



CAPABILITY BROWN 300

THURSDAY 15 TO SATURDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2016

NICHOLAS FRIEND

2016 marks the 300th anniversary of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, England's 'greatest gardener.' Nicknamed "Capability" because he would tell his clients that their property had "capability" for improvement, we celebrate and question his achievement through an examination of his career, his style and originality, and his legacy. Inscape joins a nationwide celebration of the man who transformed the 18c English landscape.

The Brownian landscape park is an idyll, a living, breathing Claude Lorraine painting, whose very subtleties reveal the genius of the man- his polymathic skills in many disciplines especially in architecture, engineering and design: his profound understanding of scale and perspective, his pure instinct for the placement of monumental trees, his hitherto little-suspected knowledge of flowering shrubs, his ability to visualise lakes and rivers where none had previously existed, and his sheer determination to move hills and carve the land and replace rigid geometry with sinuous, irregular more natural lines. Even his ease of wit and charm were noted by his contemporaries. Mythologized and maligned in almost equal measure, he has been accused of sweeping away numerous exquisite formal gardens in favour of sheep pasture to line his patrons' pockets. Richard Payne Knight and Uvedale Price reviled him - suggesting that his gardens were both over-manicured and exhausting in their scale.

To further our understanding of his work, we have arranged a special three-day study. We stay in a splendid example of a Capability Brown landscape at Bowood, and see him at Corsham Court, where he was architect as well as landscape gardener. As contrast we explore Westbury Court, an exceptional survival of a formal garden of the 1690's. At the exquisitely beautiful Iford Manor, we see a superb later garden, a work of genius by Harold Peto, who lived here from 1899 to 1933. With the perspective of these two gardens we discuss both the contributions to and the subtractions from the English landscape made by Brown, and ask if his intentions, and those of 'formal' gardeners, were really so very different after all.

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

- 09.36 Recommended train leaves Paddington for Gloucester
- 11.30 Train arrives Gloucester for minibus to Lydney
- 12.00 Group lunch at Ugly Duckling in Lydney
- 1.30 Minibus leave for Westbury Court Gardens
- 2.00 Westbury Court Gardens visit with Jerry Green Head Gardener
- 4.00 Leave Westbury Court
- 5.00 Arrive Bowood Hotel
- 7.00 Dinner in Hotel in Shelbourne Restaurant

FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

- 09.00 Visit Bowood House with House Archivist Jo Johnson
- 10.30 Coffee
- 11.00 Visit special exhibition 'Terrestrial Delights: 'Capability' Brown and The Bowood Landscape', in The Orangery of Bowood House
- 11.30 Walk in Capability Brown landscape, and private visit to Lord and Lady Lansdowne's private gardens with specialist Bowood garden guide
- 1.00 Group lunch in House Restaurant
- 2.30 Leave for Iford Manor
- 3.30 Arrive Iford Manor for private garden visit with owner William Cartwright-Hignett and Harold Peto scholar John Hignett, followed by tea
- 5.30 Leave Iford Manor
- 6.15 Arrive hotel
- 8.00 Dinner in hotel in Shelburne Restaurant

SATURDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

- 09.30 Coach to Corsham Court
- 10.00 Arrive Corsham Court for welcome by James Methuen Campbell, coffee and tour of Old Master Picture Collection and Capability Brown landscape
- 1.00 Leave for lunch
- 1.15 Group lunch Homewood Park Hotel
- 3.00 Leave for Bath station
- 3.30 Arrive Bath station
- 3.43 Train leaves for London Paddington
- 5.14 Train arrives London Paddington



BOWOOD HOTEL AND SPA

DERRY HILL, CALNE, WILTSHIRE
SN11 9PQ

BOWOOD ESTATE

Bowood, home to The Marquis and Marchioness of Lansdowne, has been the Lansdowne family home since 1754. After the Second World War, the Estate's future hung in the balance. The "Big House" was derelict and full of dry rot. Most of the Estate cottages were unmodernised. The 8th Marquis took the decision to demolish the "Big House" leaving a beautifully proportioned Georgian house,* in the centre of "the most beautiful park in England". Capability Brown created the landscape and stunning lake between 1763 and 1768; it is one of the best and most unspoilt examples of his famous work. In 1972, the 8th Marquis, retired to his estate in Perthshire, telling his son with memorable understatement: "you may find maintaining the house and estate quite a challenge." In 1975, the present Marquis, opened the house and grounds to the public.

*Bowood is a Grade I listed Georgian country house with interiors by Robert Adam who also added a magnificent orangery, as well as a small menagerie for wild animals. Adam also built a fine mausoleum for the 1st Earl which is also Grade I listed. The front wing is open to the public with rooms, paintings and sculpture on display. One of the rooms was the laboratory of Joseph Priestley, who discovered oxygen there on 1 August 1774.

THE HOTEL AND SPA

Situated at the heart of the Bowood estate, Bowood Hotel, Spa and Golf Resort is a luxury country hotel in Calne, Wiltshire near Chippenham. This beautiful 43 bedroom hotel and spa is 18 miles east of Bath on the A4 between Calne and Chippenham, yet hidden in 2000 acres of rolling 'Capability' Brown parkland considered to be one of Wiltshire's hidden treasures. As one of the finest hotels in Wiltshire, Bowood offers a contemporary and stylish stay within the grounds of an historic and beautiful country house. The hotel boasts stunning views across the Wiltshire countryside. The Bowood Estate is only just over an hour away from London by train and is easily accessible from all over the South of England via major arterial routes.

COST £995 members, £1045 non-members, single room supplement £95, deposit £250. This cost includes two nights accommodation at Bowood Hotel, all breakfasts, two lunches with wine, two dinners with wine, all tuition and lectures, entry fees, private tours, all travel during the tour, all gratuities, VAT. This cost excludes travel to and from the tour.