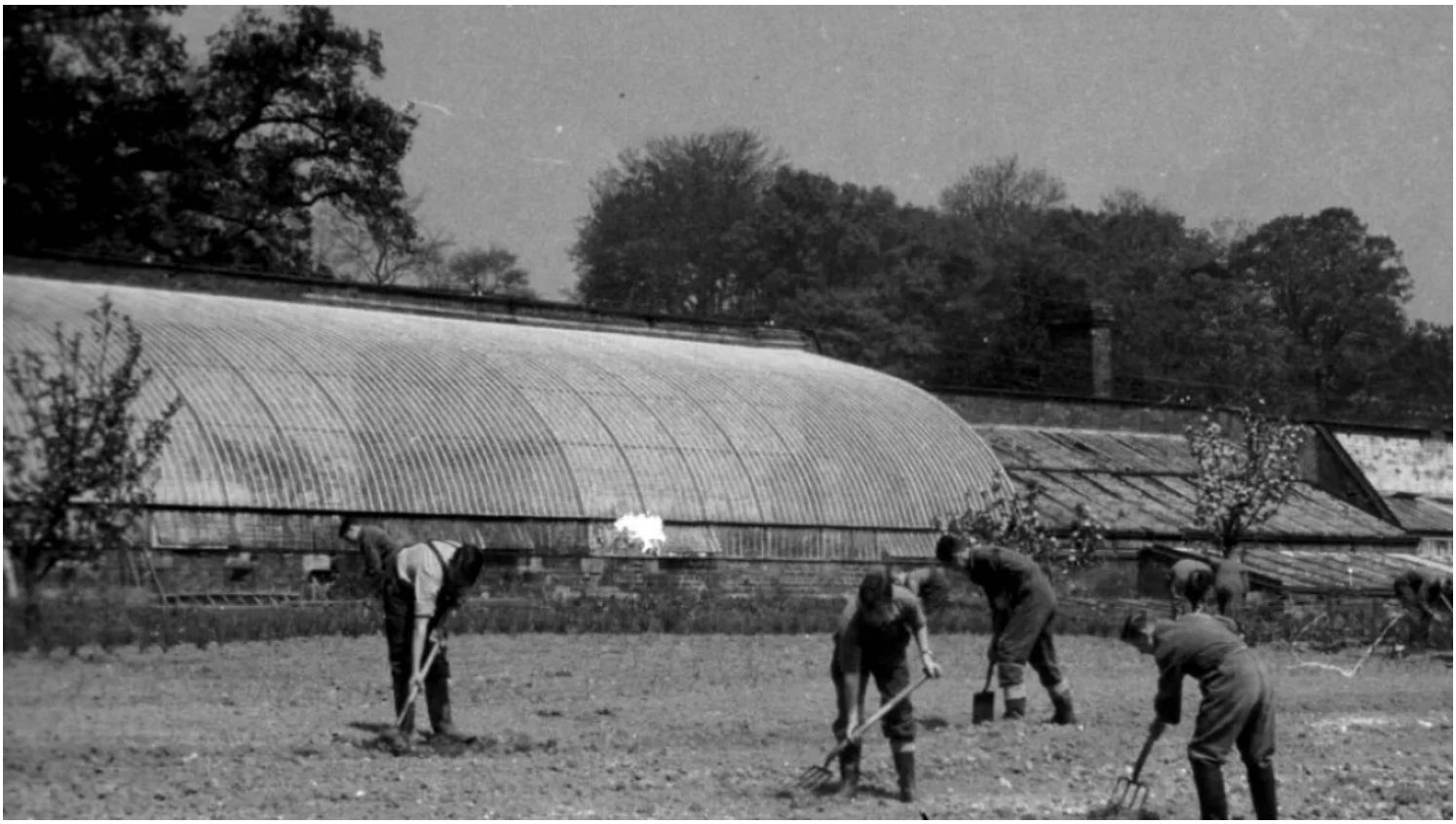


Curvilinear gasshouse in Millichope Park

The curvilinear glasshouse in the walled garden of Millichope Park became derelict over half a century ago. Dating from around 1836 it is one of very few surviving iron-framed curved glasshouses from an era when most glasshouses were still constructed using straight wooden frames. In its day it would have been in the forefront of both industrial and horticultural technology.

The three-bay south-facing structure is in the form of a lean-to against a brick wall. It is part of the privately-owned Grade II* listed Millichope Park. HLF has only recently allowed private owners, including commercial businesses, to apply directly for Lottery funding so as to encourage the custodians of heritage that is in private hands in their efforts to conserve it and open it up to the public.

The walled garden adjacent to the glasshouse is now once more in use as a heritage viola nursery and, once the glasshouse is restored, visitors will be able to discover more about the history of cultivation during the Victorian era. As the restoration gets underway a community archaeology project will excavate a melon and cucumber pit on the site.

The glasshouse is believed to be one of only four in the country of this design to survive. It was last in use during the 1950s when Millichope Park was used as a school. Prior to that the estate had been used as a monastery.

The restoration project will recruit volunteers from the local community to research the history of iron-framed glasshouses and their horticultural usage. In future, visitors will be able to learn both new and old horticultural skills

during practical courses and lectures held in the re-built glasshouse.

Reyahn King, Head of HLF, West Midlands, said: “We want to encourage real public access to heritage that is in private hands. The Millichope Park glasshouse is an important part of Shropshire’s and indeed England’s horticultural history and our grant will mean that visitors will now be able to enjoy it for the first time in years and it will also be brought back into productive use.”

For Millichope Park, owner Frank Bury said: “The HLF grant together with a grant from Country House Foundation provides the impetus for us to restore these marvels of 19th-century technology. We hope they will be the centrepiece for visitors to come to Millichope and experience a bit of social and industrial history in a beautiful rural setting."

Further information

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