



THE CAPABILITY BROWN FESTIVAL 2016

www.capabilitybrown.org

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* Photo credit:

Portrait of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, c.1770-1775, Cosway, Richard (1742-1821)/Private Collection/Bridgeman Images

The world famous landscape designer Lancelot (Capability) Brown was born in 1716, and 2016 marked the 300th anniversary of his birth. He is considered by many to be the Father of the quintessentially English landscape and changed the face of England with his ground-breaking designs that are, today, taken for granted - they are so natural that people don't realise they are designed landscapes.

Many events took place around the country throughout the year, from the more traditional guided tours, talks, exhibitions, children's trails and activities, through to poetry slams, fun runs, triathlons and high tech geocaching. Visitors may have chosen to just relax and enjoy the fresh air and open spaces in his beautiful landscaped parks. As well as sporting activities, appreciation and enjoyment of nature was also encouraged throughout the festival, including bat walks, birdwatching, pond dipping, plus tree and plant recognition - wherever opportunities arose, whether at Brown's spectacular sites, or in local parks and nature reserves. There were also events at other venues who wished to participate in the festival.

National Geographic nominated Brown sites across the UK as one of the top 20 places to visit in the world, in 2016 (see website link page 6/20)

http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/best-trips-2016/#/bow-england-burghley-house_92367_600x450.jpg

Visit England named 2016 'The Year of the English Garden'

<https://www.visitengland.com/biz/about-us/campaigns-and-opportunities/year-english-garden-2016>

The Embroiderers Guild took the Brown festival as its first national project and exhibited CB-themed work throughout 2016 at sites around the country, with 5 exhibitions in the Heart of England

https://embroiderersguild.com/index.php?page_no=278&page_menu=capability-brown-festival

Partners supporting the Festival included 20 organisations:

<http://www.capabilitybrown.org/learn/partners>

The Heritage Lottery Fund provided resources to enable the festival plans to be developed and implemented.



CAPABILITY BROWN (CB) in the Heart of England

The 'Heart of England' was defined as covering 5 traditional counties within the midlands: Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. Within these counties 35 sites have been attributed to Brown, although not all were open to the public. Details can be found on the CB map on the national website <http://www.capabilitybrown.org/map>. Site locations ranged from Trentham in north Staffs; Weston Park, west Staffs; plus to the south Croome, Worcestershire; to the east Compton Verney, Warwickshire; to the west Tong Castle, Shropshire; and to the south-west Berrington Hall, Herefordshire. A Heart of England map was produced for the festival, showing the main Brown sites.

Some of the events and displays in the Heart of England:

- Georgian art in local galleries, including works by artists such as Canaletto, Gainsborough and, inspired by Claude Lorraine, Richard Wilson, the Father of British Landscape Painting
- CB-themed monthly exhibitions at Weston Park in the Granary Art Gallery (free entry)
- Concerts, including composers of the era: Handel, Arne, Vivaldi, Mudge
- Events throughout the year at Croome, including changing exhibitions by the Embroiderers Guild, and Richard Wilson's painting of Croome, exhibited in the autumn
- Events throughout the year at Compton Verney, including 'Art in the Park'
- A literary link through libraries, and Dr Johnson, with his houses (now museums) in Lichfield and London; Lichfield also celebrates the life of David Garrick the actor, who knew Brown and was his neighbour in Hampton, when Brown, as the Royal Gardener, lived in Hampton Court, near London
- Guided walks around Brown's parklands at several sites
- Talks on Brown's contributions to the landscape in the Heart of England
- 'Capabili-teas' – afternoon teas using Georgian recipes
- Events celebrating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Lunar Society, Darwin House
- Celebrating the regions Georgian canals, many built in CB's lifetime
- Events run by the local County Garden Trusts

County Garden Trusts in the Heart of England:

Herefordshire & Worcs (H&W GT)	http://www.hwgt.org.uk/
Shropshire (Shrops GT)	http://www.shropshiregardens.org.uk/
Staffordshire (Staffs GT)	http://www.staffordshiregardensandparks.org/
Warwickshire (Warks GT)	http://www.warwickshiregardenstrust.org.uk/

CAPABILITY BROWN in Birmingham

www.birminghamheritage.org.uk/



Birmingham has only one site with a direct link to Brown: Edgbaston Hall, which was owned by the Gough family and, in the 18th century, Sir Henry Gough commissioned Brown to redesign the surrounding park c.1775. The evidence for this has been found in Brown's account book, now owned by the Royal Horticultural Society, and housed in the Linley Library, London:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/libraries-at-rhs/collections/library-online/capability-brown-account-book>
(scroll through the 192 displayed pages to 152-153, which shows the entry - highlighted below - on the left hand page)

Page 131, quote:

"Sir Henry Gough B^t at Edgbaston in Warwickshire
a Plan for the general alterations of the place sent to Sir Henry
Jan 30th 1776 paid in June 1777 42 0 0"

No plans have yet been located and no other evidence has been found. The site is now owned by the Calthorpe Estate and is leased by Edgbaston Golf Club, the Hall being used as the club house. As this is a private golf club and in use 7 days a week there is no public access, but the parkland can be viewed from across the lake in the nature reserve - accessed through the garden of Winterbourne House:
www.winterbourne.org.uk/ email: enquiries@winterbourne.org.uk Tel: 0121 414 3003

Birmingham celebrated its Georgian history

With no other Brown sites within the city, local volunteers decided to explore 'The Age of Enlightenment' as reflected in Georgian Birmingham, to show Brown in the wider context of his era, through Georgian music, art, architecture, scientific developments, the industrial revolution, canal-building and men of the Enlightenment with local connections. All this was highlighted through a guided CB-themed Open Top 'Big Buz' tour of Georgian Birmingham.

Men of the Enlightenment

- The Lunar Society was founded in 1766, and celebrated its 250th anniversary in 2016 with a programme of events. This is being followed, in 2017, with a programme of legacy events:
<http://www.erasmusdarwin.org/the-lunar-society/>
- There is a Lunar Society Trail around Birmingham city centre and beyond
<http://historywm.com/lunar-society-city-centre-walk/>

- **Members of the Lunar Society were talented scientists, engineers, doctors, philosophers, entrepreneurs and industrialists of the age and most invested in the booming canal developments from c.1750:** <http://www.revolutionaryplayers.org.uk/>
- **James Brindley, the much sought after canal designer, also had his tercentenary in 2016. Brown knew Brindley, and commissioned work from him. Birmingham named the redeveloped canal-side site as Brindley Place to celebrate his contribution to Birmingham, and many local canals were built during Brown's lifetime (1716-1783):** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Brindley
- **Artists of the era developed new ways of presenting their work. Richard Wilson (c.1714-1782), a contemporary of Brown, has been called the Father of landscape painting, enhancing its status within the hierarchy of art in the C18, and can be viewed online:** www.richardwilsononline.ac.uk

Further reading:

- Laura Mayer: Capability Brown and the English Landscape Garden, Shire Library, 2012
- Jane Brown: Lancelot 'Capability' Brown - The Omnipotent Magician 1716-1783, Pimlico, 2012

Some of the festival events in the Heart of England 2016-17

2016			
January	04	Compton Verney:	Photographic Competition
February	01-28	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Staffordshire Society of Artists
	09	Croome, Worcs:	Talk: Life and Times of Capability Brown
	10	Croome, Worcs:	CB Winter walk
	11	Warwickshire Garden Trust:	Talk on CB's Warwick Castle Park
	14	Trentham:	Walk: CB Sunday Scenes Tour
March	24	Trentham:	National Gardens Scheme: garden tour
	01-31	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Embroiderer's Guild
	07	Charlecote Park:	Embroiderers' Guild CB-themed Exhibition (to Oct '16)
	17	Shropshire Gardens Trust:	Talk on CB's Moccas Park, Herefordshire
	19	Compton Verney:	Art in the Park (to Dec '16)
	20	Berrington Hall:	Embroiderers' Guild CB-themed Exhibition (to Nov '16)
	20	Trentham:	Walk: CB Sunday scenes Tour
April	22	Croome, Worcs:	West Mids NADFAS: CB special interest day
	29	Berrington Hall:	Georgian Boots and Bonnets Trail
	01-28	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Tim Scott Bolton
	11	Croome, Worcs:	Embroiderers' Guild CB-themed Exhibitions (to Oct '16)
	17	Weston Park:	CB Spring Walk: Exploring Temple Wood
May	23	Barber institute:	Friends' special interest day on CB
	01-30	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Simon Vernon
	01	Berrington Hall:	CB Walks, daily to November
	03	Croome, Worcs:	CB Walk: Patrons, Places and Landscape Design
	07/08	Hewell Grange, Worcs:	National Gardens Scheme: Open gardens
	09	Ragley Hall, Warks:	Open water swimming in CB's lake (to Sept '16)
	14	Packington Hall, Warks:	National Gardens Scheme: Open gardens
June	15	Packington Hall, Warks:	Warks Gardens Trust: guided walks
	01-29	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Russell Gilder
	10	Birmingham Heritage Bus:	Guided tour of Georgian Birmingham
	10	St Philip's Cathedral, Bham:	CB-themed concert by Conservatoire students
	12	Weston Park, Staffs:	CB-themed concert by Conservatoire students
	14	Croome, Worcs:	Talk: Capability Brown and his landscape
	24	Worcester schools:	CB-themed Exhibition & Concert
	25	Compton Verney:	Regency Ball
	25-26	Compton Verney:	'Park Life' weekend
	29	Berrington Hall:	CB Walk: Patrons, Places and Landscape Design
July	01-29	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Andrew Naylor
	02	Berrington Hall:	Music to create a landscape

	05	Croome, Worcs:	CB Talk: Brown's gardens of the National Trust
	12	Croome, Worcs:	CB Walk
	28	Weston Park:	CB Summer Walk: The Wider Parkland Uncovered
August	01-30	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: National Fine Art Open
	08	Berrington Hall:	Boating on CB's lake
	14	Berrington Hall:	Theatre: Histories of Capability Brown
	30	Various sites/events:	Capability Brown's Baptism, 1716
	30	Artrix, Bromsgrove:	Embroiderers' Guild CB-themed Exhibition (to Sept '16)
September	01-29	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Graham Colling
	06	Croome, Worcs:	Talk: Capability Brown, Visionary or Vandal
	08-11	Various sites/events:	Heritage Open Days (at some sites not normally open)
	18	Packington Hall:	WGT Guided walks around the park and afternoon teas
	18	Packington Hall:	6pm CB-themed concert in the church
	25	Croome, Worcs:	Brown's 300 th birthday party and exhibition launch
October	01-28	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: P Brown & B Thompson
	6-9	Warwick:	'Warwick Words' Literary Festival, CB talks
	11	Compton Verney:	Stratford DFAS special interest day on CB
	30	Weston Park:	CB Autumn Walk: Crunching through the leaves
November	01-29	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Matthew Wood
	19	Berrington Hall:	Christmas with the Georgians
December	01-31	Weston Park gallery:	CB Exhibition: Royal Birmingham Society of Artists
2017			
February	6	Anniversary of Capability Brown's death, aged 66, in 1783	
	28	Reviewing the Festival Legacy... what next?	

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Local sites and contact details

(Capability Brown Sites denoted by CB)

	Barber Institute	Tel: 0121 414 2261	info@barber.org.uk www.barber.org.uk
CB	Berrington Hall	Tel: 01568 615721	http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/berrington-hall
	Birmingham Canal Museum		http://www.birminghamcanalmuseum.org.uk/
Birmingham Churches:			
	St Bartholomew's		http://www.edgbastonoldchurch.org.uk/
	St Mary's Handsworth		http://ahistoryofbirminghamchurches.jimdo.com/handsworth-st-mary/
	St Paul's Church		http://www.birminghamheritage.org.uk/stpaul.html
	St Philip's Cathedral	Tel: 0121 262 1840	email: enquiries@birminghamcathedral.com www.birminghamcathedral.com
	Birmingham Greenways		www.birminghamgreenways.co.uk
	Birmingham Museums (including Soho House and Sarehole Mill)	Tel: 0121 348 8000	email: BMAG.Enquiries@birminghammuseums.org.uk http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/
	Birmingham Heritage Tours:		email: enquiries@birmingham-tours.co.uk
	Big Brum Buz and guides	Tel: 0121 427 2555	www.birmingham-tours.co.uk
	Canal and River Trust	Tel: 03030 404040	email: enquiries.westmidlands@canalrivertrust.org.uk https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/
CB	Charlecote Park	Tel: 01789 470277	http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/charlecote-park
CB	Chillington Hall	Tel: 01902 850236	http://chillingtonhall.co.uk/

CB	Compton Verney	Tel: 01926 645500	http://www.comptonverney.org.uk
CB	Coombe Country Park	Tel: 02476 453720	email: coombe.countrypark@coventry.gov.uk http://www.coventry.gov.uk/coombe
County Garden Trusts in the Heart of England:			
	Herefordshire & Worcs	(H&WCGT)	http://www.hwgt.org.uk/
	Shropshire	(ShropsCGT)	http://www.shropshiregardens.org.uk/
	Staffordshire	(StaffsCGT)	http://www.staffordshiregardensandparks.org/
	Warwickshire	(WarksCGT)	http://www.warwickshiregardenstrust.org.uk/
CB	Croome	Tel: 01905 371006	email: croome@nationaltrust.org.uk http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/croome
CB	Croome Walled Garden	http://www.croomewalledgardens.com/	
CB	Edgbaston Hall	http://www.parksandgardens.org/places-and-people/site/1225?preview=1	
	Erasmus Darwin House	Tel: 01543 306260	http://www.erasmusdarwin.org/
CB	Fisherwick	Tel: 01543 433606	email: fisherwicklakes@gmail.com http://www.fisheries.co.uk/fisherwick/
CB	Hewell Grange	Tel: 01527 783017	email: roy.jones01@hmpps.gsi.gov.uk All visitors must be pre booked by email before arriving. http://www.ngs.org.uk/gardens/find-a-garden/garden.aspx?id=172
	History West Midlands	Tel: 0800 121 4288	email: publisher@historywm.com www.historywm.com
CB	Ingestre Lodges	Tel: 01889 271013	email: info@ingestrelodges.com http://ingestrelodges.com
	Dr Samuel Johnson:	Lichfield House:	http://www.lichfield.gov.uk/sjmuseum/
		London House:	http://www.drjohnsonshouse.org/
	Moseley Hall	(currently a hospital)	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moseley_Hall,_Birmingham
	Moseley Hall:	Ice House & Dove Cote	http://moseley-society.org.uk/
CB	Packington Hall	Tel: 01676 522020	email: kay@packingtonestate.co.uk http://www.packingtonestate.net/
	Proof House	Tel: 0121 643 3860	http://www.gunproof.com/
CB	Ragley Hall	Tel: 01789 762090	email: reception@ragley.co.uk http://www.ragley.co.uk/
CB	Tong Castle	http://www.parksandgardens.org/places-and-people/site/6711?preview=1	
CB	Trentham Estate	Tel: 01782 646646	email: enquiry@trentham.co.uk http://www.trentham.co.uk
	Wedgwood Museum	Tel: 01782 371903	email: info@wedgwoodmuseum.org.uk http://www.wedgwoodmuseum.org.uk/
CB	Weston Park	Tel: 01952 852100	email: enquiries@weston-park.com http://www.weston-park.com/
	Winterbourne	Tel: 0121 414 3003	email: enquiries@winterbourne.org.uk www.winterbourne.org.uk/