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)


Visit England named 2016 ‘The Year of the English Garden’

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
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 Loraine, 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Trust Name</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herefordshire &amp; Worcs</td>
<td>(H&amp;W GT)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hwgt.org.uk/">http://www.hwgt.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>(Shrops GT)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.shropshiregardens.org.uk/">http://www.shropshiregardens.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>(Stiffs GT)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.staffordshiregardensandparks.org/">http://www.staffordshiregardensandparks.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwickshire</td>
<td>(Warks GT)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.warwickshiregardenstrust.org.uk/">http://www.warwickshiregardenstrust.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CAPABILITY BROWN in Birmingham

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:


(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 B1 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/](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](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](http://www.richardwilsononline.ac.uk)

Further reading:
- Laura Mayer: Capability Brown and the English Landscape Garden, Shire Library, 2012

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>Compton Verney</td>
<td>Photographic Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February</td>
<td>01-28</td>
<td>Weston Park gallery</td>
<td>CB Exhibition: Staffordshire Society of Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>09</td>
<td>Croome, Worcs</td>
<td>Talk: Life and Times of Capability Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Croome, Worcs</td>
<td>CB Winter walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Warwickshire Garden Trust</td>
<td>Talk on CB’s Warwick Castle Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Trentham</td>
<td>Walk: CB Sunday Scenes Tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Trentham</td>
<td>National Gardens Scheme: garden tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March</td>
<td>01-31</td>
<td>Weston Park gallery</td>
<td>CB Exhibition: Embroiderer’s Guild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>07</td>
<td>Charlecote Park</td>
<td>Embroiderers’ Guild CB-themed Exhibition (to Oct ‘16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Shropshire Gardens Trust</td>
<td>Talk on CB’s Moccas Park, Herefordshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Compton Verney</td>
<td>Art in the Park (to Dec ‘16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Berrington Hall</td>
<td>Embroiderers’ Guild CB-themed Exhibition (to Nov ‘16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Croome, Worcs</td>
<td>West Mids NADFAS: CB special interest day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Berrington Hall</td>
<td>Georgian Boots and Bonnets Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April</td>
<td>01-28</td>
<td>Weston Park gallery</td>
<td>CB Exhibition: Tim Scott Bolton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Croome, Worcs</td>
<td>Embroiderers’ Guild CB-themed Exhibitions (to Oct ‘16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Weston Park</td>
<td>CB Spring Walk: Exploring Temple Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Barber institute</td>
<td>Friends’ special interest day on CB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May</td>
<td>01-30</td>
<td>Weston Park gallery</td>
<td>CB Exhibition: Simon Vernon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Berrington Hall</td>
<td>CB Walks, daily to November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>03</td>
<td>Croome, Worcs</td>
<td>CB Walk: Patrons, Places and Landscape Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>07/08</td>
<td>Hewell Grange, Worcs</td>
<td>National Gardens Scheme: Open gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>09</td>
<td>Ragley Hall, Warks</td>
<td>Open water swimming in CB’s lake (to Sept ‘16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Packington Hall, Warks</td>
<td>National Gardens Scheme: Open gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Packington Hall, Warks</td>
<td>Warks Gardens Trust: guided walks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June</td>
<td>01-29</td>
<td>Weston Park gallery</td>
<td>CB Exhibition: Russell Gilder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Birmingham Heritage Bus</td>
<td>Guided tour of Georgian Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>St Philip’s Cathedral, Bham</td>
<td>CB-themed concert by Conservatoire students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Weston Park, Staffs</td>
<td>CB-themed concert by Conservatoire students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Croome, Worcs</td>
<td>Talk: Capability Brown and his landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Worcester schools</td>
<td>CB-themed Exhibition &amp; Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Compton Verney</td>
<td>Regency Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25-26</td>
<td>Compton Verney</td>
<td>‘Park Life’ weekend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Berrington Hall</td>
<td>CB Walk: Patrons, Places and Landscape Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>July</td>
<td>01-29</td>
<td>Weston Park gallery</td>
<td>CB Exhibition: Andrew Naylor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>02</td>
<td>Berrington Hall</td>
<td>Music to create a landscape</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aug
01-30 Croome, Worcs: CB Talk: Brown’s gardens of the National Trust
08 Croome, Worcs: CB Walk
14 Berrington Hall: Boating on CB's lake
30 Various sites/events: Capability Brown’s Baptism, 1716
30 Artrix, Bromsgrove: Embroiderers’ Guild CB-themed Exhibition (to Sept ’16)

Sep
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 300th birthday party and exhibition launch

Oct
01-28 Weston Park gallery: CB Exhibition: P Brown & B Thompson
06-09 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

Nov
01-29 Weston Park gallery: CB Exhibition: Matthew Wood
19 Berrington Hall: Christmas with the Georgians

Dec
01-31 Weston Park gallery: CB Exhibition: Royal Birmingham Society of Artists

2017
Feb
06 Anniversary of Capability Brown’s death, aged 66, in 1783
28 Reviewing the Festival Legacy... what next?

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 Tel: 0121 348 8000 (including Soho House and Sarehole Mill) email: BMAG.Enquiries@birminghammuseums.org.uk http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/

Birmingham Heritage Tours:
Big Brum Buz and guides Tel: 0121 427 2555 email: enquiries@birmingham-tours.co.uk 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/
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.warwickshireregardentrust.org.uk/