



CURATORIAL VOLUNTEER
2008 -2009

WHY DID I VOLUNTEER AT WESTON PARK?

The whole team were incredibly welcoming and it consolidated my wish to work with a historic collection within a historic building.

I liked that the relatively small staff meant working alongside a variety of different jobs including the gardeners, the event and catering staff, house maintenance, and house guides! That is something which resonated with me.

I still really enjoy working alongside people with entirely different skill sets but with the same passion for a building or a purpose.

Weston's diverse event programme means the collection and house are very much still working, welcoming people just as they were intended to when newly-built three hundred and fifty years ago, something I see every day in the royal residences!

SALLY GOODSIR

CURATOR OF DECORATIVE ARTS, ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST

In 2008-09 I was between university courses and contacted Weston Park as I was keen to expand my curatorial and collections experience.

I volunteered at Weston Park with the Curator and Head of Learning, Gareth Williams, who has continued to be a great ally and support to me.

The Rose Paterson Gallery was newly-opened and it was interesting to see the different types of display between the house and the gallery setting.

Gareth set me a task to cross-reference historic collection inventories between the Bridgeman family residences, thus adding to the provenance of pictures and works of art which today remain in the care of the Weston Park Foundation and giving me a wonderful opportunity for research, networking, archival visits, and the production of a tangible document of long-term benefit to the Foundation.





FORMER WESTON PARK
GARDEN VOLUNTEER

WHY DID I VOLUNTEER AT WESTON PARK?

I was once told that, one of the greatest gifts you could give anyone was your time and volunteering does come with its own rewards.

ADVOLLY RICHMOND

GARDEN & SOCIAL HISTORIAN,
AUTHOR AND BROADCASTER

I was in the middle of writing a dissertation for my MA in Garden History at Bristol University. I found it rather therapeutic to just weed, dead-head and prune around the gardens in the company of the other gardeners. My days volunteering at Weston Park enabled me to formulate my thoughts around my work, whilst removing myself from my desk. The gardens were such a peaceful space.

I think learning about the history of Weston Park and its inhabitants over the centuries galvanised my interest in social history.

Some of my best moments were the breaks in the 'bothy' with my fellow gardeners who taught me a great deal about the plants, planting and landscape.





CURRENT WESTON PARK VOLUNTEER

WHY DID I VOLUNTEER AT WESTON PARK?

Volunteering at Weston my confidence in handling artefacts, assessing their condition and caring for them has grown exponentially. The team is always happy to show me how things work, such as the cleaning, documentation and conservation of items which has given me a valuable education in artefact conservation.

Cataloguing the library collection has honed my organisation skills and ability to use excel for data processing. Operating in a friendly workspace within a team has also boosted my personal confidence and ability to work alongside others. I am very grateful for the skills I have been developing from this opportunity and as someone who hopes to pursue a career in curatorship and collections management I feel it has given me strong foundations for career development.

SAMUEL WILLIAMS

CURRENT WESTON PARK VOLUNTEER

I am a volunteer in the library currently cataloguing the collection for upload to JISC. The project is very exciting with the opportunity to handle and engage with rare and antique books.

As someone with a special interest in eighteenth century texts the project has been highly rewarding to browse and read texts of the era; however, discovering a much wider variety of items has opened up my horizons. Being able to work in a beautiful and cultured environment is enriching, educational and has certainly benefited my mental health.

Above all completing the groundwork to assist researchers in accessing the treasures the library contains is very fulfilling.

If you're ever thinking of volunteering in heritage, whether it's to start a career or as a fun activity I would strongly recommend it. It's easy to feel inspired by the many interesting and beautiful objects around when working in a historic environment and it will certainly leave you feeling culturally richer. I would like to thank Gareth, Alison and the team for the opportunity.

