

Enjoy Capability Brown's Landscapes in 2016

During summer 2016 a Capability Brown Festival, celebrating the 300th anniversary of his birth, will be held, and well publicized. An internet search for CB300, or for the Capability Brown website, www.capabilitybrown.org, will produce information about events being held all over England. He produced more than 200 landscapes for, and with, the very rich, but today they can be enjoyed by us all; with our families, or as walkers, historians, photographers. Several of his most beautiful landscapes are within easy reach of Bedford and Bedfordshire.

Ampthill Great Park: he worked here between 1771 and 1772, and was paid £2,396 9s 7d. Free guided tours, by the Friends of Ampthill Great Park, which has recently benefited from a Parks for People Heritage Lottery Grant to restore the Brown landscape, will take place on Saturday 16th April, Tuesday 21st June, Sunday 18th September, 2016. The tours are free and for further enquiries please contact: h.hill@ampthilltowncouncil.org.uk

Stowe Landscape Gardens (National Trust) about 35 miles west of Bedford, are where he laid the foundations of his career in the 1740s. He developed the Grecian Valley and was Clerk of Works for some spectacular buildings there. In 2016 the Temple of Concord and Victory will be open as a visitor hub, and 'tea experience,' and there will be a programme of walks, talks and entertainments.

Jemima, Marchioness Grey, and Capability Brown were friends for many years. He modified her gardens at **Wrest Park** in Central Bedfordshire (English Heritage) but left the majority of the layout as it was. There is a monument to the creators of the gardens which notes the 'professional assistance' of Lancelot Brown, one of only three monuments to him in the country. For events at Wrest Park, telephone 01525 860000.

He developed the park north of her house at **Wimpole** too (National Trust) about 20 miles east of Bedfordshire. At Wimpole in 2016 you will be able to enjoy new Capability Brown displays and events, stroll through the shelter-belts and around the lakes which he designed, or view the beautiful park through amber-tinted viewing mirrors.

Brown also produced a special landscape at **Luton Hoo**, now the setting for Luton Hoo Golf and Spa Hotel. On June 6th there will be a ladies luncheon in celebration of him and his work there with their Head Gardener, and a chance to walk round the grounds with him afterwards. On Sunday 24th July their gardens will be open to the public for National Garden Scheme Open Day from 10 am to 4 pm.. For more info. Tel. 01582 734437. light refreshments, entry £5.

He also designed the **Luton Hoo Walled Garden** which now belongs to the Luton Hoo Estate. It is being restored by volunteers and is open on Wednesdays between May and September. There is a Capability Brown study day on April 6th see their website for further information www.lutonhooestate.co.uk

The great man worked at **Southill Park** (Central Bedfordshire) in 1764 and 1775-7. Tours of his lovely landscape will be held there during the weeks commencing 16th May and 6th June 2016. Book your tickets, cost £12, with www.Eventbrite.co.uk

Ashridge House and estate: Lancelot 'Capability' Brown improved the landscaping and rides of the surrounding park here on an heroic scale between 1759 and 1768. Much of his work still survives, most notably his sweeping, dry Golden Valley. Between 5th and 7th August there will be the Ashridge Garden History Summer School in association with The National Trust 'The Life and Work of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-1783).' For information contact Sally Rouse, 01442 841028 or sally.rouse@ashridge.hult.edu

An important early example of his work is **Croome** in Worcestershire and a later example is **Berrington Hall** in Herefordshire, where he worked with his architect son-in-law, Henry Holland. Information about these and other special Capability Brown events at National Trust properties can be found on the National Trust website.

Fenstanton – his final resting place. Visit the church and see his family memorial; village heritage trail leaflets can be found there, or visit Open Gardens Fenstanton on Saturday and Sunday June 18th and 19th, 1 to 5.30pm, cost £5.

If you are unable to visit these sites, Bedford National Trust Association's Talks Service offers one-hour talks: '**Lancelot Brown, Life and Landscapes**' or '**From Stowe to Sheringham.**' Contact Dorothy Jamieson, on 01234 404879 or email: dorothy.jamieson@ntlworld.com for details.

Special events at National Trust landscapes and gardens in 2016

<p>Berrington Hall, Herefordshire 01568 615721</p>	<p>This is said to have been Brown's last project. Thomas Harley asked him to design the park, sometime after 1775. His son-in-law Henry Holland designed the house. This summer Members of the Embroiderers' Guild display their unique pieces of textile and stitch artwork inspired by the landscapes of Capability Brown, and England's glorious landscapes and gardens.</p>
<p>Charlecote Park, Warwickshire 01789 470277</p>	<p>Brown landscaped the grounds in the early 1750s. It was a commission of unalloyed good humour on all sides, based on a detailed agreement. Members of the Embroiderers' Guild display their unique pieces of textile and stitch artwork inspired by the landscapes of Capability Brown, as well as the nation's rich array of glorious landscapes and gardens. Picnic, play and wander through the parkland, with views across the river Avon.</p>
<p>Claremont Surrey 01372467806</p>	<p>A succession of the 18th century's greatest gardeners worked here and Brown built the house and landscaped the gardens after 1768. Today there are still many unique and unexpected features to discover. Look for the Thatched Cottage, a filled with fun and games for children.</p>
<p>Clumber Park Nottinghamshire 01909 544917</p>	<p>Members of the Embroiderers' Guild display their unique pieces of textile and stitch artwork inspired by the landscapes of Capability Brown, as well as the nation's rich array of glorious landscapes and gardens</p>
<p>Croome, Worcestershire 01905 371006</p>	<p>Brown was hired in 1751 by the 6th Earl of Coventry and worked here for 30 years. It was said to be his favourite, and was his first complete landscape. Visit Croome this Autumn to see an exhibition with paintings and archive material about the work undertaken by Brown at Croome Court.</p>
<p>Ickworth Suffolk 01284 735270</p>	<p>Visit the National Trust's Ickworth Estate and explore the tranquil 18th century landscape parkland at Ickworth. Take a gentle walk discovering the influences of Brown and taking in some of the fantastic classic views.</p>
<p>Petworth House and Park, West Sussex 01798 342207</p>	<p>The park at Petworth is arguably his finest landscape. Members of the Embroiderers' Guild display their unique pieces of textile and stitch artwork inspired by the landscapes of Capability Brown, as well as the nation's rich array of glorious landscapes and gardens.</p>

<p>Sheffield Park and Garden East Sussex 01825 790231</p>	<p>The garden is a horticultural work of art formed through centuries of landscape design. Four lakes form the heart of the garden, with paths circulating through the glades and wooded areas surrounding them. Enjoy finding out about the work involved in restoring the Capability Brown landscape in the 'Changing Seasons' exhibition by the Nature Corridors for All Group, and other activities.</p>
<p>Stowe Landscape Gardens Buckinghamshire 01280 817156</p>	<p>Celebrate the tercentenary of Brown's birth here with lots of things to see and do; from individual events to a long running exhibition. Visit the festival hub to discover Brown's life and work at Stowe, enjoy a 'tea experience, take tours of the garden or explore it at your own pace. There will be an Embroiderers' Guild display of their unique pieces of textile and stitch artwork inspired by the landscapes of Capability Brown, and other glorious landscapes and gardens..</p>
<p>Wallington Northumberland 01670 773600</p>	<p>This year we're marking the 300th anniversary of the birth of local boy Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and exploring his connection to the Wallington estate. Sarah Rutherford, author of the brand new book about Capability Brown delves into Brown's life and times, on Fri 06 May 2016, 10 am to 1 pm. Members of the Embroiderers' Guild display their unique pieces of textile and stitch artwork inspired by the landscapes of Capability Brown.</p>
<p>Wimpole Cambridgeshire 01223 206000</p>	<p>For 10 years, from the mid-1760s, the park was in the hands of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, assisted by William Emes. Explore the North Park and look through the nine three-metre high structures, part easel and part viewing glass, with an artist's eye. Dr Sarah Rutherford talks about her new book, Capability Brown, Monarch of Landscape, in the beautiful Book Room on Fri 10 Jun 2016, 19:30 - 21:00. There are other fascinating events during the next two weekends and a Capability Brown birthday weekend on August 17 and 28.</p>

Dorothy Jamieson 2016