



## Issue 34:

January 2011

### Upcoming events:

- **06 March—Annual General Meeting** starting at 2.30pm at East Haddon Village Hall, Northamptonshire. Details were enclosed with the Journal and are available from the F/F website [www.follies.org.uk](http://www.follies.org.uk)
- **18-19 March—Welsh Weekend** with visits to Paxton's Tower, the Cilwendeg Shell House, and the gardens and grotto at Dolfor. Details from [pgodfrey@gmail.com](mailto:pgodfrey@gmail.com)



Paxton's Tower, Carmarthen  
Photo: Akoliasnikoff (Wikipedia)

### The Folly Fellowship

Articles, pictures, comments and feedback for the e-Bulletin should be sent to [andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk). All other correspondence should be sent to [membership@follies.org.uk](mailto:membership@follies.org.uk).

# £75,000 awarded to Browne's Folly site

**B**athford Hill (Wiltshire) is a haven for some of our rarest flora and fauna, including the White Heleborine and Twayblade Orchid, and for Greater Horseshoe and Bechstein's Bats. Part of it is owned by the Avon Wildlife Trust who received this month a grant of £75,000 to spend on infrastructure and community projects such as the provision of waymark trails and information boards telling visitors about the site and about its folly.

The money was awarded from the Biffaward Fund, the Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust, the Big Lottery Fund and donations from members. At a time when so many grants are being cut or withdrawn altogether, the award is good news and we add our congratulations to the Trust on its success.

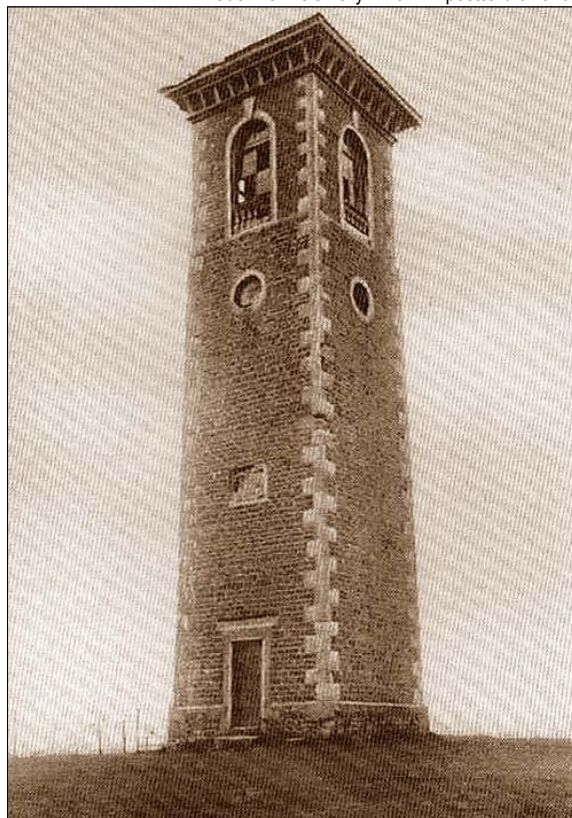
The Fellowship bought Wade Browne's folly from the Trust in 1998 and quickly restored its roof. Since then vandals have broken through a range of locks and other security measures, and slowly damaged the interior. As a result, we are currently looking at the possibility of removing the metal door and blocking up the opening to prevent access until a full restoration can be made.

The tower was built in 1848 as a replacement for a Semaphore Tower that originally stood on the site. It was put up by Col. Wade Browne who

leased the manor at Monkton Farleigh in 1842 and used the folly as a project for providing employment during the agricultural depression. He also improved the condition of the parish roads and built a school in the centre of the village where he personally taught the girls.

After his death on 2 August 1851, the manor was leased to a succession of tenants and eventually sold to Sir Charles Hobhouse in 1873: his descendants still own the estate. He was the author of *Monkton Farleigh* (an early history of the parish) published in 1882, and earned money mining stone

Wade Browne's Folly From: A postcard c.1910



from the quarries on his estate. In 1907 he altered the tower so he could use it as a hunting stand.

Not far from Monkton Farleigh, Thomas Wheeler built an almost identical tower in 1850 as an extension to Budbury Castle. It stood on the Winsley Road in Bradford on Avon until it was demolished in the early 1960s to make way for two houses. It is possible that this was a copy of Browne's tower and might show us how Browne's folly looked before Hobhouse made his alterations.

Brown or Browne? A plaque in Monkton Farleigh Church and the Will of Squire Wade Browne the elder (held in Birmingham), both spell the name with a 'e'.



Budbury Castle, c. 1900 From: [www.freshford.com/folly.htm](http://www.freshford.com/folly.htm)

## Oh, Mr Porter!

David Porter lives in a unique home astride the main London to Brighton railway at Hassocks (East Sussex). Not surprisingly, it is a bit of a celebrity and featured in this month's edition of *Sussex Living* magazine.

In the 1830s, when the London to Brighton Railway Company was planning the route of its main line, the local farmer insisted that if the railway was to be taken across his land, the front of the tunnel should be given a pleasing appearance. It was a challenge that was met by David Mocatta as a diversion from his usual work of designing railway stations. His solution was a mock medieval facade in Caen Stone, with a giant Gothic arch through

which the trains could pass.

The tunnel was completed in 1841 at a cost of £90,000, taking 6,000 men a total of three years to dig the mile and a quarter long route. Early passengers travelling in open carriages of the day were terrified by the long, dark tunnel, so the railway company sought to make the journey more comfortable by installing ceiling-mounted gas lights. Unfortunately, these were snuffed out by passing trains so it became necessary to engage a tunnel keeper to relight them.

In an attempt to provide the tunnel keeper with a place to live, the railway company appointed J. U. Rastrick to design a cottage which he placed centrally between

the octagonal turrets. Building work was completed in 1850, and is now David Porter's home.

In 1861 the tunnel was the scene of a major accident that left 200 people either injured or dead. It originated from a signal failure at Brighton which let three

trains depart within minutes of one another. A further misunderstanding between signalmen saw two of those trains collide inside the tunnel and causing them to de-rail. As survivors tried to escape from the wreckage, their plight was made worse by hot coals and scalding water exploding from the tenders and raining down on them in the darkness. Many of the injured were trapped for several hours before help arrived and they could be rescued. 23 people died at the scene and were eventually taken back to Brighton Station where they were laid out for identification on boards and trestles.

Four years after the accident occurred, Charles Dickens used it as the basis for his ghost story *The Signal Man*. He supported it with details from another accident at Staplehurst in which he was involved personally. So traumatised was he by the incident that he is said to have lost his voice and could never again cope with rail or hansom cab journeys. Not surprisingly, the incident fuelled stories about ghosts, with some people claiming that they can still hear the screams of the injured.

When Network Rail renovated the cottage and sought a tenant, it was marketed as "an ideal home for a trainspotting insomniac." In the *Sussex Living* article David tells us that he had to 'fight off hordes of keen trainspotters to secure the cottage and admits he has become very attached to it.'





## Jigsaw News

**T**wenty-five years ago the Benevolent Confraternity of Dissectologists was launched by a group of experts. Far from being a society for surgeons, the BCD is a club for people who share a passion for jigsaw puzzles, especially the early wooden ones. Having a family connection with the society, I had hoped that it would help me find a collection of jigsaws picturing follies but my search has been in vain.

Some progress was made this month when Paul Brooker told me of a website ([www.jigzone.com](http://www.jigzone.com)) where you can upload your own picture and complete the puzzle on screen. It includes a sample puzzle showing a gloriette (puzzle 73055D549864), and a chance to embed your chosen picture puzzle on the website. Another gloriette appears on a puzzle of a tranquil scene produced by Kerrison Toys.

Considering how picturesque they are, it is surprising that follies do not feature among the list of castles, cathedrals, locomotives, rose-framed cottages and other landmarks used by jigsaw makers.

I'll keep looking.

# Wanstead Stripped

**S**ince it was excavated in the early 1990s, the grotto at Wanstead Park has been covered by a blanket of ivy. Now, under the direction of archaeologists from the Museum of London, a group of volunteers have cut away the ivy to reveal the stonework beneath.

The grotto was built in 1761 as part of the gardens at Wanstead House. It has been attributed to William Kent, but 'only on the grounds that he decorated the ceiling of the Great Hall there in 1721' (H+M *Follies*). It originally served as a boathouse and had a first floor room that was said to have been decorated with feldspar and coloured glass, and with floors that had been laid out in geometric patterns using pebbles. Candles in mirror-lined alcoves illuminated it all together with small openings in the end walls overlooking the lake and glazed with coloured glass.



The Grotto before clearance of the Ivy  
Photo: Brian Gotts—[www.geograph.org.uk](http://www.geograph.org.uk)

Wanstead House was demolished in 1824, but the grotto survived both this and a further plan to remove it in 1835. In 1884 the grotto was completely destroyed in a fire, two years after the park had been opened to the public. Only the lake facade survived, and it is this which has been revealed in all of its naked glory.

An excellent account of the grotto and its history has been written by Mike Cousins and is published in *Follies* 68; 6-11 (Autumn 2007) and on the Wanstead Parklands Community Project website at [www.wansteadpark.org.uk](http://www.wansteadpark.org.uk)

## Landmark Appeal

**L**andmark Trust has begun an appeal to save the Warren House, a grade II\* listed folly overlooking Kimbolton Castle in Cambridgeshire. If successful, the eye-catcher will be the latest in their growing list of follies that are available for holiday accommodation.

The appeal, which was actually launched in November 2010, still needs to raise £43,000 if it is to reach its original £110,000 target. This, and grants of £500,000 from The Monument Trust, English Heritage and Huntingdonshire District Council, will enable restoration work to start later this year.

Built in the 16th century as a warrener's cottage, it was altered in the early 18th century by the 1<sup>st</sup>

Duke of Manchester who added a decorative facade and used it as an eyecatcher from the Castle, taking care to first ensure that it was aligned with the Duchess's bedroom window. For most of the 20th century the folly stood empty, vandalised and without a use.

Restoring the Warren House will involve bringing in an electricity and water supply. In an attempt to meet the need to be sustainable, the folly will also be connected to a 'green' air source heat pump.

Dr Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of

English Heritage, is a former pupil of Kimbolton School and recalls looking at the folly on a daily basis. EH has given £106,000 to the project target of £610,000: a total of £560,715 has been raised so far.

Donations to the appeal should be sent to The Landmark Trust at Shottesbrooke, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3SW.

The Warren House Photo: The Landmark Trust





# Haddonstone Show Garden Visit



**T**his year's Annual General Meeting takes place at East Haddon Village Hall (see cover for details), and is preceded by a rare opportunity to make a private tour of the Haddonstone Show Garden.

Haddonstone's renowned show gardens attract visitors from around the world. Its main garden surrounds the Manor House in the heart of East Haddon, where each level displays shrub roses, conifers, clematis and climbers. Over the years they have developed into a series of garden rooms that are ornamented with classical and contemporary planters, statuary, fountains and balustrading. Mem-

bers will be particularly interested in the Orangery, the poolside pergola and, in the Jubilee Garden, landscape follies that include a temple, pavilion and Gothic grotto. So sumptuous are they that the gardens now feature regularly in magazines and on television.

The gardens are normally open during the week but will be opened up for us by F/F member Simon Scott, who is also Haddonstone's Marketing Director. To augment the visit, Simon will be giving away a small number of Haddonstone's 208-page catalogue as well as his own acclaimed book on Artificial Stone.



## Directions for the day:

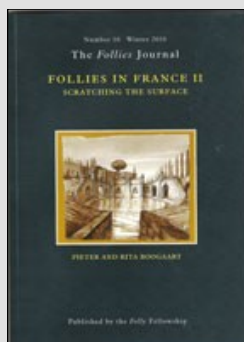
**Parking**—There is ample parking at the Show Garden—follow the brown tourism signs to the Haddonstone Show Gardens from the A428. The car park entrance is opposite the village school in the centre of East Haddon. For those who have SatNav systems, the full address is: The Forge House, Church Lane, East Haddon, NN6 8DB.

Panoramic views of the gardens and an online map are available from [www.haddonstone.com/VisitHaddonstone.aspx](http://www.haddonstone.com/VisitHaddonstone.aspx)

**Lunch**—Anyone who prefers to face the AGM on a full stomach is recommended to take lunch at The Red Lion, just 100 yards from the Show Gardens. It is a popular venue so pre-booking is advised on 01604 770223, or via the website [www.redlioneasthaddon.co.uk](http://www.redlioneasthaddon.co.uk)

## The Follies Journal

Issue 10 of the Journal has been released this month and completes Pieter and Rita Boogaart's record of the Follies of France. If you have not received your copy yet, please let us know.



# Gloriette Identified

**S**imon Scott spotted that the snow-covered gloriette pictured in the December e-Bulletin was a domed rotunda that had been supplied by Haddonstone as part of a project to improve the Lambeth Palace gardens ahead of the 1988 Lambeth Conference.

The project was led by Rosalind Runcie, wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and completed by Faith and Geoff Whiten.

A condition of purchase was that structure should not be referred to as a 'temple' because of its obvious pagan connotations.



*Unless otherwise stated, all pictures in this edition of the Bulletin are taken by the editor or from the Folly Fellowship Picture Library. We are grateful to all of the photographers for the generous use of their pictures. All views and comments that are expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily the opinion or belief of The Folly Fellowship.*