Erbistock church. There is a large pond to the south west of the house and the gardens lie to the south of the house. The lawned area in front of the house has paths leading to a shrubbery to the south east, and the sloping site has a south facing walled garden and orchard. The north wall of the walled garden had glass houses which may have been the vineries referred to by Gertrude Mary.

The 1912 map no longer shows the detail of the walled garden but a path leads south towards a well. The path approaching the front of the house from Overton Bridge has been centered to the front of the building leading up to a widened terrace surrounding the house. This path is now impassable.

By this time some specimen trees have been planted but the terraced lawns, yew hedges and parterre

gardens said to be Edwardian in the 'Clwyd Register of Landscapes Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales' are not evident on the 1912 map.

Nowadays the house is approached by a drive from the north west leading to the small forecourt. Not far from the house is an area of horse chestnuts under planted with holly and laurel.

The north and east boundaries have a yew hedge and the park is separated from the garden by a fence - the original simple iron fence has now been partly replaced by a new one.

Rosehill should prove to be an interesting visit.

Researched by
Elizabeth Smart and Maureen Thomas



The Recording Seminar held at the Rhyl Botanical Gardens was followed by a visit to Bodrhyddan Hall. Lady Langford guided us around the garden showing us the site of the 15th century fish ponds. We also saw the more recent garden developments in the Pleasance begun 1983. The snowdrops in the Dingle (above) were stunning.

Tan y Llan

Archaeology in the Garden

Hazel Formby's garden at Tan y Llan Ysceifiog has considerable historic interest. On the left of the drive as you approach the house there is an archaeological dig! The St Asaph Archaeology Society (SAAS) have now been excavating this site for three seasons.

This is the site of the old farm house whose ruins were demolished in 1909 when its stone was quarried for building the present Tan y Llan house which is sited in what was once the old orchard. Hazel has lived here since 1942 when she arrived as a child and saw the old ruins in the snow.

Tan y Llan is marked on the John Evans map of 1793 where it is the only named property in the area. The quality of the stonework found on site suggest it was once a house of significant status. The fine sandstone mullions (the dividing element between window panes) and stone roofing and ridges which have been found are believed to originate from an old quarry near Gwespr last worked in 1698. These are now features in the garden. (See below)

Tan y Llan is believed to date from the late 1600's if not earlier and may have been a medieval hall house. Hazel has unearthed an Elizabethan iron window frame complete with its butterfly catch which exactly fits a window opening of a small room in the ruins. However the earliest and most exciting find is a bronze thimble c1480 from the Netherlands which may be indicative of a considerably earlier building



Above: The fine stone mullions used as garden features.
Below: Tan y Llan ruins in the snow 1979



Above: The archaeological dig across the yard from Hazel's front door. Below: Ancient barns are a back drop to the garden.



on this site.

A yeoman named Mr Edward Jones in 1779 is the earliest documented occupant of Tan y Llan. When he died in 1781 he was buried in Ysceifiog church yard with a headstone inscribed 'late of Tan y Llan' and he left a will describing the contents of the house. At that time the property belonged to the Duke of Westminster, the Grosvenor's of Eaton Hall Tan y Llan still has a number of ancient outbuildings which would have related to the earlier house and these form the backdrop to the country garden which surrounds the house facing over the Wheeler valley.

Several ancient fruit trees still survive including an unusual apple tree yet to be identified. According to Simon Farr from the 'North East Wales Orchard Initiative' the old walnut tree in the garden is the only one still remaining in the Wheeler valley. Last autumn botanist Jo Phillips visited the garden and listed 26 native species and 14 which were alien and he intends to return this spring.

In the garden of the old house there is an old white rose with an attractive scent. This survives from the time when the old house was lived in.

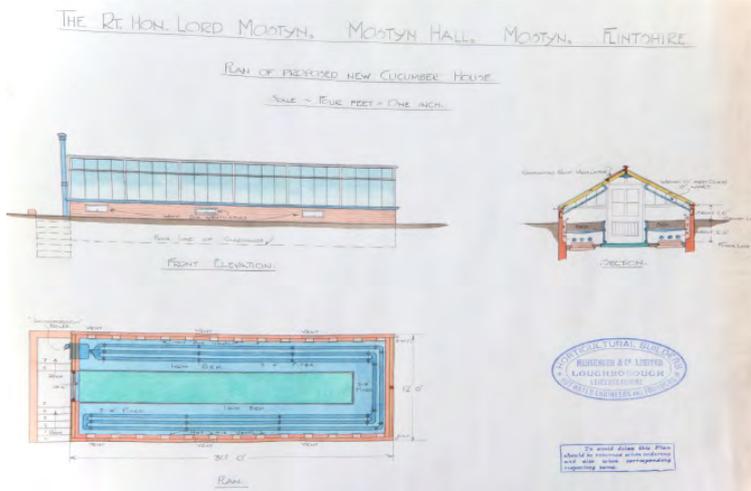
Hazel will be opening her garden on 1st August under the auspices of the CBA (Council for British Archaeology).

If you would like to visit contact Hazel Formby 01352

Mostyn's walled garden



Left: The restored walled garden at Mostyn.
 Right: Fire pits below the wall on the inside of the garden.
 Below left: Recently discovered drawings for a new cucumber house 1931



Jan Lomas gave a tour of Mostyn before becoming Deputy Head Gardener at Eaton Hall. Jan's achievements at Mostyn are considerable - particularly the restoration of the large walled garden. Thomas Dinely recorded the 'excellent walled fruit' at Mostyn in 1684. Now the walls are once again ready for new fruit trees.

The restoration revealed the fire pits unusually sited inside the garden to heat the walls. The site slopes in two directions which presented problems for the correct levelling of the beds. It seems that these gardens will be now mothballed whilst work gets underway with restoration of the house.

Jan showed the newly designed parterre next to the hall and which she completed before leaving Mostyn. As well as discovering the 1914 Goldring plans for Mostyn (Kew have not yet identified all the plants listed) Jan also discovered the original drawings for a new Messenger cucumber house dated 1931.

Now Jan will be working as border team leader with Head Gardener Les Armstrong on the eighty acres of Eaton Hall. Jan has recently been working alongside Arabella Lennox-Boyd designer of the summer hot borders.

This promises to be a new and inspiring experience and we wish Jan every success in her new post.

Diary

May 15 Musical Evening at Leeswood 7.30 pm

This is fund raising event hosted by Elizabeth and Pierre Bartlett. Concert by Cheltenham 'Voices' (repertoire ranges from Bach and opera to Andrew Lloyd Webber) Ticket includes supper buffet and wine £25

Leeswood is the only Grade I garden in the area A rare early 18th century design by Stephen Switzer. You are welcome to explore the gardens before the concert but please bring a change of shoes.



July 4 Tea in Glenna's garden (above)
 46, Mwrog Street, Ruthin. £3 non members £4

July 24 Teddy Bears Picnic at Dolhyfryd
 Fun in the garden for little friends and every sort of bear.

Oct 16 Visit to Birkenhead Park
 Tour and talk on the 'History, Restoration and future Plans of Birkenhead Park'

Bookings: Elizabeth Bartlett 01352 758023