

## MANOROWEN

<b>Ref number</b>	<b>PGW (Dy) 64 (PEM)</b>
<b>OS Map</b>	157
<b>Grid ref</b>	SM 934 363
<b>Former county</b>	Dyfed
<b>Unitary authority</b>	Pembrokeshire
<b>Community council</b>	Sceleddau
<b>Designations</b>	Listed buildings: Manorowen Grade II; Walled garden Grade II; Gazebo Grade II
<b>Site evaluation</b>	<b>Grade II</b>
<b>Primary reasons for grading</b>	The survival of a walled garden originating in the late seventeenth century, with an unusually intricate layout. Built into it is a fine late eighteenth-century gazebo, from which there is a panoramic view to Fishguard Bay.
<b>Type of site</b>	Walled and compartmented garden with gazebo
<b>Main phases of construction</b>	Late seventeenth century; late eighteenth century; <i>c.</i> 1830

### Site description

Manorowen is a late Georgian mansion, with Home Farm and farm outbuildings, situated about 2 km south of Goodwick, on Fishguard Bay. The setting is rural, although the site is bisected by the A487 road and the railway line to Fishguard runs close to the east end of the garden. The ground slopes gently down to the house from Manorowen Hill, to the south-west, and eastwards down to a small river valley, which runs north to Fishguard Harbour.

The house is two-storey and stuccoed, with a slate roof. The main front is on the south-east, facing a sloping lawn down to the road. The drive leads off the A487 from an entrance north-east of the house, swings round towards the south-west, passes in front of the house and continues for a short distance to the farm road to the south. To the north of the house, on the edge of an area of woodland, is a ruinous earlier mill house. This is smaller, stone built, with mullioned windows. Its roof collapsed in the late twentieth century.

The present house dates mainly to about 1830, with some later additions. It is not shown on the 1797 French invasion map by T. Probert but is on the 1842 tithe map. However, embedded in the present house are remnants of an earlier one. Richard Fenton recorded that a house here, which was then called Manarnawen, belonged to his great grandfather, John Lewis, in the late seventeenth century. It was

rebuilt for Richard Bowen before 1833 and was sold in 1839 to Dr Moses Griffith (died 1883). Subsequently it was owned by the Revd Thomas Johns (died 1905) and his descendants.

The gardens of Manorowen lie in two distinct areas, separated by the A487 road. To the west of the road lies the house, with a simple, informal garden in front of it. To the east is the main garden, which is walled.

The garden west of the road consists of a sloping lawn to the east of the house, bounded on the west by a scarp up to the drive and house and on the north by the drive. Flanking the lawn, at its north and south ends, are a few ornamental trees, including a cedar, and shrubs. Behind the house, to its west, is a triangular area of woodland. Although now overgrown and disused it may originally have been part of the pleasure grounds of the house. It contains the old mill pond, remnants of its leat and former field boundary banks.

The one and a half-acre walled garden to the east of the road lies opposite the north half of the garden on the other side of the road, with the entrance doorway opposite the entrance to the drive. To the south is the former road to Goodwick and the church and churchyard. The garden has an unusual shape and internal layout and a fine gazebo in its north-west corner.

The garden is roughly rectangular, aligned east-west, but the walls are segmental, giving it eight sides. Inside, the ground slopes down from north to south and west to east. The walls, which stand to their full height, are of mortared rubble stone construction. Their tops have a protruding slate course beneath rough stones. The west wall is *c.* 3 m high and runs parallel with the road, with an entrance near the north end. The doorway is slightly arched, with a brick lintel. At the south end of the wall it turns inwards and is higher, sloping down slightly at the corner. The south wall, in two segments, is *c.* 3.5 m high. Outside it is a belt of mature sycamore trees and a track running parallel to the wall, which used to be the road to Goodwick. In the centre of the wall is a small, slightly arched doorway, with a wooden door and slatestone over it. To the east is a wider entrance, with two wooden doors. The east side is partly intact, the west side is broken down. At the east end is a break in the wall, with a steep drop outside it. The east wall starts lower, at its south end, is broken down in the middle and then continues up the slope at up to 3.5 m high.

The north wall is in two segments, the main one running from the north-east corner almost to the gazebo. This continues at the same height as the east wall. Near its east end is a hole in the bottom to allow water to pass into a small channel in the garden which runs down into the pond at the east end. At the west end the wall turns towards the south-west for a short distance, finishing at the gazebo. In this section is a wooden door in a doorway with a gently curved arch of slate with two bricks in the centre. The gazebo stands in the north-east corner of a small enclosure between the main garden and the road. The north and west walls of this area are only *c.* 0.4 m high, the east side is formed of the gazebo itself and the high wall to its south which supports the steps up to it. The short south wall is the same height as the west wall of the main garden and continues from it.

The structural layout of the interior responds to the slopes. At the west end is a grass terrace along the wall, with a slope below. The slope is planted with one large sycamore and some shrubs. In the middle is a small pool. Below this slope the ground of all but the north side of the garden levels out, still sloping gently towards the east end. This is largely laid out as lawn, with a few trees, mainly sycamore, and a shrub border along the south side. In the centre are three small formal compartments. The

west one is hedged with *Lonicera nitida*. To its east is a cross hedge of mixed shrubs, with a walk along its east side. To the east are two further compartments hedged with lonicera and cypress. Below is a lawn planted with a few trees of ash and sycamore. A narrow path, covered with a modern pergola, runs eastwards to a north-south path with a similar pergola. A stone-edged gravel path runs down a slope, east of the crossing, to steps down to the pond. The path is flanked by three pairs of ornamental cast iron pillars. These are *c.* 1 m high, baluster-shaped, with 'flame' tops and stand on square stone plinths. The pillars have hooks on them, suggesting they were originally linked by chains.

The pond lies at the east end of the garden, which is its lowest part. Although clay-lined its water supply has been cut off and it only fills with water intermittently. However, the ground is boggy enough to support damp-loving species around it such as *Gunnera manicata*. The overflow is on the east side. In the middle of the west side is a flight of four stone steps up to the gravel path.

The steeply sloping north side of the garden has been treated differently, being partly divided into two small terraces. At the east end is a steeply sloping lawn, planted informally with trees and shrubs. Below it a path winds gently westwards up the slope, through shrubs such as hebe, fuchsia and *Leycesteria formosa*. This leads to a small terrace, at most 3 m wide, at the top of the garden. The stone revetment wall of the terrace has virtually no parapet, except at the west end, where there is a very low one. At its front is a small lawn, with a raised bed behind, supported by a low stone revetment wall. Behind the terrace is the gazebo, which can be reached by a narrow, winding gravel path at the west end of the terrace. This leads to a gap in the wall bounding the steps up to the gazebo, about half way up them.

Below the upper terrace is another, known as the Bee Garden, as it has hives in it. From below it is reached at its south-east end by narrow stone steps between high stone walls with curved outer ends. The walls are *c.* 2.5 m high and have flat slate tops. A straight joint in the east wall, about half way up, shows that the outer part has been added. The original outer end of this wall was also curved. Above this wall is a narrow, semi-circular projecting terrace, with a low parapet. The Bee Garden is bounded on the east by a stone wall, with a slate top, which rises from the south end to *c.* 2 m. In the north-east corner is a flight of five stone steps to the upper terrace. On the north side a low wall separates this garden with the upper terrace. The south side has a low parapet above a revetment wall *c.* 3.5 m high, against which are the glasshouses. The terrace is simply laid out to lawn, with an ash tree in the middle. Towards the west end it narrows against a rock outcrop on the north side. A grass path leads along the foot of the rocks and ends at the steps to the gazebo, to which there is currently no access. At the west end of the path is a revetment wall above it *c.* 2 m high, on which the upper path lies.

Against the revetment wall of the Bee Garden are two glasshouses, now without their glass. The east one is quite simple, built of stone, with some of its wooden framework surviving. It was at one time used as a potting shed. The front wall is *c.* 1 m high and there is a door in the west wall. In the centre of the rear wall is a blocked doorway but it is not known what this leads to as the wall is built against solid rock.

After a short gap to the west of the first glasshouse is the second, which used to be a vinery. This is more sophisticated, with a mortared back wall, against which is a brick ledge. The front wall is *c.* 1.3 m high and there are doors at both ends. Behind the east end a step down leads to a stone-arched space between the vinery back wall

and rock face. This is the former boiler-room for the vinery and there is a chimney above. In its outer wall are two cubby holes, one above the other. To its east is a small hole under a low stone wall. This has not been investigated but is probably connected in some way to the boiler. Outside the west end of the vinery is a curving revetment wall built against the rock face.

The final part of the garden is the gazebo, reached by a steep flight of steps to its south. The steps start just inside the entrance in the west wall. At their foot is a seat carved out of a single piece of stone. There are 24 steps, built of slate stone on rubble, which lead straight up to a slate stone landing. Flanking the east side of the steps is a mortared parapet wall up to 1.5 m high, with an uneven top. Below the gap where the path comes in the wall has been raised, the upper part having different stone and construction. The wall on the west side of the steps rises to *c.* 3.5 m high, the parapet being *c.* 1.4 m high at the top.

The gazebo is built on bedrock and is set at an angle to the steps. It is square, single-storey, with a pyramidal slate roof and mortared rubble stone walls which show traces of rendering on the north side. There are window openings on the north, east and west, of which the north one is the largest. and a door on the south. The windows have wooden frames and gently arched brick tops. From the north window is a panoramic view towards Goodwick and Fishguard Bay. The door on the south side has a gently arched brick top, over which, in a pediment, is a circular window, also edged in brick. The eaves are built of three layers of brick set at different angles. The floor joists are at present broken or rotted, making the interior unsafe.

The walled garden probably originates in the late seventeenth century, when Richard Fenton's great grandfather, John Lewis, lived at Manorowen. Fenton, in 1811, claimed that his gardens 'supplied him with common fruit of the choicest kind; such as apples, pears and plums and his arched walks some of which existed to within these few years, with abundance of filberts, walnuts and mulberries were found in his dessert'. The 'arched walks' were probably tunnel arbours of some kind. It is probable that at this time, and later, the garden was both utilitarian and ornamental.

The addition of the gazebo, probably in the late eighteenth century, attests to the garden's pleasurable use. The walled garden and gazebo are shown on Propert's map of 1797 and the tithe map of 1842. There is a legend that at some point during the French invasion of the vicinity, in 1797, some found their way to Manorowen, 'seeming to be making for the summerhouse'. Since that time a few alterations have been made to the interior of the garden, including the building of the glasshouses and the extension of the south-east end of the Bee Garden. The present structural layout and glasshouses are shown on the 1887 25 in. Ordnance Survey map. During the nineteenth century the garden was used as kitchen garden and orchard but after the First World War it became neglected and overgrown. Since 1989 there has been a steady programme of clearance and restoration which has returned the garden to a well cultivated state.

## **Sources**

### **Primary**

Tithe map, 1842: National Library of Wales.

### **Secondary**

Fenton, R., *An historical tour through Pembrokeshire* (1811), pp. 4-6.  
Lewis, S., *Topographical dictionary of Wales* (1833).  
Sale advertisement in the *Welshman*, 26 October 1838.  
Carradice, P., *The last invasion* (1992), pp. 76-77.