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SPECIAL
Eventing

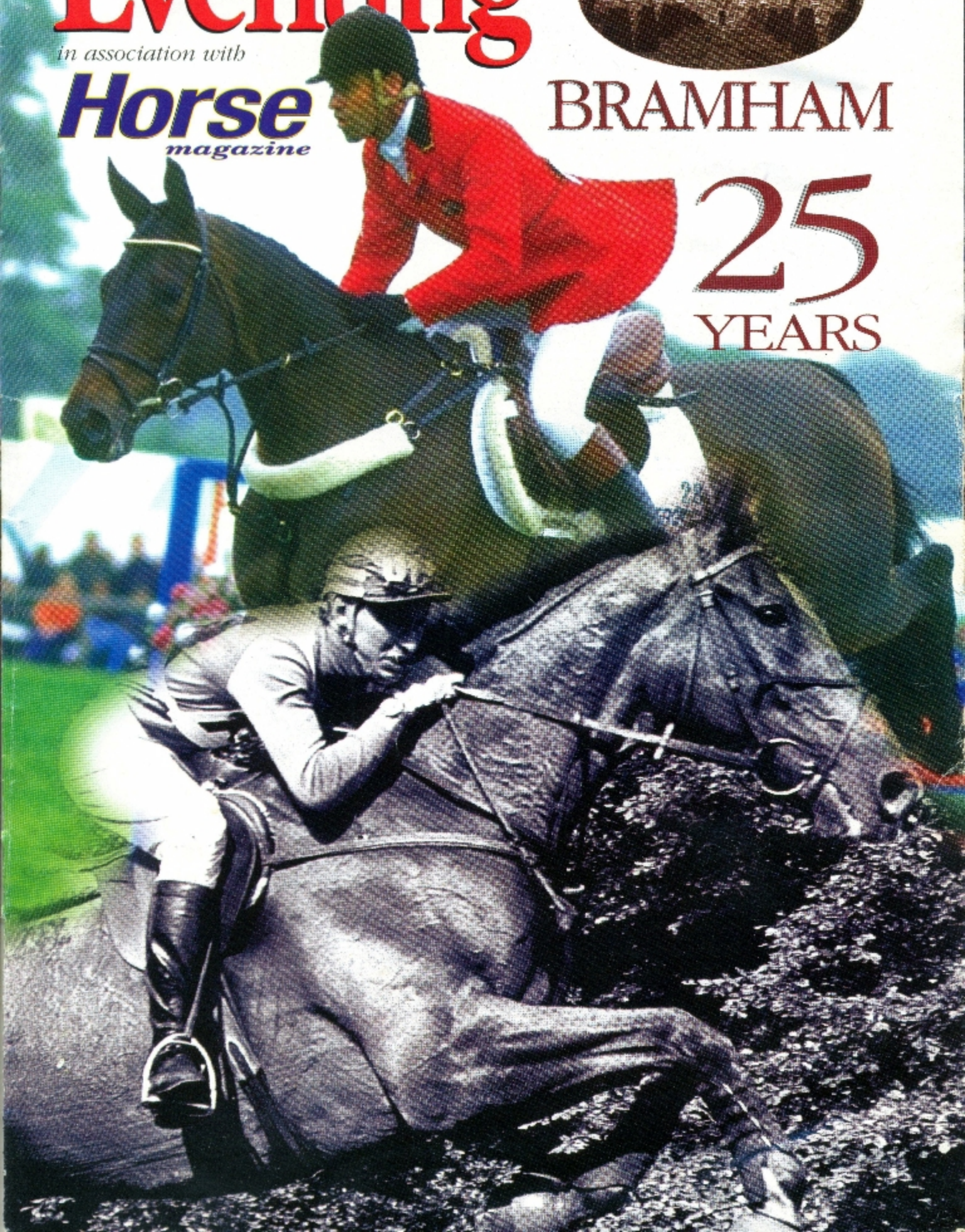
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Horse
magazine



BRAMHAM

25
YEARS





An unpretentious gentleman

This year Bramham celebrates its silver jubilee. Over 25 years it has grown into a three-day event of international stature with a reputation for friendliness, thanks in no small part to its founder and organiser George Lane Fox. George is profiled in this special supplement, compiled and written by JULIE HARDING, who also talks to director Bill Henson and winners past and present of northern England's favourite horse trials



A FEW days after visiting Bramham's host George Lane Fox, I phoned the horse trials office. I wanted to write George a thank you note.

"How should I address him?" I asked the voice at the other end of the telephone. "Just plain Mr," came the reply. "But doesn't he have a title from his army days?" I enquired. "He does, but he doesn't like to use it."

Of course, I thought as I replaced the receiver, a man as thoughtful and unpretentious as George Lane Fox, despite the fact that he owns a huge swathe of Yorkshire land, lives in a 34-room

stately mansion which has been in his family for 10 generations and is no stranger to an aristocratic social life, would only be happy with the modest title of Mr.

A few days earlier, when I had been ushered into the large but comfortable dog-filled sitting room at Bramham Park, Eton-educated George had been the perfect, unassuming host.

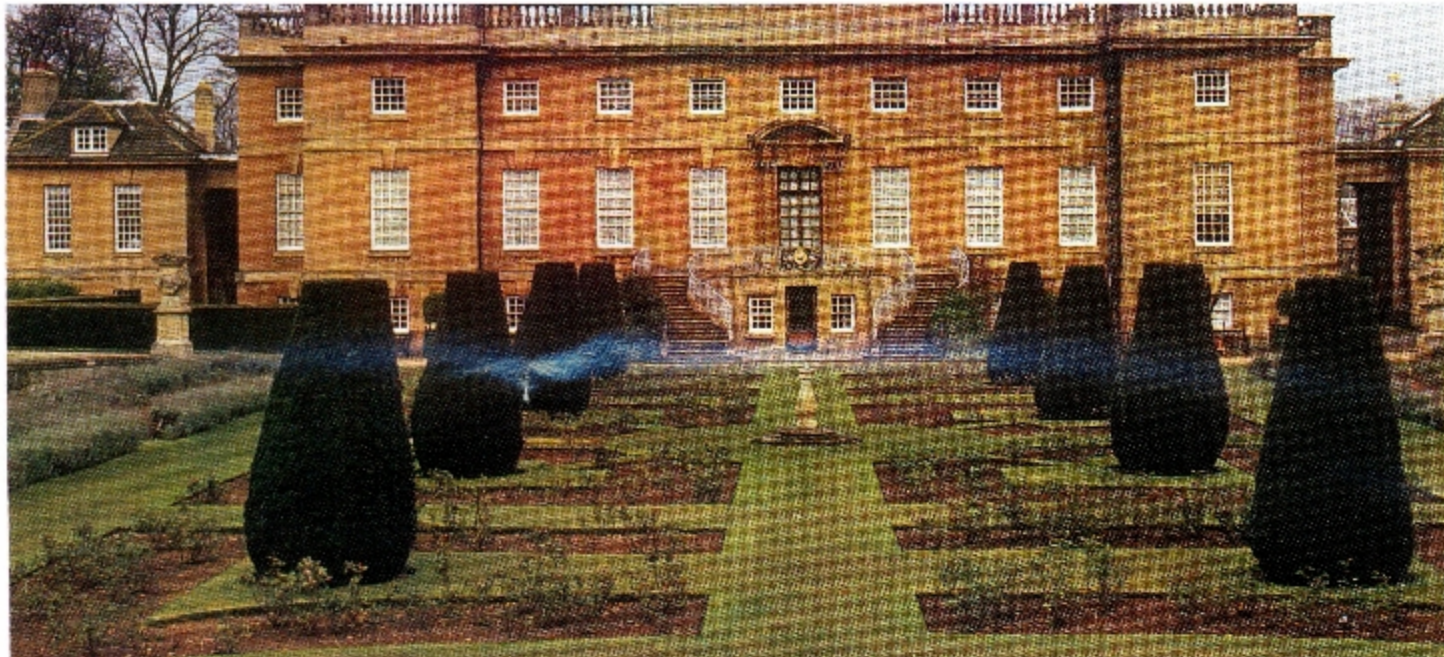
"What can I get you to drink," he had enquired just a few seconds after meeting me, as he disappeared behind a normal-looking door into a recess which served as his drinks "cabinet". "Have you had lunch?" he asked next, with genuine concern. "I wondered if you would like to go to the local pub?" Sadly, I had to

decline. I had heard that George's hospitable lunches lasted for hours and I had to catch a train back to London at half-past four.

So we stayed in the room where we were, George sipping something from a tumbler and smoking the occasional French cigarette.

Immediately, I discovered that George enjoys conversation. He loves discussing his ancestors and he tells with relish fascinating stories which don't always show them in a complementary light.

"The George Lane Fox who succeeded his father in 1821 was nicknamed the Gambler. He bred coursing greyhounds and had very expensive tastes, plus a very expensive wife who loved



Previous page: George in the hall at Bramham house, where Kneller's picture of Queen Anne hangs over the fireplace. **Left:** George with his daughter-in-law Rachel and grandchildren Charlie, Sophie, Freddie and George. **Above:** Bramham house.

London life, and he died with terrible debts. His son, the Squire, could only try to re-establish the family's money, but he wasn't able to rebuild the house, which had burnt down in 1828."

The family was certainly fascinating, but I didn't have time to hear its entire history, so I interrupted during a slight pause.

"What kind of famous guests have stayed here?" I asked.

"Queen Anne visited Robert Benson, who built Bramham, and presented him with a handsome picture of herself by Sir Godfrey Kneller, which now hangs in the hall here. Another queen who stayed had a reputation for being a bit of a jackdaw and the story goes that she liked a particular picture and asked why it wasn't hanging at Windsor. She was told in no uncertain terms that it belonged at Bramham!"

During the next, barely perceptible, break I change the subject completely and ask about the Lane Fox family and hunting. It is another subject close to George's heart. He tells me that he, his late wife Victoria and son Nick have all been joint masters

of the Bramham Moor, George between 1970-75 and then again between 1980-82, when, he says, he was "dragged back. I found that tedious indeed".

George's favourite hunter was Bella, whose greatest feat, despite standing barely 16hh, was clearing the enormous Cock Beck, a deep and dangerous stretch of water which the rest of the field forded, almost drowning in the process.

George also enjoys discussing the horse trials, which he set up as a one-day event in 1973 and a three-day in 1974. During his years in the Blues regiment, George longed to event, but there were few horse trials and "it was

the riding instructors who were allowed to compete at places like Tidworth, rather than mere subalterns like me".

Bramham was suggested as a horse trials venue in the 1950s.

"Harewood took place nearby, but towards the end of its run in 1959 the old colonels were becoming cavalier about what ground they used and it was decided to look for another venue. My parents were approached but, having heard that horse trials were difficult to run, they said no. The event went to Burghley, which was rough on people in the north, so when I came out of the army I was determined to set up a horse trials at Bramham." ▶

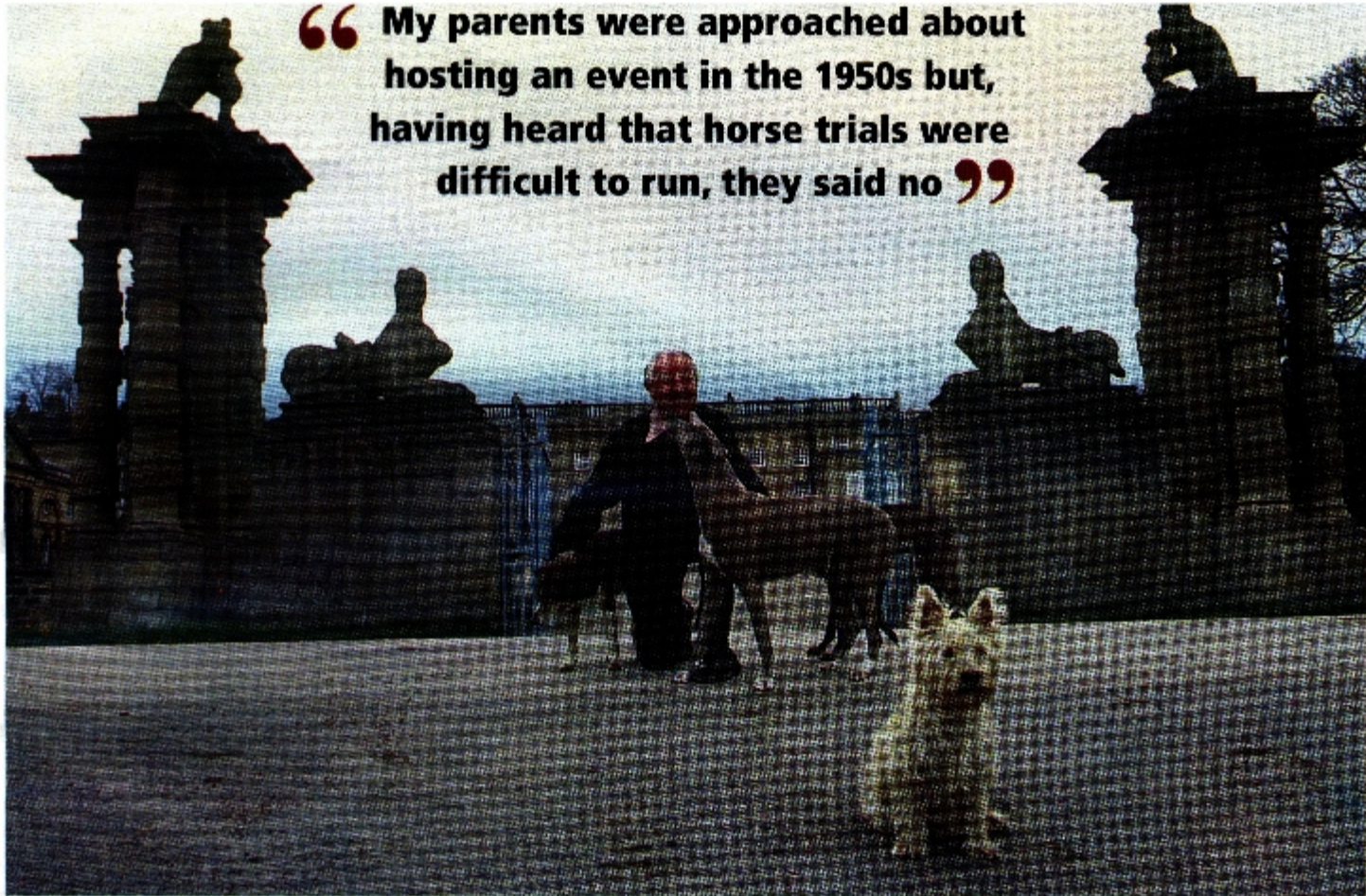
Did you know...?

At the first Bramham, competitors in the Junior section included Tiny Clapham and Andrew Harris, who went on to enjoy success at senior international level. Charlie Lane, who later became *chef d'equipe* to the senior British team, was also competing in the section on Sir Benfro.

There were 22 starters in the Standard Bank section, one of two senior sections run in 1974, including Princess Anne who rode Arthur Of Troy into fifth place despite a run-out at the second fence.



“ My parents were approached about hosting an event in the 1950s but, having heard that horse trials were difficult to run, they said no ”



George Lane Fox outside the gates of Bramham Park with four of his six dogs. Pictures by Trevor Meeks.

That first Bramham, which ran at the beginning of September, was intended for riders who hadn't been picked for the Burghley World Championships. Twenty-two competitors, all British except for a handful of Americans, started in the main Standard Section, which was won by a youthful Bruce Davidson, that year's eventual World Champion, who was on his honeymoon. He rode Paddy, with whom his new wife Carol was later eliminated at Badminton.

In the early days, George designed the cross-country course, with the help of the local undertaker George Kitchen who had a reputation as a competent builder of hunter trial tracks. The late, great course-designer Bill Thomson, George's "mentor", always came to offer advice.

When the event went international in 1981, George was obliged to employ an "international" designer — firstly Mike

Etherington-Smith, then Mike Tucker, and, more recently, Mark Phillips. George was sorry to give up such a fulfilling job.

Now George chooses who will officiate at Bramham and he hosts a houseparty during the trials at which guests include members of the ground jury.

Sadly this year will be the first time George has had to entertain without his wife Victoria, a passionate hunting woman. Victoria died suddenly last year just as a large house party was drawing to a close. She had suffered a heart problem for years and since 1984 had had four different pacemakers inserted. Nothing frustrated her more than being unable to ride to hounds.

"Her pacemaker meant she became exhausted mid-hunt, so she became the most fearsome car follower," George explains.

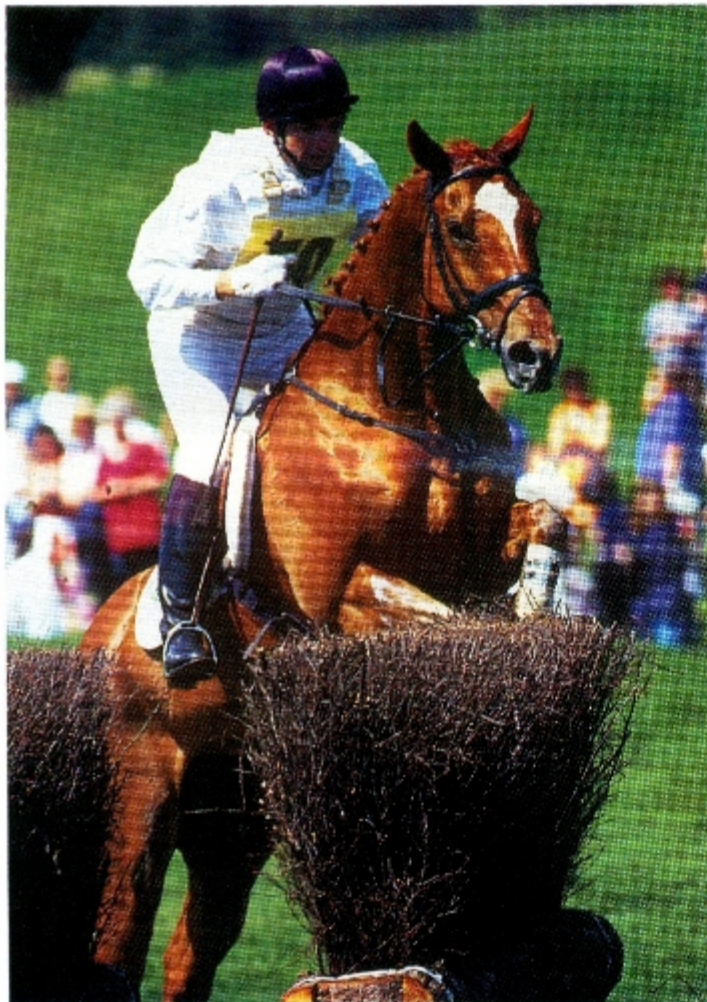
Since Mrs Lane Fox's death there have been changes at Bramham. The stables have been

"cleared out", except for two children's ponies, and Nick Lane Fox, a stockbroker and the eldest of George's three sons, his wife Rachel and four children — with a fifth due in June — have moved into Bramham Park. The long, dark, stone-floored corridors now often ring with children's happy voices. George obviously looks forward to 3.30pm, when Sophie, six, George, five, and Freddie, three, return from school.

With the children home it must be time for me to get a lift back to York station. George shakes my hand firmly as I leave.

The packed 16.30 to London is a scene far removed from the quiet calm and roomy splendour of Bramham House. As I battle to find a seat, I can't help wondering how George would fare aboard a Great North East Railway train.

He would be too polite for his own good, I thought, and without a reservation in first class he would be left standing all the way.



Clockwise from left: Ian Stark and Forest Glen, CCI winners in 1996; Sharon Lemon and Oh Nicholas, winners in 1990; Jane Dobson-Seaton receives her prize after winning the CCA in 1982 with Barnabus.

Did you know...?

Riding to hounds one morning in the 1930s, Col Francis Lane Fox, the present owner's father, thought he heard the Bramham Moor hounds and their huntsman hurrying after him across the park. He held the gate open for them to pass through, but nobody came and the sound of galloping hooves died away. He realised he had heard "the horses", which legend says is the ghostly sound of riderless horses fleeing from the Battle of Bramham Moor in 1408.

King's Jester, ridden by Jane Thelwall, is the only horse to have won the Bramham CCI twice.

Several TV programmes have been made at Bramham, including *Darling Buds of May*, *Raffles*, *Romance on the Orient Express* and *Circles of Deceit* with Dennis Waterman.

BRAMHAM'S CHAMPIONS

RICHARD MEADE

(Standard Sterling winner 1975)

"THE YEAR before I won at Bramham I had ridden Jacob Jones, a Thoroughbred originally owned by John Shedden, at Colombier in Switzerland. His inexperience showed and he didn't go well, especially at ditches which he hated. I hunted him over the winter, which helped, and I took him to Bramham that spring. We won, but afterwards developed "fourth-itis" — we were fourth at Boekelo, fourth at Badminton and fourth at the Montreal Olympics — but that was really quite a feat for a horse who wasn't very brave.



I have always enjoyed Bramham, which is a very friendly event. The cross-country has become more technical over the

years, but the competition has always provided a good stepping stone for horses going on to even greater things."

ANDREW HARRIS

(Standard Sterling winner 1976)

"MY BROTHER Johnny originally show jumped Ritudyr Rose, by racehorse sire Ritudyr, at Grade A level, but she would never jump water trays and so was switched to eventing.

I rode her at the first Bramham in the Junior section, then won the main senior section two years later despite one of Ritudyr Rose's poor performances in the dressage arena. After that we went to Badminton. Frank Weldon rung beforehand and boomed down the telephone: 'Do you know what you are letting yourself in for?' I didn't, but we still finished in the top 20! They had a water tray in the show jumping that year, but for the first

time in her life Ritudyr Rose didn't refuse! She injured her back afterwards and was used as a brood mare, but I have her to thank for bringing me into the limelight. She shaped my career."

JUDY BRADWELL

(Standard Sterling winner 1978)



"I FIRST saw my Bramham winner Castlewellan in the beam of a car's headlights in Ireland when he was three. I knew instantly that he was the horse for me and he went on to become my horse of a lifetime.

He was a very sharp individual and no one ever rode him but me, but he was wonderfully talented and in 1978 he won five events out of five, including the two-day at Windsor.

I will never forget Bramham in 1978. It took place during a wonderful balmy summer week. I was drawn last and had to play a real waiting game — I had so much time that I was able to read *Lady Chatterley's Lover*! When the time came for me to go across country everyone was going home!

Later that year Castlewellan fell at Burghley, but during his career he also won Punchestown, was third at Luhmühlen and third at

Boekelo and he won the Working Hunter of the year at Wembley and the Spillers Combined Training. After injuring my leg, I was forced to sell Castlewellan. He went to the States where he enjoyed success first with Jimmy Wofford and then Karen O'Connor.

In 1979 I was lucky again at Bramham, winning the Novice Griffin section with a mare called Nina. She had been sent over from the States to show jump, but she didn't make the grade and so I took her eventing. Sadly, she was another horse who had to be sold when I injured my leg out hunting. I hit a telegraph pole in a freak accident, but it weakened my leg and ended my career at top level."

RICHARD WALKER

(Winner Bank Standard section in 1978 and CCA in 1984)

"BRAMHAM brought me mixed fortunes during my eventing career. I won a section in 1978 with John Of Gaunt at what was our first event together. By the Queen's Cleveland Bay stallion Mulgrave Supreme, John Of Gaunt was ridden initially by owner Ken Lyndon Dykes, until the horse's dislike of tractors caused Ken to fall off and break his arm. John Of Gaunt had a wonderful personality, but he was not the ideal three-day event horse ▶



William Fox-Pitt and *Cosmopolitan* en route to victory in 1995. Below: Sandy Pfleuger and *The Abbot*, winners in 1977. Bottom: Julie Robinson, Young Rider Champion with *Irish Skater* in 1997.



Did you know...?

Organiser George Lane Fox longed to event as a young man but was never able to realise his dream. Instead he fulfilled another equestrian-related ambition by setting up Bramham horse trials on the estate which has been in his family for 10 generations.

Paddy, the first winner of Bramham's main section, had previously won a three-day event in America. He became Horse of the Year in the states and was Bruce Davidson's reserve for the 1974 Burghley World Championships.

Mary Thomson (now King) finished first and second at Bramham on King Cuthbert and Silverstone in 1986, while Sarah Cutteridge achieved the same feat with James Frederick and Hail And Thunder in the Young Rider Championship in 1993.



Bruce Davidson receives his prize after winning the main section at the first Bramham with Paddy.



Above: Richard Meade and Jacob Jones, on their way to victory in 1975. Top right: Dual winners Jane Thelwall and King's Jester on their lap of honour in 1988. Right: Lucy Kemplay and Heron's Flight, Young Rider Champions in 1995 and 1996.



From competitor to course-designer ...

MARK PHILLIPS took over as course-designer from Mike Tucker in 1997. As a competitor, his best placing was a third in 1988.

"My overriding memory of competing at Bramham was falling off a catch ride on the steeplechase! I also schooled Columbus there in 1974 after the competition was over and just before that year's World Games. My best result was a third place on Cartier in 1988, a year

before I retired from eventing. Then, as now, the time was difficult to attain, and if you got behind on the clock the hilly terrain made it impossible to catch up.

As the course-designer at Bramham I am always struggling to find flatter ground. Apart from the hills, there is a large wooded area and a number of "bottlenecks". Inevitably, when you take over from somebody else, you stamp your own mark

on a course and do things differently. Last year at Bramham a lot of things were a little different. This year there will be a few more new things — 12 new fences in all. I think I had some good ideas last year and as I watched the competition new ideas came thick and fast.

My philosophy is to be kind to the horses and, with my tongue in my cheek, be "unkind" to the riders in a way that brings out their horsemanship.



I think people know that they can't jump one of my courses with their eyes shut!

Bramham is growing all the time. It is just a shame it has to exist without sponsorship. For the course-designer this means having to operate within a limited budget."

as he found the distances tiring. Nevertheless, he went on to win Burghley in 1980.

With Alan Birchall's Globetrotter I won the first Falsterbo CCI before going on to win Bramham in 1984. Globetrotter was a talented horse and at a three-day, as with any quality animal, once you started sharpening the blade it got sharper!

But it was with another of Alan Birchall's horses, Accumulator, that I suffered the fate of being eliminated in the show jumping for missing out a fence while in the lead in 1987. I just didn't want to be there any more, but Alan showed what a great sportsman he was and when the National Anthem played at the end no one sang louder than he did."

TUFFY OWEN

(CCA winner 1981)

"LAURIMAN WAS a brother of Laurieston, who won dual gold at the Munich Olympics with Richard Meade. Mark Phillips brought Lauriman out, but a bad fall in the Trout Hatchery at Burghley, in which he damaged his tendons, was thought to have ended his career.

The night his owner Major Allhusen phoned me up to offer me the ride I was thinking of quitting the sport.

I was just out of Juniors and the expense of competing was proving prohibitive for my parents who were sheep farmers.

However, I took Lauriman on and hunted him hard that winter with the Flint and Denbigh. I also ran him in a point-to-point, but

being half German he only managed to stay with the field for one-and-a-half circuits!

The hunting and point-to-pointing restored his confidence and after a couple of one-days I took him to Bramham. The Allhusens didn't expect much and had gone on holiday, but we were equal first after the dressage and on the cross-country he just went from strength to strength despite the muddy going.

Afterwards I finished fifth and best of the British at the Young Rider Europeans in Achsel-schwang. Later on, when I had a baby, Lauriman was given to another rider.

Despite having ridden at Burghley three times since, winning Bramham was the highlight of my eventing career." ▶

**ACE
IN THE PACK**

Thanks to his business acumen, Burghley director Bill Henson has helped to make Bramham horse trials bigger, better and more profitable



good the food is! I brought in a new accounting system and more recently suggested running Gatcombe, which my son Tim directs, from the Bramham office, giving hardworking secretary Gail Dale a full-time rather than part-time job. The office will also soon be running the new Harewood CIC.

What do you remember of Bramham from the early days?

Its friendliness and great atmosphere. My daughter Lucinda has competed there several times, so I knew the event well before I became involved on a business basis.

How has it developed?

It gets more spectators — 34,000 now, mostly people who appreciate country sports and are interested in the young horse classes and international show jumping as well as the CCI. Bramham occupies an important place in the horse trials calendar, is more sophisticated than it used to be and is more of a

When and why did you get involved with Bramham?

Nine years ago George Lane Fox invited me to take a look at the event with a view to making recommendations. After reading my report he telephoned to say: "When are you coming to do all this?"

What changes did you recommend?

Thirty-six in all. The CCI was well run, but little attention had been paid to spectator facilities, such as catering. In my view, people judge their day at a horse trials on three things — how easy it is to get in, what the loos are like and how



Clockwise from left: Terry Boon and Vital Decision, Young Rider Champions in 1994; Sybilla Ambler and Spirit of Calvados, British Junior Champions in 1983; Nick Straker and Ruan, winners of the Standard Bank section in 1974; Andrew Harris and Ritudyr Rose on their way to victory in 1976.



Did you know...?

The Bramham estate covers 5,500 acres and includes 1,100 acres of woodland. Most of the fences at Bramham are constructed from timber sourced on the estate. In the great gale of 1962, 400 mature trees were blown down in the garden alone. The house, which dates back to 1710, has 34 rooms.

Lucy Kemplay became the first rider in the 11-year history of the Young Rider National Championship to take the title two years in succession, both times with Heron's Flight. Polly Lyon was the first Young Rider to win the championship twice — in 1988 and 1990 with two different horses, Highland Road and Folly's Last.



shopper's paradise. With so many tradestand holders clamouring for space, we are having to turn some away.

What are your future goals?

More spectators and a sponsor. We haven't found one yet for this year, but I am ever hopeful of a flash of lightning!

How does the Bramham job fit in with being director of Burghley?

Easily. I'm administration director of Bramham, but director of Burghley, a more time-consuming job. We rarely have things like committee meetings for Bramham. We had one in the first year and one again last year, but went without one during the six years between! George Lane Fox and I work it out between us. George is the main man and I'm just there to back him up.

How did you get involved with horse trials?

After giving up the mastership of

the Grove and Rufford, I wanted to do one of two things — be secretary of the Belvoir or run Burghley. I didn't want to do the former while my brother was master, and Charles Stratton, who was younger than me, already had the Burghley job. Unfortunately, he had to give up through health problems and so I took over.

I cut my teeth on running the 80,000-spectator Lincolnshire Agricultural Show, which helped me to make the horse trials I am involved with into more rounded shows.

Have you ever ridden/evented yourself?

I rode at Badminton four times in the 1950s. I met my wife Val through the sport. While at Cambridge University and preparing for Badminton I looked around for somewhere to keep my horse. Val offered and then helped me with my dressage, but she made sure I was never as good as she was! I suppose you could call

our daughter Lucinda a purpose-made event jockey!

I still ride, and last year I hacked around Burghley during the trials on one of Val's horses to keep tabs on what was going on.

How do you combine farming with running horse trials?

I only farm on a Sunday morning! A few years ago I sold my herd of dairy cows and now grow crops on my farm in Lincolnshire, which fits in more easily with the horse trials.

What are your passions in life?

Wine and a decent steak, plus a long holiday in the sun when it is cold in England.

Also football. I'm a passionate follower of Nottingham Forest. I've been to matches all over Europe and carried on going during football's "rough" period. I once nearly had my car turned over by an angry mob outside a ground, but it didn't deter me. Val hates football. When I watch *Match of the Day*, she goes to bed!

BRAMHAM'S CHAMPIONS

JONQUIL HEMMING

(Winner first Young Riders' National
Championship 1983)

"I WAS 15 when I got my Bramham winner Mr Moon, by the HIS stallion Iron Ore. When I went to try him, he bucked me off, jumped a five-bar gate out into the road and galloped home! I thought I had ruined him before I had even begun, but we bought him because we knew he could jump! He was an amazing horse who made the transition from Pony Club to top level. I won at Wylde as a Junior in 1981, then the Young Riders at Bramham in 1983, which I can't claim as my best victory because I had several show jumps down.

Afterwards I rode Mr Moon in the Young Rider Europeans at Burghley, finishing fifth.

We still have Mr Moon, who is

Did you know...?

The current owner's nineteenth century ancestor George Lane Fox ("the Gambler") was 6ft 5ins tall and weighed 19 stone. He and his wife Georgina, whittled away the family fortune, which their son George ("the Squire") devoted his life to paying off. The debts totalled around £175,000.

Karen Dixon has finished in the top 10 at Bramham several times, but she has never won the event, unlike her elder brother Nick Straker, who won in 1974 and 1977.

There were 25 starters in the main Standard Sterling section at the first Bramham. There was one of the biggest fields in 1991, when 99 started in the CCI. In 1987, with Badminton cancelled, there were two CCI sections, with 46 starters in Fox and 34 in Lane section.

now 26, at home. He had a huge heart and was the horse who put me on the map."

JANE WALLACE

(Won CCI 1987 & 1988 with King's Jester)
"BRAMHAM HAS always been a lucky event for me. I rode there for the first time in 1976 — at what was my first ever three-day event — on the former point-to-pointer River Boy.

If I'm honest, my victory at Bramham in 1987 with King's Jester was slightly hollow because it occurred only because the leaders Richard Walker and Accumulator were eliminated in the show jumping.

However, the next year was very special. It occurred after the disappointment of missing Badminton in the spring due to 'flu, and formed the first part of a memorable double — I went on to win Burghley.

To win twice out of just three runs at Bramham means the event obviously holds a special place in my affections. I will never forget the wonderful photograph published in the *Yorkshire Post* after one of my victories, showing Jester with his ears pricked on our lap of honour — that summed it up completely."

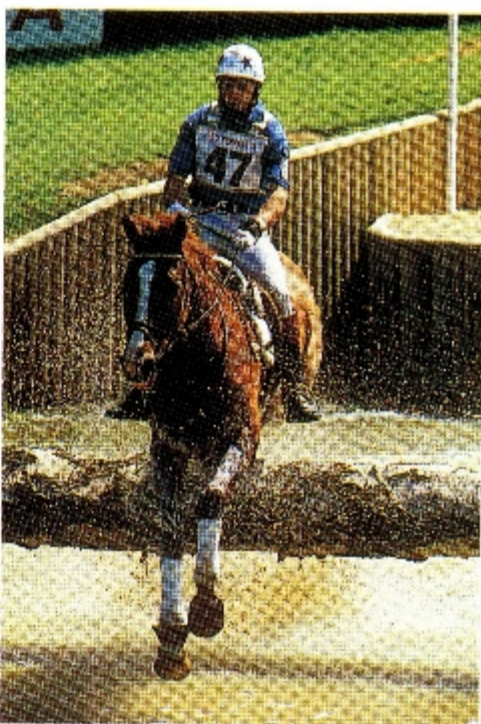
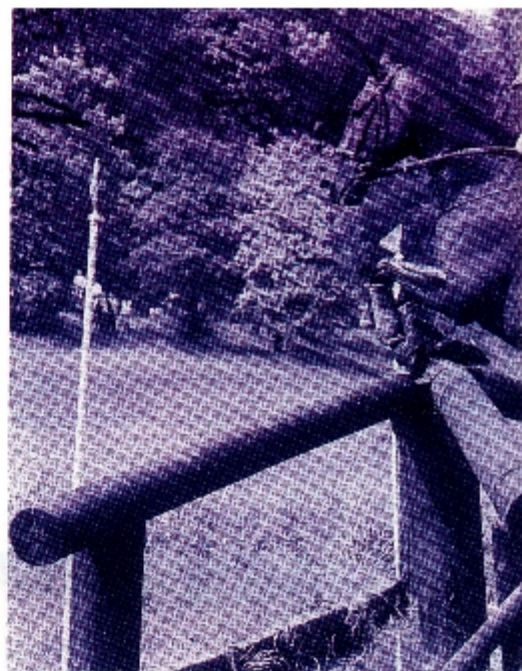
MARY KING

(First and second
in advanced section 1986)

"I TOOK King Cuthbert on as an intermediate with a rather inconsistent record and a habit of falling over.



Bramham in 1986 was our first three-day together and it wasn't all plain sailing. I had the 'flu and had lost weight, so there was a mad panic trying to find a weight cloth just 20 minutes before I was due on Phase A. Cuthbert then



Mary King, who achieved a one-two in the advanced section in 1986 with King Cuthbert and Silverstone (pictured). Above: Blyth Tait and Aspyring, CCI winners in 1994.





Above: Tuffy Tilly about to achieve a career best by winning the CCA on Lauriman in 1981. **Below:** Tanya Longson and Pink Fizz, first in the Young Rider section in 1984.



BRAMHAM'S CHAMPIONS

shot out of the cross-country start box before he had been told to go, so I wasted valuable seconds bringing him back round again. Nevertheless, he shot round the course like a bullet and we pulled up into the lead.

My other horse, Silverstone, lay in third after the cross-country. The next day the latter show jumped clear and when poor Andrew Harris, lying second, had a disaster I knew I had won the competition anyway. With the pressure off, Cuthbert show jumped clear to win.

I've always liked Bramham, particularly its great parties. One year I had a "lorry warming" party.

Any drink brought was poured into a huge bowl and the game was to take out bits of fruit without using your hands!

Everyone got rather merry and John Poole's wife fell down the lorry steps as she was leaving and was lucky not to break her leg!"

SHARON LEMON

(CCI winner 1990)

"I BOUGHT Oh Nicholas, a speedy and clever Thoroughbred with a touch of pony, from a dealer who was later arrested for stealing! Nicholas was originally my Pony Club horse, but he coped with the transition to BHS eventing.

I first competed at Bramham in 1989, when we lay in 78th place after the dressage! I went to Jane Bartle for lessons as a result and the next year we lay 14th after the first phase. Conditions were dreadful on the cross-country, but Nicholas added just 0.8 of a time penalty and moved easily into the lead. We didn't need the two fence advantage we had going into the show jumping.

Nicholas was fourth at Bramham the following year and

I ran him twice at Burghley, but each time he was lame after the steeplechase. Sadly he died of colic in 1992.

I have had other eventing successes since, but your first big win is always the best, and winning Bramham was even more special for me because Nicholas was my best friend."

PIPPA FUNNELL

(Winner 1992 with Metronome)

"I LED after the cross-country the year before my win, but the next day in the show jumping, during a terrible thunder storm, I had three fences down. It was just awful, but great to be able to go back the following year and win. Another disastrous thing happened to me in 1987. I was lying third in the Young Riders after cross-country with Sir Barnaby, but I missed a fence out in the show jumping and was eliminated — just as Richard Walker was in the CCI.

I have had some great times at Bramham, though. It's a lovely, hospitable three-day event, with a nice course, good going and a great atmosphere."



Did you know...?

In 1828 Bramham house was gutted by fire and lay in ruins until restoration began in 1906.

Laura Jennings was one of the unluckiest Young Riders at Bramham. Her horse Time Watch was spun two years in succession at the final vets' inspection, including in 1996 when she was leading the competition and trying to emulate her sister Lucy's victory in 1992.

KRISTINA GIFFORD

(Winner Young Riders National

Championship in 1991 and CCI in 1993)

"MY VICTORY in the Young Riders National Championship with Smithstown Lad was my first major Young Rider win, although I had won medals at Junior level with Song And Dance Man

Smithstown Lad was originally bought for my brother Nick, but I eventually took him on. Quite often he was chosen in preference to Song And Dance Man for teams because he was better at dressage.

General Jock's victory in the CCI in 1993 was a surprise. After buying him at Doncaster Sales as a four-year-old, I broke and produced him myself, but he had done few competitions and I remember travelling up to Bramham thinking that it would be nice if he just went well. I never dreamed of winning.

We were one of only two combinations to go clear across country inside the time — we even won the prize for finishing closest to the optimum — and as a result we rocketed to the top of the leaderboard. We had a show jump down the next day, but still managed to beat the dressage

leaders Pippa Nolan and Cartoon."

ANDREW HOY

(CCI winner 1997)

"I HAD ridden Swizzle In just once before Bramham — for a rather inauspicious cross-country schooling session during which he was pretty unwilling. He then had time off and I next got on him during Bramham week. It was only after a good dressage test that I felt I was in with a chance. He jumped a great clear round the next day and on the Sunday was unbelievable — he almost jumped me off in the collecting ring and then ballooned every show jump in the arena.

Swizzle In was sold after Bramham, but fortunately I retained the ride."



Did you know...?

Only four riders from overseas have won at Bramham over the 25 years. After Bruce Davidson's victory in 1974, it was another 16 years before a foreign competitor (France's Didier Seguret with Lotoise) would take the spoils. During the last four years, overseas riders have won twice — Blyth Tait for New Zealand in 1994 and Australia's Andrew Hoy in 1997.

ROLL OF HONOUR

1974

Standard Sterling

Paddy

(Bruce Davidson, USA)

Standard Bank

Ruan (Nick Straker)

Junior Section

Sunshine Girl

(Miss J Davies)

1975

Standard Sterling

Jacob Jones

(Richard Meade)

Standard Bank

Don Carlos

(Mrs C Graham)

Novice Griffin

Scintinella

(P Carrington)

Novice Guineas

Blarney Stone

(Miss H Stapleton)

1976

Standard Sterling

Ritudyr Rose

(Andrew Harris)

Novice Gold

Jonathan Courage

(J Carder-Geddes)

Novice Griffin

Marksway Carver

Doone (Mrs M Wallace)

1977

Standard Sterling

The Abbot

(Sandy Pfleuger)

Bank Standard

Montego Bay

(Nick Straker)

Novice Gold

Mombasa

(Miss C Middleton)

Novice Griffin

Soldier Blue

(Mrs W White)

1978

Standard Sterling

Castlewellan

(Judy Bradwell)

Band Standard

John Of Gaunt

(Richard Walker)

Novice Gold

Wildacre Kestrel

(Debbie Munrowd)

Novice Griffin

Liverpool Bay

(Charlie Micklem)

1979

Standard Section

Rescator

(Gillian Fleming-

Williams)

Bank Standard

Priceless

(Ginny Holgate)

Novice Gold **Bobalong**

(Celia Ross-Taylor)

Novice Griffin

Nina (Judy Bradwell)

1980

Standard Section

Claughton

(John Marsden)

Sterling Section

Fighting Fifth

(Robin Cayzer)

Novice Griffin **Banana**

(Hendrik Wiegiersma)

Novice Guineas

Sparrowhawk II

(Ginny Strawson)

1981

CCA **Lauriman**

(Tuffy Tilly)

Sterling Section

Asian Princess

(Maureen Piggot)

Gold Section

Honeymead

(K Woolrych)

Griffin Section

Cundall Knight

(Phillip Johnson)

Guineas Section

Zeus (Jonquil Sainsbury)

1982

CCA **Barnabus**

(Jane Dobson-Seaton)

Standard Sterling

Minsmore

(Ginny Strawson)

Standard Silver

Filou (Lorna Clark)

Novice Gold **Fezantey**

(Fiona Stewart)

Novice Griffin

High Brow

(Linda Laidig)

Novice Guineas

Millie Too

(Belinda Bull)



Clockwise from left: Judy Bradwell and Castlewellan, Standard Sterling winners in 1978; Gillian Fleming-Williams and Rescator, on their way to victory in 1979; John Marsden, on Claughton, receives his prize in 1980.



Did you know...?

Ian Stark's victory in 1996 with Forest Glen signalled the end of a five-year run for Ian without a major three-day event success.

Four Bramham winners, Jacob Jones (1975), Priceless (1979), Sir Wattie (1983) and Cosmopolitan II (1995), went on to compete at the Olympics. Bramham winners The Irishman, Priceless and Sir Wattie all went on to win Badminton.

1983

CCA

The Gamesmaster
(Robert Lemieux)

Young Riders' National
Championship

Mr Moon

(Jonquil Sainsbury)

Standard Section

Sir Wattie (Ian Stark)
British Junior
Championship

Spirit Of Calvados
(Sybilla Ambler)

1984

CCA **Globetrotter**
(Richard Walker)

Advanced

Charlie Brown IV
(Ian Stark)

Young Riders' Section

Pink Fizz

(Tanya Longson)

1985

Advanced Section

Deansland (Ian Stark)
Young Riders'

National Championship

Streetlighter

(Helen Ogden)

1986

Advanced Section

King Cuthbert
(Mary Thomson)

Young Riders' National
Championship

Friday Fox

(Rachel Hunt)

1987

Fox CCI **King's Jester**
(Jane Thelwall)

Lane CCI

The Irishman
(Rodney Powell)

Young Riders' National
Championship

Master Chester

(Katie Parker)

1988

CCI **King's Jester** (Jane
Thelwall)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Highland Road

(Polly Lyon)

1989

CCI **Lotoise**
(Didier Seguret, FRA)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Fair Share

(Claire Bowley)

1990

CCI **Oh Nicholas**
(Sharon Lemon)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Folly's Last (Polly Lyon)

1991

CCI **Welton Chitchat**
(Ginny Leng)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Smithstown Lad
(Kristina Gifford)

1992

CCI **Metronome**
(Pippa Nolan)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Diamond Pedlar
(Lucy Jennings)

1993

CCI **General Jock**
(Kristina Gifford)

Young Riders'

National Championship

James Frederick
(Sarah Cutteridge)

1994

CCI **Aspyring**
(Blyth Tait, NZL)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Vital Decision

(Terry Boon)

1995

CCI **Cosmopolitan II**
(William Fox-Pitt)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Heron's Flight

(Lucy Kemplay)

1996

CCI **Forest Glen**
(Ian Stark)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Heron's Flight

(Lucy Kemplay)

1997

CCI **Swizzle In**
(Andrew Hoy, AUS)

Young Riders'

National Championship

Irish Skater

(Julie Robinson)



The Hon Mrs Lane Fox and Sophie Lane Fox



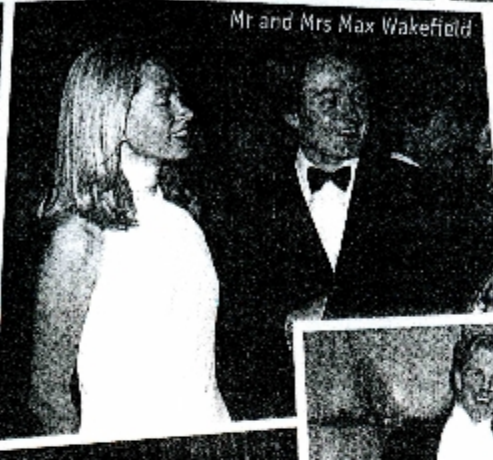
Mr Jonathan Lewis-Jones, Miss Harriet Robertson, and Mr Edward Coley



Mr and Mrs George Lane Fox, and Spike



Mr Somerled MacDonagh and Miss Emily Latham



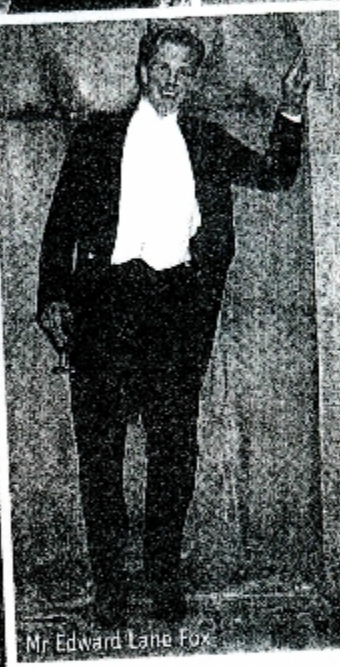
Mr and Mrs Max Wakefield



Mr Nicholas Lane Fox and George Lane Fox



Mr Andrew and Miss Abigail Fox



Mr Edward Lane Fox



Miss Cecilia Hutton and Miss Sarah Hughes

Bramham Park Ball
Mrs and Mrs George Lane Fox celebrated Edward's 21st, Rachel's 30th, and Bramham's 300th birthdays

Bramham Park Ball

Mr and Mrs George Lane Fox gave a party at Bramham in Yorkshire to mark a triple celebration – the 21st birthday of their son Edward, the 30th birthday of their daughter-in-law Rachel, and the 300th birthday of Bramham itself. Well-known to many for the very successful horse trials held there each June, Bramham was built in 1698 for Robert Benson 1st Lord Bingley, from whom the Lane Foxes are descended. He masterminded the architecture of the house itself, and spent 30 years laying out the famous gardens.

It made a happy setting for a party that was very smart – with some men in white tie – but the greatest fun and very relaxed and with guests of all ages. Friends and neighbours from Yorkshire were very much in evidence, but others had come from much farther afield for what all agreed was a wonderful evening.

Simply Delicious, the excellent Malton-based caterers, provided the super food, and the much-admired flowers too were local, from Glen Hamilton in Boston Spa.

Avery, Kent, Moore Dance

Mrs Julian Avery, Mrs Andrew Kent, and Mrs John Moore gave a party for Jessica, Laura and Marianne, who are all coming out this year, at the Royal Thames Yacht Club in Knightsbridge. There was a very good dinner followed by dancing until 1am. The girls looked lovely, and they and their friends clearly appreciated the surroundings and the effort that had gone into the planning and organisation.

Diary dates

4-5 November The British Red Cross Christmas Fair will take place at Chelsea Town Hall, King's Road, SW3. Details: Cynthia Godley (0181-944 8980).

5 November The 'Rite to Rede Oreshum', in aid of the Dyslexia Institute, will take place at Christie's, King Street, SW1, to celebrate the charity's 25th anniversary. £30 for a double ticket. Details: Sarah Hughes, 133 Gresham Road, Staines TW18 2AJ (01784 463851).

6 November Sir Ranulph Fiennes will give an illustrated talk on 'Living Dangerously' at the Royal Geographical Society, SW7, in aid of the British Dyslexia Association. Details: The Last Word Lectures, 17 Ladbroke Terrace, W11 3PG (0171-792 9512).

10 November The first Sir Peter O'Sullivan Award Dinner will take place at the Café Royal, W1 in aid of his nominated equine charities. Details: The Market Racing Agency, Hillside House, Charney Bassett, Oxon OX12 0RX (01235 868838).

10-11 November Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund Christmas Market at the Royal

HOUSEHOLD BREWING IN YORKSHIRE IN THE 17th CENTURY

An extract with a reference to the Brewhouse at Bramham Park.

(kindly supplied by Leeds City Museum , Archives Dept.,)

..... sites of former gardens, that at ~~Shibden Hall~~ having been recovered from the ruins of a cottage on the nearby hillside for example. It is more likely, however, that most of the hops were brought up from more fertile counties of the south and midlands for sale in Yorkshire. This is certainly suggested by the inventories of such traders as Edmund Bothomoly a Slaithwaite chapman, who held twenty-four quarters of hops worth £9 00 in his shop in 1658, or as John Webster, a Doncaster grocer, who stocked 'an End of Hops' in 1674. For the eighteenth century the evidence of this trade is much more common, requests for consignments of hops frequently being made by numerous Yorkshire household to their relations, masters or agents in London; 'I wish you would send a hundred weight of hops next Friday per the Carryer' wrote Mr. Sparks of Bramham Park to his colleague, Mr. Coulter of London on October 14th, 1727, and these arrived a few weeks later having been deposited for him in a Leeds warehouse.

Having assembled the essential ingredients, brewing could commence. The brewhouse itself would be equipped with a full complement of the requisite vessels, these including a copper, a gutter or gantry, a maskfat, a tense, a lead, a cooler, a gylefat, and a tunel or tundish. Fortunately it has proved possible to establish the use and construction of these various pieces of equipment from contemporary account books.

The most important item was undoubtedly the copper. This was a huge open-topped pan mounted inside a substantial sheath of masonry above a fire-grate or 'furnace'. As the name suggests, it was usually constructed from plates of copper rivetted together and hammered to the required shape, but some were made with leaden upper sections as at Bramham Park where 'The Diameter of the Copper at the bottom is 3 foot: 7 Inch, at the Nails i. e. rivets that nails the Lead and Copper together 4ft: 1½ Ins. The Depth from the Nails to the Bottom 1ft: 5½ Ins. The Diameter at the top 5ft: 6½ Ins. The Depth of the Lead to the Copper Nails 2 ft: 3½ Ins.

The water for brewing was either pumped directly into the copper along a wooden gutter running from the pump-head, or else laboriously raised bucketful by bucketful from an open well. When the copper was about half full a fire was kindled in the grate, and the water heated almost to boiling point. A tap at the bottom of the copper was then opened and the contents run off into the maskfat. This was a wide cooper-made tub ('at the top the diameter is 4 ft: 3 ins. and the Depth is 3 ft. '), which contained the malt which had been rendered down to a meal-like texture by means of a domestic malt grater or by the services of a professional grist miller. Using a paddle, the malt and water were thoroughly mashed together and allowed to stand for an hour or more to allow the water to absorb the sweet soluble elements of the malt. The maskfat was then tapped and the

liquor drained off into 'The lead under it 6 ft: 4 ins. Long and 3 ft: 5 ins. Deep From this trough the liquor was raised back into the copper where it was boiled with hops to impart a characteristic bitter flavour and to improve its keeping qualities. After one hour's careful boiling the liquid, now called wort, was run off through a horse-hair tennet or sieve into the wooden 'Cooler 13 ft: 9 ins. long, 5 ft: 8½ ins. broad and 9¼ ins. deep, where it rapidly cooled in autumn and winter to between fifty five and sixty degrees fahrenheit. At this temperature it was finally drained off into the gylefat, a further wooden tub into which the yeast culture was introduced to start the fermentation. Slowly a light flowery head appeared across the surfact of the wort, this gradually thickening to form a yellow-white crust which subsided over the next two days. The beer was now ready for casking, a baler and funnel being used to transfer it into the barrel, great care being taken not to disturb the sediment remaining at the bottom of the gylefat. Fermentation often continued for a while after the beer had been casked, and for this reason a small spouted tub called a tun-dish was placed under the barrel to collect the overflowing beer, this later being poured back into the barrel through a bung-hole at the top. When fermentation had finally ceased a bung was driven tightly in place, and the beer left to mature for a period ranging from a few weeks to a few years depending on the nature of the brew.

These basic methods of brewing were seldom written down, for brewing was a regular seasonal occurrence, and anyone living in a large household would have been able to learn the techniques simply by observation. Even so, the ability to brew was an art, not everyone being equally successful. Thomas Fleming gives a good illustration of this in a letter written from Bramham Park to his master, Lord Bingley, in London; 'I am afraid of venturing Sarah to Brew' he writes, 'for a week after you were gone she had all her Brewing things to wash up. Margaret says you promised her she could Brew, but I fear she is as bad as Sarah. If you think fit I will send for Marjery again for she understands Brewing the best of them all.' Perhaps she could also brew some of the more specialised beers and ales recorded in Yorkshire receipte books, these including rook or cock ale, for which the entire bird was skinned, pounded, and added to the wort, dock ale and orange small beer, containing herbal or fruit flavourings, or even bragget, a strong ale enriched with honey, liquorice, anniseed, cloves, pepper and nutmegs.

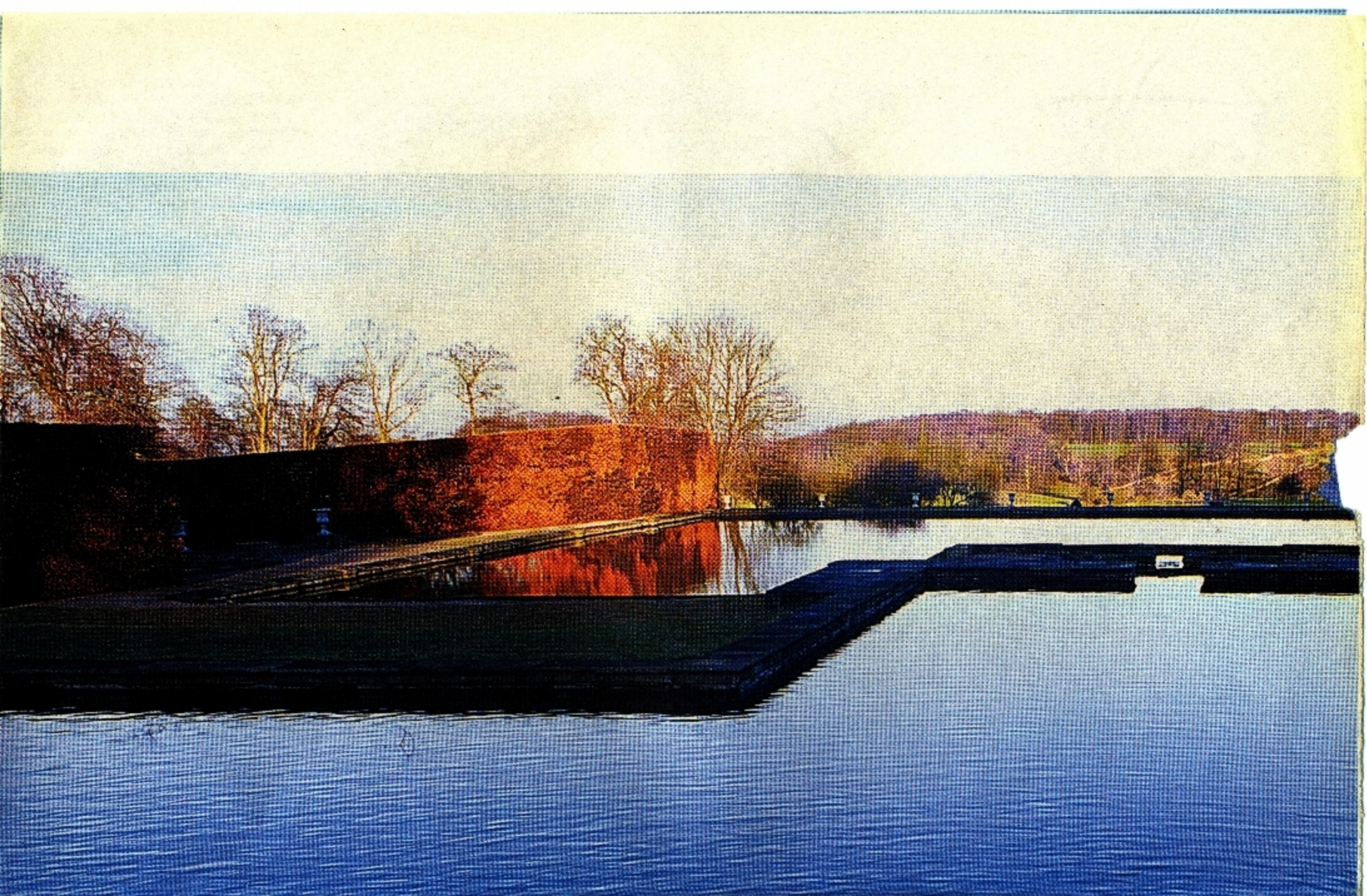
Unlike these famous ales, Yorkshire cider was of little repute, even though it had certainly been made here during the medieval period, as shown by the huge circular pressing-trough in the middle of the cloisters at Fountains Abbey.

Probably the earlier ciders took the form of a sour extract of crab-apples known as verjuice, this being occasionally mentioned in local inventories. The first part of the cider-making process consisted of crushing the apples to extract their juice, but there are very few documentary references to cider presses. The inventory of William Myddilton of Stockeld of 1578 included 'one apple crusche', and a 1683 receipte from Methley for grape wine instructed that the fruit should be put into

TRUE TO FORM

The gardens of Bramham Park in Yorkshire are a rare example of the geometric style we lost in the 18th-century







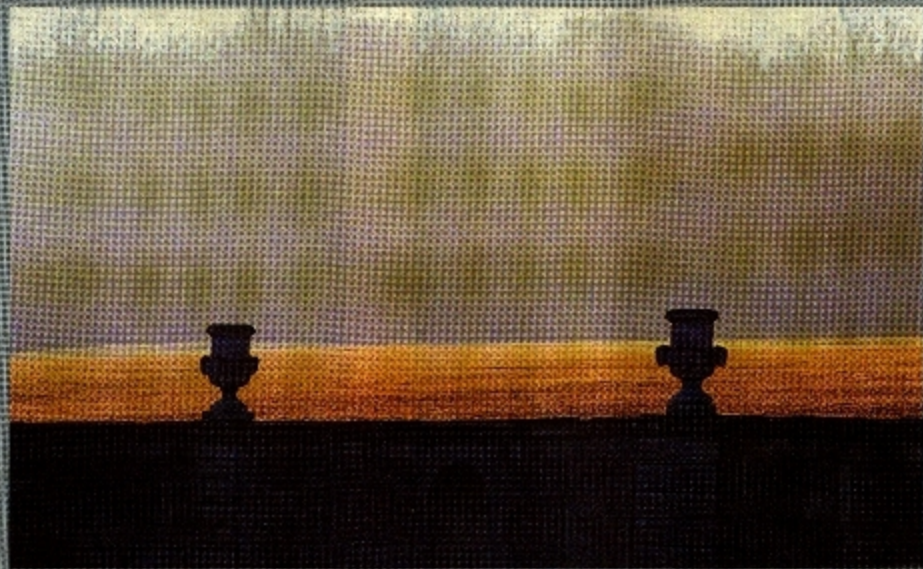
If you want to see what a grand garden looked like before the craze for naturalistic landscaping swept through the English landowning classes, go to Bramham Park in Yorkshire. Examples of this style are more common on the continent, but there are very few left here: you can count them on the fingers of one hand. They are the sort of places that were considered thoroughly old-fashioned by the time Jane Austen was writing. From the second half of the 18th century, fashion dictated that houses were best set off by a sea of open grass. How refreshing, then, to find that the Lane Foxes, who have lived at Bramham for nearly 300 years, chose to buck the trend.

Both house and garden were created by Robert Benson. The son of a Yorkshire lawyer, he became MP for York City in 1705. He married well, rose to high office as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Treasurer of the Royal Household, and was created Baron Bingley in 1713. The house, built between 1698 and 1710, was inspired by the Italian villas Bingley had seen on the Grand Tour. He was also inspired by the work of the French landscape designer André Le Nôtre, who created the gardens at Versailles.

The avenues, ornamental lakes and cascades that Bingley laid out in Yorkshire were all in the grand formal style. But even as he drew up the plans, garden geometry was going out of fashion. Lord Shaftesbury had begun to question the 'formal mockery' of the style, and Pope and

craze for naturalistic landscape. Mary Keen celebrates a grand survivor

Main picture inspired by water features in 17th century French gardens, the Obelisk Ponds were completed in 1716. Far left: an urn depicting the four seasons stands between 30ft-high beech hedges. Left: an ancient oak. Right: the wall of the parterre, which became a race garden in 1886



Addison were championing the revolt against the formal. But formal Bramham remained, and if Bingley were alive today he would still recognise his handiwork, although he might be surprised to see the beech hedges lining his avenues standing almost 30 feet tall.

Instead of calling in Capability Brown, Lord Bingley's daughter Harriet, who inherited the place and married George Fox (later Fox Lane, then Lane Fox), was quite happy to continue to ornament her father's landscape. The couple added several temples and began to concentrate on the woodland in the area known as Black Fen. One of the remarkable things about Bramham is that it was created on the poorest of moorland, and Black Fen is a reminder of that triumph of man over nature. The vistas are huge. From the Obelisk Ponds across to Black Fen is a distance of a mile, and the 'garden' covers 70 acres in total.

In winter the leafless trees, the russet-brown hedges, the stretches of grass and sheets of glittering water have a mystery that is lacking in gardens more crowded with incident and colour. This is a contemplative place, a place out of time.

The beech leaves emerging in spring create such an intensely coloured light that a walk at Bramham feels almost like being underwater. In the early days of summer, the turf of the avenues is a tapestry of wild flowers, studded with milkwort and campion and half a dozen kinds of orchid. And though any woodland is beautiful

Parts of the garden look much as they must have done in the mid-18th century, when the Bingley trees were beginning to mature

in the autumn, Bramham's copses of oak and beech, enclosed by the enormous hedges, are especially so.

This is forest gardening, a genre with which very few people are familiar, but which generations of Lane Foxes have practised. After the gales in 1962 blew down more than 400 beeches, they were replanted by Joe and Marcia Lane Fox, whose son George still lives at Bramham. Those Sixties beeches are now at their best, making parts of the garden look much as they must have done in the mid-18th century, when the Bingley trees were beginning to mature.

At the centre of this rare survival are two more generations of Lane Foxes – Nick and Rachel, and their five children. Looking after the *folie de grandeur* of your ancestors may seem an unlikely occupation for a pair of thirtysomethings in the 21st century, but there they are, cheerfully learning about *allées* and waterworks, facing up to dangerous trees and crumbling buildings. That is perhaps the most remarkable thing about Bramham – such dedication of one family over three centuries is almost as rare as the antique style of gardening. With the help of a professional garden designer – Patrick James of the Landscape Agency, who is drafting plans for the creation of a garden archive and for the restoration of ponds, garden buildings and overgrown rides – it looks as though the Lane Foxes and



Bramham are all set for a fourth century. ■

Main picture: the 'T' Pond, named for its shape, was probably the last feature to be created by Lord Bagley, in 1728. Below: Bagley's daughter, Harriet Fox, commissioned the octagonal Gothic pavilion

Bramham Park (01937 846005) is ten miles from Leeds and 15 miles from York. The gardens are open every day from 10am to 5.30pm until 30 September (except for 5-11 June). Adults £2.95, children and OAPs £1.95, under-fives free

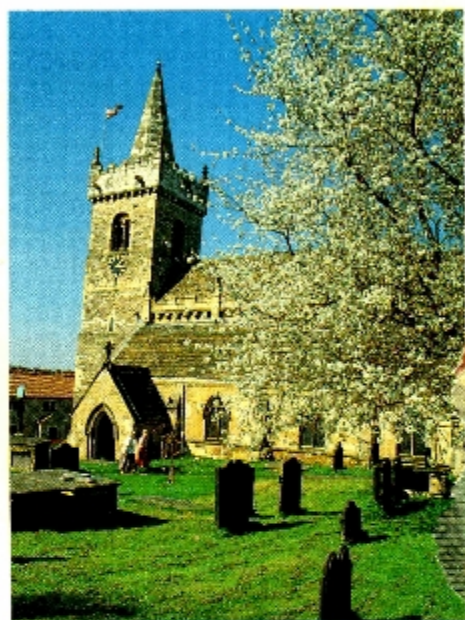






HORSE SENSE

Anthony Skinner visits the village of Bramham
on the eve of its famous international horse trials
Photographs: Bill Wilkinson



*Above: All Saints church
Left: Mr and Mrs Lane Fox on the terrace
of their house*

THE village of Bramham has played host to some cosmopolitan characters during its long history. The Romans built a villa there and constructed a road through the place. The Battle of Bramham Moor was fought locally during the War of the Roses in 1408 when the Duke of Northumberland - father of Harry Hotspur who was immortalised in

Shakespeare's Henry IV - was killed. There is a memorial to him on the Tadcaster Road. Cromwell won one of the crucial battles of the English Civil War only six miles away at Marston Moor in 1644, planning his war strategy from his military headquarters at the Sun Inn between Wetherby and York. The Saxons erected the first wooden church and also a large oval graveyard at

Bramham, which received an honourable mention in the Domesday Book compiled by the Norman conquerors in 1086.

And Bramham - despite its picture postcard charm - was once quite a busy industrial centre with brickworks, gasworks, leatherworks and the like. They in turn attracted more people to the village.

Bramham has not been short of residents for the last 200 years. In 1800 there were around 800 inhabitants and in 1860 more than 1,300. The population dropped to under 1,000 earlier this century but there has been a 60 per cent increase in the last 15 years and a fair number of new houses have been built to satisfy the demands of those who want to enjoy the country air and excellent motorway links at the same time. Bramham now has a population of around 1,400 - big enough to support a primary school and three pubs.

The road network has contributed immensely to Bramham's fortunes. The village is within a few miles of several motorways and the Great North Road - once one of the busiest thoroughfares in England - passed right through the centre until 1962 when the first of two bypasses was built. Now at least villagers are able to cross the



bramham panorama

The gardens at
Bramham Park are
regarded as some of the
finest in England and
on a par with
Hampton Court

road in relative safety.

And over the last 24 years Bramham has found itself on the international equestrian map as the home of one of the top horse events in England, and indeed Europe. The Bramham International Three Day Event, held amid the stately splendour of Bramham Park, attracts top riders from all over the world. More than 30,000 people are expected to watch them tackle dressage, a steeplechase, a gruelling cross country course and showjumping against the clock over four days of exciting competition from June 12-15. There is also a large country fair, with terrier and lurcher racing, archery, dog and gun competition etc. on the last day.

This is the 24th year the Horse Trials have been held at Bramham Park, the home of an old established Yorkshire family.

And this year promises to be special even by Bramham's standards. For the first time



The couple in the garden

Captain Mark Phillips, ex husband of Princess Anne, has designed the stamina-sapping cross country section with 33 obstacles arranged around a four miles course.

The riders will have little opportunity to admire the spectacular scenery but the landscape at Bramham is well worth seeing. The house itself was built in 1698 and its gardens laid out over the following 30 years by Robert Benson, first Lord Bingley. He

was MP for York, British Ambassador to Spain and treasurer to two monarchs - Queen Anne, who visited him at Bramham, and George II. The young Benson completed his education with a Grand Tour of Europe, a common practice in those days for the sons of the aristocracy and the wealthy. What he saw during his trip - particularly Italian architecture and French garden design - became the inspiration for his garden at



Bramham Park



Bramham cottages

Bramham. It was essentially French and formal but adapted in a relaxed and entirely English manner. The garden is still almost completely original, perhaps the only large scale formal garden to survive unchanged from the early 18th century.

Among its delights are a Round House temple, 100ft obelisk, a chapel originally built as an orangery, Gothic temple, a 20ft stone urn depicting the four seasons, a number of stunning vistas and two miles of 25ft high beech hedges which used to take two men all year to clip but which are now finished in just nine weeks with modern machinery.

The house itself has not enjoyed such a tranquil history. George Lane Fox, the fourth generation of the family who inherited the stately pile in 1821, was not nicknamed 'The Gambler' for nothing. He was a member of the Prince Regent's hard drinking, hard gambling circle and he crippled the family with his extravagance. His son spent most of his life repaying these debts estimated at £175,000, a sum equivalent to many millions in today's terms.

'The Gambler's' bad luck at cards meant the family could not afford to rebuild their mansion house when most of it was destroyed by fire in 1828. For 80 years Bramham Park was an empty shell until in 1903 George Richard Fox raised enough money to recreate the house as closely as possible to the original Queen Anne design. Mr Fox was an MP for 25 years and a Government Minister.

The house is an architectural triumph praised by no less an authority than Professor Nikolaus Pevsner, who was even more complimentary about the gardens. He wrote: 'They are with Hampton Court and perhaps

one or two others the most remarkable example in England of the planning of a park in the French manner of Louis XIV.'

Bramham Park is however not as large as you might expect. This is because the first Lord Bingley planned it as a summer house, a place to entertain his friends when the royal Court and Parliament were not sitting.

Bramham is now the home of another George Lane Fox who lives there with his wife Victoria and other members of the family. The couple have three sons and a growing number of grandchildren so the estate looks to be in good hands for the future.

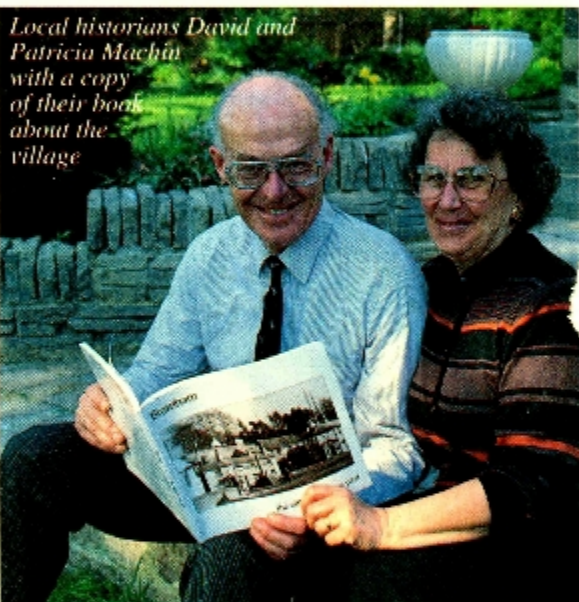
Mr and Mrs Lane Fox are a charming couple who are steeped in the country life and who love living at Bramham. Mr Lane Fox is a former chairman of Bramham Parish Council and he and his wife have both served as masters of the old established Bramham Hunt.

Both are keen riders - Mr Lane Fox is a former officer in a cavalry regiment, as is his eldest son - and they thoroughly enjoy having the Bramham Horse Trials on their land - with the event bringing in much needed income too.

Bramham is one of only 14 three star equestrian events in the world, just three of them in Britain and only Badminton is ranked higher in this country.

The village itself reeks of tradition and a sense of continuity. There are three pubs, all with solid, reassuringly English names such as the Red Lion, White Horse and White

Local historians David and Patricia Machin with a copy of their book about the village



Swan. And the street names are splendidly simple too - Town Hill, Low Way, Vicarage Lane, Back Street, High Street.

All Saints Church is an impressive building constructed in the reign of William II about 1100, with a large part of it dating from the 14th and 15th centuries. It has a spire on top of its tower but the church bells are in need of restoration and have not rung out for a year or two.

The village's full name is Bramham cum Oglethorpe. Bramham means homestead among the brambles or words to that effect. The Oglethorpe part comes from the name of a family who owned large amounts of land around the time of the Norman Conquest.

Bramham today is a mix of the old and the new. It has a village square with a nicely kept war memorial adorned with flower tubs and there are some lovely old cottages built of the local Bramham stone, which gives off a pinkish hue in the evening when the sun is low. But there are also some modern

One 19th century ancestor was a member of the Prince Regent's hard drinking circle and lost more than £175,000 gambling



The tough cross country course has been redesigned by Captain Mark Phillips, former husband of Princess Anne

dwellings which are not quite as pleasing on the eye. I am assured they will eventually blend in with the local environment when the stone and brick weathers.

Like most villages Bramham has had to cope with considerable changes over the years. At one time there were 17 shops, now there is just one with a post office attached. Bramham used to have a racecourse and

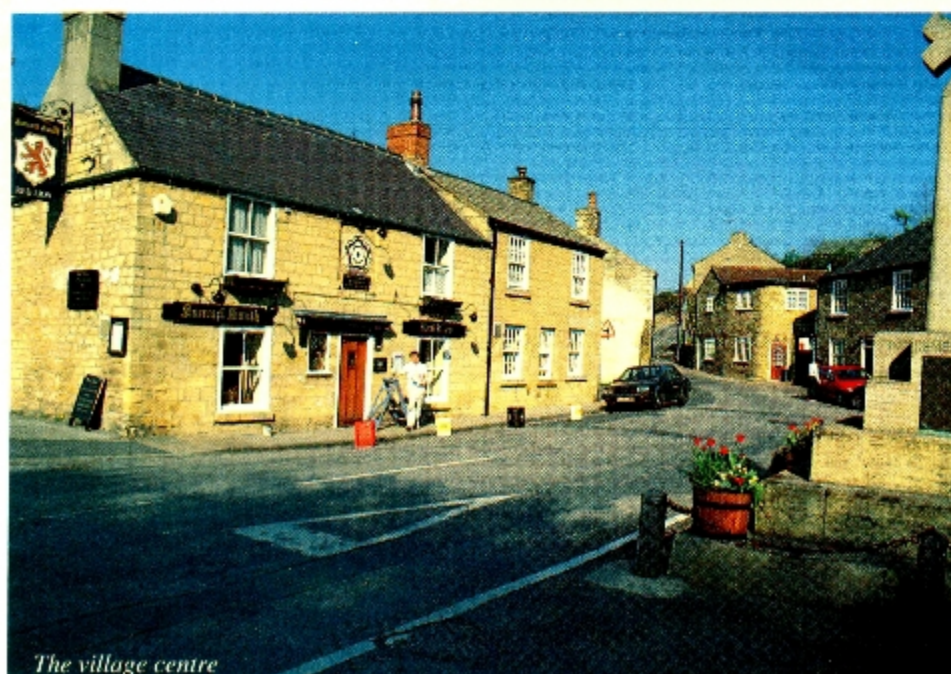


*Above: Lucy Kemplay on Heron's Flight at Bramham last year
Photograph: Kit Houghton*

Queen Anne gave a gold cup for the races. It closed when York racecourse opened.

The village hall, now the centre of community life, was bought by public subscription in 1908 and there is a flourishing dramatic society. Bramham is situated in the midst of some smashing countryside and on a clear day I am told it is possible to see the Vale of York, the North Yorkshire Moors and the city of York. It is yet one more reason why this part of the world has become a good place to live.

• *Bramham Park house and gardens are open from 1.15pm to 5.30pm on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from June 22-July 3 and from July 20 to September 7 inclusive. Cost is £4 for adults and £2 for children and senior citizens. The charge for the grounds only is £2.50 for adults, £2 for senior citizens and £1 for children.* □

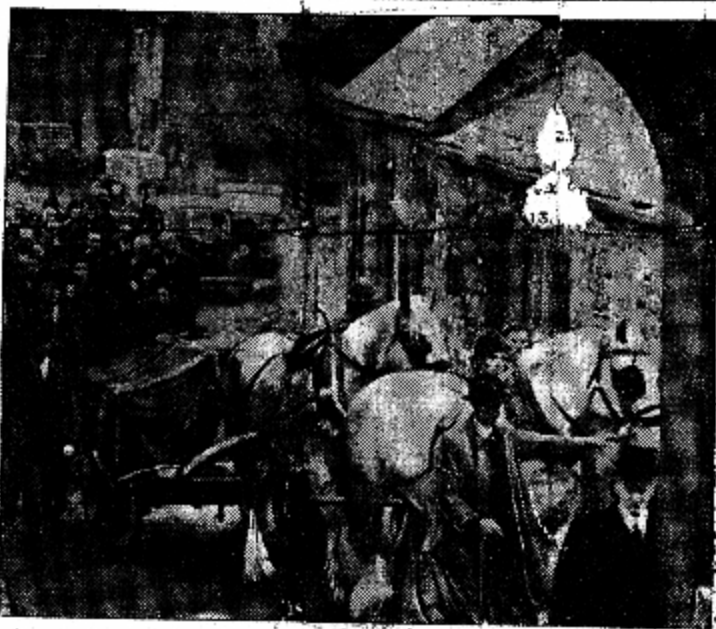


The village centre



George Lane Fox in his study

February 2001



LORD BINGLEY'S LAST JOURNEY—The coffin, drawn by horses from the estate, arrives at the lychgate of the church.

ESTATE WAGON WAS FUNERAL BIER

Lord Bingley Buried in Village Churchyard

Evening Post Reporter

THE funeral of Lord Bingley, of Bramham Park, near Tadcaster, one of Yorkshire's best-known public men, took place to-day at the early 17th century village church of All Saints, Bramham. To-day, Lord Bingley would have been 77.

It was the funeral of a simple country gentleman, and it was faithfully carried out as he himself had arranged.

Last Monday, Lord Bingley called the estate bailiff, Albert Rogers, to his bedside and said, "I feel I have got to the end of my days, and I want you to take me down there on the estate wagon and match me a pair of horses if you can."

Old Stone Wagon

So it was that Norman Birdsall and Harry Kitchen, two estate workers, led two dapple-grey shire mares down the village street to-day drawing the "old stone wagon," a flat tray and one of the oldest farm vehicles on the estate, as it carried a plain oak coffin made by the foreman estate joiner, Alfred Martin, and his man, Stanley. The top of the coffin was decorated with the Lord's favourite flowers—roses and other flowers.

Estate Workers Bearers

The family mourners were Lady Bingley (his widow), Col. and the Hon. Mrs. P. Lañe Fox, Lady Bridgeman, Mr. K. and the Hon. Mrs. Parkin, son, the Hon. Mrs. O. Facke, with Lord and Lady Halifax, the Hon. Richard Wood, and Hon. Charles Wood and Mrs. Wood.

Estate officials and members of the household were with them, and among those who had preceded them into the village church and filled it to overflowing so that many stood outside for the service, were Lord Harewood, Lord ~~Cadogan~~, and the coffin borne by six estate workers, Messrs. Kenneth Stirk (woodman), Stanley Thompson (joiner), Sam Norman, and John Dykes (bricklayers), Charles Birdsall and William Thompson (gardeners). The service was conducted by the Vicar, Rev. P. E. Shepherd.

A High Churchman, Lord Bingley had asked for a Requiem Mass, which was celebrated before the village service, in the private chapel at Bramham Park. This was also conducted by the Vicar.

The coffin was laid to rest in an ivy-lined family grave, under the trees at the top edge of the little churchyard.

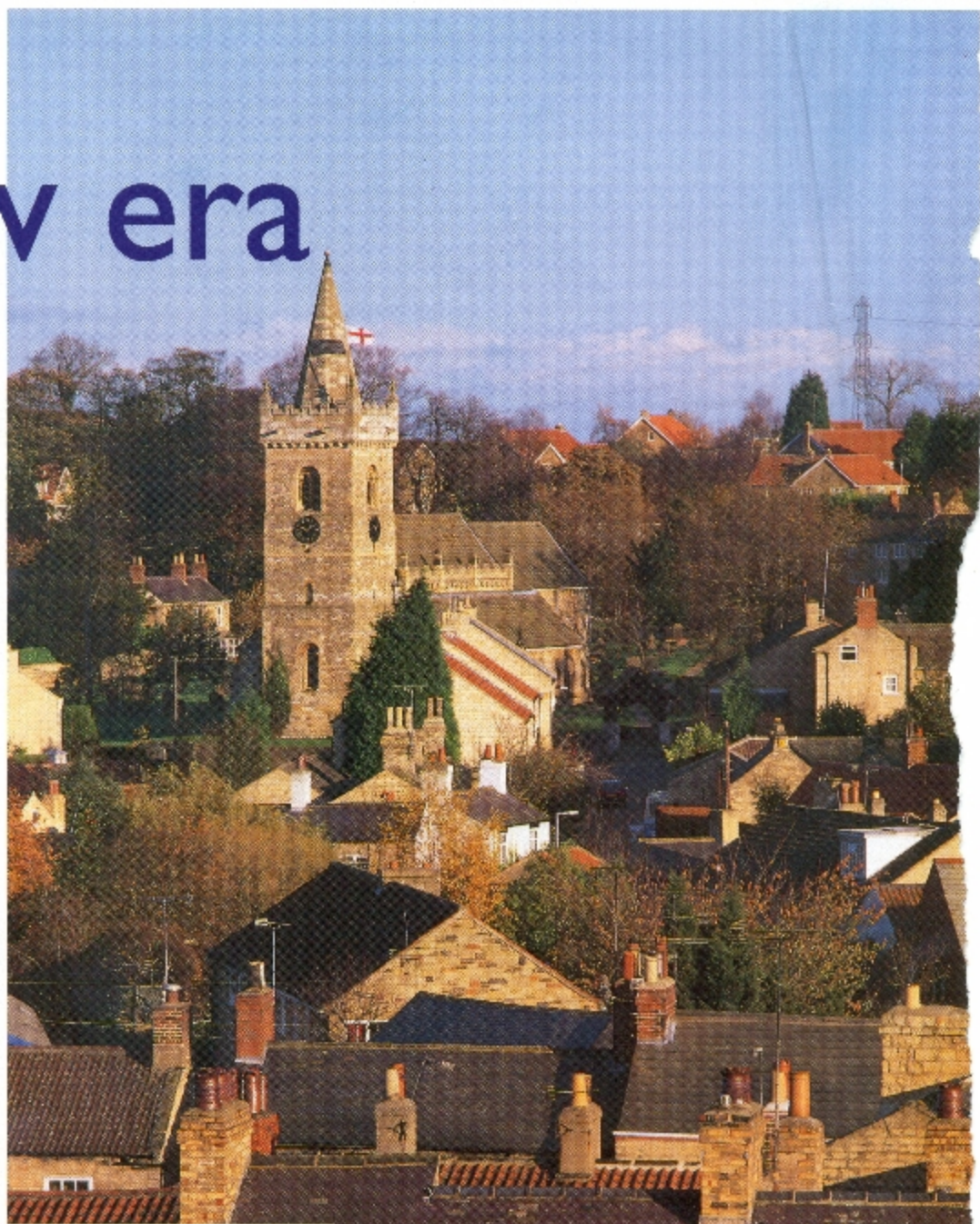
A new era

We visit Bramham as its famous park prepares to formally open its gardens

Photography:
Jeremy Phillips

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AS CLEARLY as the A1 divides it from its stately home Bramham seems a village of two halves.

There's the Tap Room regulars in the Red Lion and the commuters whose people carriers and showroom-shiny four wheel-drives seem somehow alien in the village's higgledy-piggledy narrow streets, ready for mass exodus into the outside world at 8am sharp.

Threads of these different lifestyles make the central cobweb that is Bramham all the more interesting. A sign of our computerised times, there's quite a few people who work from home. But then, clip-clop, here come the grooms exercising the horses of the Bramham Moor Hunt. At first glance there seems a sharp contrast between the sepia-tinted world of the 'old school' estate-orientated workers such as 85 year-old Arthur Tindall (who kindly advised me on history) and the executive homed newcomers.

Above: Cottages on front street
Right: Looking up Tenter Hill with the White Horse pub on the left
Below right: Some of the cars at the village garage caught our photographer's eye!
Opposite page: main picture: A bird's eye view of the village

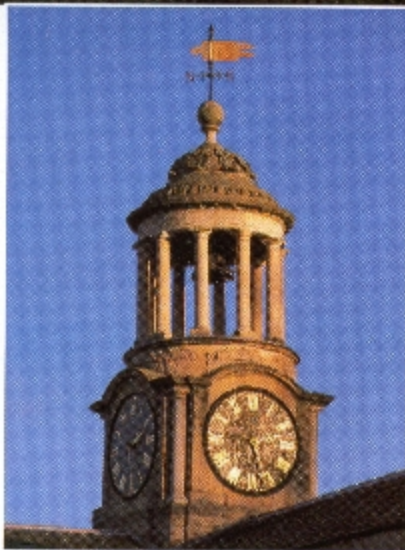


But wait. Bramham Park's tweed jacketed agent Johnnie Dickinson and his handsome young assistant Sam Jennings tell me the incumbent of Bramham Park is, wait for it, a stockbroker in Leeds. Yes, a commuter himself . . .

So, it seems, worlds that were once a million miles apart now have a common vein running through them.

Aforementioned stockbroker, Nicholas Lane Fox, likes to be called Nick. He talks appealingly about how ashamed he now is to recall, at the age of about eight, saying to his late mother he was 'bored' - that there was 'nothing to do' at the park.

He married the Honourable Rachel Baring in 1989 and the couple have five children, reminding me of the Ingilby family of Ripley Castle and the brood of lovely wellie-booted, rosy-checked gigglers that sometimes appear for a look before tea at the smart society 'dos'.



*Top picture: All Saints Church
Above: Clocktower at the park*





*Left: The Old School House
Below: Young Johnny Wallace on Lady the pony, with estate staff Jack Stang, Sarah Kozaczek, Gail Dale, Emma Ladbrook, Sarah McCracken and Jumble the dog*



Sam Jennings, assistant agent and below: Looking from the house through the main gates



Even more akin to the very commercially 'switched-on' Ripley Castle is the way the young Lane Foxes are starting to dip their toes into the conference and corporate hospitality market – just a few days before my visit they'd had fireworks for a group from NatWest.

Nick is also behind a scheme to – from the second of this month – formally open the spectacular French baroque-styled gardens to the public. A new chapter in the history of the park.

'It's a very exciting time,' he explains. 'I have always felt that it would be nice for many more people to come and look around this unique garden. Now people will be able to assume that it's open rather than assume that it will be closed.'

'It's very important to me that the



Above: Bramham still has a Post Office and shop
Far left: Ideally situated for the commuter

house is a real family home. It really is a marvellous place to bring up a family.'

With regard to combining his career and the running of the estate Nick says 'I wouldn't be able to manage without such a good wife and agent.

'Rachel holds the fort when I'm not around and I'm lucky in that I can start work early and finish quite early, at about five o'clock - which gives me a good few hours in the summer.

'Johnnie, as agent, also has to put up with a lot of meetings being held in the evening rather than usual work hours.'

What makes Bramham's gardens special is that they are one of the few of their kind left in this country - 'Capability' Brown was commissioned by many families to sweep such French style away.

300 years ago Robert Benson, the first Lord Bingley, acquired the 611

The young Lane Foxes are starting to dip their toes into the conference and corporate hospitality market - just a few days before my visit they'd had fireworks for a group from NatWest'



Above: Looking across farmyard to the old windmill
Left: The Methodist Chapel
Below: Peter Smith dressing stone during renovation on one of the villages many cottages
Right: Winter sun silhouetting a tree on farmland



acres of Bramham Moor. Benson, the son of a wealthy lawyer, employed architect Thomas Archer and between them they set about building a fine country house to live in during the summer. The construction was influenced by the memories still fresh in his mind of architecture and gardens he had seen while taking a Grand Tour of Europe. The house was completed around 1710, with additions to the gardens made throughout Benson's lifetime. Out of interest, away from Bramham he was MP for York and joined the Government, serving as Lord Treasurer to Queen Anne and Treasurer to the Household of King George II in 1730. He was created Lord Bingley in 1713, while British Ambassador to Spain.

In 1828 – during the time of the George Lane Fox who was



Top right inset: The coat of arms
Left: The Library and
below: The East Room, which is used as a dining room

nicknamed "The Gambler" – there was a great fire, which gutted most of the house. It lay empty for almost 80 years before renovations – including removing trees which had seeded themselves in the front steps – were started (the gambling debts had to be paid off first). The family moved back to the house in 1907, where they have stayed ever since.

Nick's father, another George Lane Fox, lives with the young family and, together with his late wife Victoria, started the now famous Bramham International Three-Day Event 27 years ago. A staggering 60,000 people are expected at this year's test of horse and rider, which takes place between June 8th and 11th.

Here we pick up another thread of Bramham's overall cobweb, that of the traditional industries of horses, farming and forestry. The park has not escaped being buffeted by the current rural crises.

Recently the forestry department was closed down, but the agent was quick to point out that one worker is now being



Below: George Lane Fox, known as 'The Squire'. He devoted his life to paying off his father – George 'The Gambler's' debts. He was one of the finest amateur coachmen in England

Above: Robert Benson, 1st Lord Bingley, who built Bramham Park in 1698



Above and below: A glimpse of the gardens, which from this month will be formally open to the public
Left: The Long Gallery

used on a self-employed bases, while another has been employed elsewhere on the estate.

This is still the sort of set-up where you'll find former workers allowed to continue living in estate cottages, with Christmas trees handed out to the local school and the like.

It's a funny old place, Bramham. The first village we've ever visited where nobody came up for a chat. Normally, the camera draws locals like a magnet. 'Which paper are you from?' they say.

Photographer Jeremy thought this rather a sad sign of the times, everybody busy with their own lives and no desire to pass the time of day. But maybe, just maybe, the key to communities like Bramham is to belong – really belong. To co-exist alongside such history must give villagers a real sense of being. Maybe the appeal is that the rest of us are just outsiders, looking in . . . ■

SARAH TODD



The gardens at Bramham Park are open to the public from February 2nd to September 30th, from 10.30am to 5.30pm – with last admissions at 5pm – seven days a week. Admission is £2.95, children under 16 and pensioners £1.95 and under 5s free. The house itself is open to groups by prior arrangement. For more information telephone 01937 844265.

One house fits all

A couple and their five children find that there's room for everyone at Grandad's place. By Jonny Beardsall



'I WAS about 10 when I remember saying to my mother, "I'm bored, there's nothing to do here." How could I ever have said that?' says Nick, with a pained sigh. Leaving the children to fish fingers in the kitchen, I follow Nick and Rachel past the sunken parterre into a dreamy garden of walks and vistas, architectural features and reflecting water. Hidden behind a high beech hedge, an old tennis court has been overgrown by the thistles forcing their way up through the baseline tarmac.

Nick is the 10th direct descendant of Robert Benson, who built Bramham in 1698. As a young man, Benson was sent off on the Grand Tour where, smitten with Italian Palladio architecture and French garden design, he was inspired to try something spectacular in Yorkshire on his return. It was so spectacular that it took until 1710 to complete. From the outside, it looks impossibly stately, but for the family's Famous Five, it must be fun growing up in a house with a

labyrinth of corridors, passages and secret stairways.

Nick married Rachel in 1989, when she finished university. After he left the Army in 1995, they moved into a smaller wing of the house. Two years later his mother died suddenly, so they moved in with his father. 'Mum and Dad had been rattling round here for a while. He was of a generation that was not too good about cooking for itself,' Nick explains, as we head inside.

'I was beginning to make more and more decisions before Mum died. I think Dad felt that this was the moment to let me in.' For almost a year, Nick wondered if he might run Bramham's 6,500 acres of farms and forestry full-time. 'I'm more the interfering type. At first, I'd be driving to supper and would see a fence rail down and couldn't resist stopping to fix it. I soon saw that leaving the day-to-day management to an agent is a better solution, so I trained as a stockbroker. Few things have changed, but I feel as

though I've got more of a hold.'

George, who has a kind face, ruddy cheeks and a wodge of grey hair, is having tea with his fishman, who pulls up here in a van every week. He still organises the shoot in winter and the Bramham International Three-Day Event in summer, a competition he has steered since its inception in 1974. Nick does not interfere. 'Everything else he lets me get on with, but if it's an amazing decision, of course I discuss it with him. It's his place till he dies, if he wants it that way.'

Nick purrs off to Leeds in his silver soft-top Audi Quattro at 7.15am sharp, leaving Rachel to deal with children, the house and the garden. 'With a live-in nanny and a housekeeper next door, this is a very busy place. Sometimes I wonder if I can even go to the lavatory without someone bursting in,' Rachel jokes. She has an office in which she makes executive decisions but might bounce them off Johnny, the agent, or Nick in the office. 'Hah! I'm trying to decide whether to buy Glaxo when Rachel calls me about plumbing,' reasons her husband.

Bramham Park is open to visitors, but to see the house people must ring and book. 'Our last group spotted the standby light had been left on on the television,' says Nick. 'They loved that, they thought it made it look lived in. Well, it is lived in.' Very lived in. This afternoon, the drawing-room sofas are draped with lurchers and a West Highland terrier. 'We had to ban them from the kitchen after the health and hygiene man raised his eyebrows when we wanted to start doing dinners for visiting Americans,' says Rachel.

There is little demarcation between George's living space and that of the younger family. 'He's heavenly,' says Rachel. Nick smiles: 'That's the key to it... he and Rachel get on so well.' His father's dressing-room, bedroom and bathroom interconnect on the house's principal floor, so if five children get too much, he can close the doors. He always has supper with Nick and Rachel, who live one floor above.

It is early so I leave while I am still fit to drive. George has his own recipe for a Fox's Tail cocktail which, consisting of two fingers of Cinzano, one of dry vermouth, two of white wine and lots of ice, I'm avoiding at all costs. But it's the perfect refreshment, George assures me, 'after walking a horse-trials course'.

Nick Lane Fox, 36, his wife, Rachel, 32, and children, Sophie, nine, George, eight, Freddy, six, Charlie, four, and Harry, two, live with his father, George, 69, at Bramham Park, West Yorkshire