

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

BARBARA HEPWORTH SCULPTURE GARDEN

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**BARBARA HEPWORTH SCULPTURE GARDEN**

Name: BARBARA HEPWORTH SCULPTURE GARDEN

District: Cornwall (Unitary Authority)

Parish: St. Ives

label.localisation: Latitude: 50.213072  
Longitude: -5.4809674  
National Grid Reference: SW 51750 40585  
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden  
Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1001488  
Date first listed: 30-Jan-2001

## Details

A mid and late C20 garden created by Dame Barbara Hepworth as a setting for a group of her own sculptures.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Trewyn Studio, a small artist's studio of late C19 or early C20 origins, was purchased by Barbara Hepworth (1903-75) in 1949 when the grounds associated with Trewyn House, St Ives were divided and sold at auction. Miss Hepworth, who moved to St Ives with her family and Ben Nicholson at the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, used the Studio for her sculpting for two years, before making it her permanent residence in 1951. The garden contained a few mature trees which survived from the grounds of Trewyn House, and from 1949 these were integrated into a new garden designed and planted by Hepworth herself. Greatly influenced by landscape forms, Hepworth found inspiration in the garden which allowed her to experience the infusion of 'the perfection of geometry with the vital grace of nature' (guidebook). The garden, a highly personal creation, also served as a setting for an expanding collection of sculptures created in the Studio. The garden provided an opportunity for Hepworth to carve in the open air, re-enforcing her creative link with the wider landscape (ibid).

In 1961 Hepworth acquired the adjacent Palais de Danse on the east side of Barnoon Hill as additional studio space for the construction of large bronze works, while in 1965 additional land to the west of the original garden was purchased. A further area of garden was developed to provide a more extensive setting for her works (ibid).

Barbara Hepworth was created a Dame of the British Empire in 1968 in recognition of her achievement as a sculptor, and for her support for schemes such as Cornwall County Council's 'Art in Schools Programme'. In 1975 Trewyn Studio was damaged in a fire which led to Dame Barbara's death. In her will Dame Barbara expressed the hope that a permanent exhibition of some of her works could be established in Trewyn Studio and its garden, and that both could be left as they had been at the time of her death. In 1976 the Studio and garden was opened to the public by her Trustees, and today (2000) the site remains the Barbara Hepworth Museum, administered since 1980 by the Tate Gallery.

### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** The Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden is situated on Barnoon Hill, a minor residential road in St Ives, c 250m west of the harbour. The c 0.1ha site is bounded to the east by Barnoon Hill, and to the north by a further minor road, Ayr Lane. To the west the site adjoins the grounds of Trewyn House, a mid or late C19 house, from which it is separated by timber fences and trellis planted with ivy and other climbing plants. The southern

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boundary is formed by a mid C20 road, Trewyn Hill, which was formed from an existing service drive (OS 1908) when the grounds of Trewyn House were divided and sold in 1949. The south, east, and north boundaries are marked by high stone walls with rustic stone coping which serve to retain the garden above the level of the surrounding land which slopes steeply from west to east. The garden itself slopes gently from north-west to south-east, revealing views east and south above the roofs of adjacent properties to St Ives Bay, the tower of the parish church, and houses to the south in St Ives. These views are framed by mature trees within the garden and on its boundary; those to the south are also framed by trees growing in the adjacent Trewyn Subtropical Gardens, a mid C20 public garden created from part of the grounds of Trewyn House (Pring 1996).

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The site is entered from Barnoon Hill at the north-east corner of the garden. A door leads directly from the street to the lower studio room. The garden is entered through a door which leads south from the upper room of the studio to a mid C20 glazed lean-to porch with a window seat below the south-facing window; this reveals views across the lawn at the lower, east end of the garden. A flight of granite steps ascends from the lower studio room within a further mid C20 glazed structure to enter the north-east corner of the garden.

A further entrance leads through double timber doors set in an arched opening in the north boundary wall at the east end of Ayr Lane; these doors give access to the workshop area immediately north-west of the studio, while further double doors lead from the workshop to the garden.

A white-painted wicket gate at the mid-point of the southern boundary leads to a small path (today, 2000, overgrown and disused); until 1969 this gate marked the south-west corner of the garden (guidebook).

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Trewyn Studio is situated at the north-east corner of the site and fronts directly onto Barnoon Hill to the east and Ayr Lane to the north. The studio is constructed in stone and rendered stone and comprises two storeys under a pitched slate roof. The surrounding ground levels dictate that the lower floor of the studio, which is entered directly from Barnoon Hill, lies below the level of the garden.

Trewyn Studio was built in the late C19 or early C20 in the grounds of Trewyn House and is the remnant of a block of buildings shown on the 1908 OS map extending from north to south across the width of the site. It was purchased at auction by Barbara Hepworth in 1949; the sculptor commented that 'Finding Trewyn Studio was a sort of magic. For ten years I had passed by with my shopping bags not knowing what lay behind the twenty foot wall ... Here was a studio, a yard and garden, where I could work in open air and space' (Hepworth 1970). From 1951 until her death in 1975, Trewyn Studio was Barbara Hepworth's main residence. It was damaged by fire in 1975 and was subsequently restored; today (2000) it is preserved as it was at the time of her death as the Barbara Hepworth Museum.

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The garden is situated immediately to the south and south-west of Trewyn Studio, on a gentle slope which descends from north-west to south-east through the site revealing views of the sea, parish church tower, and town.

The garden is laid out with three terraces running from north to south, to the west of a lower area which is laid to lawn. The terraces are linked by sloping concrete walks at their north and south ends, while a centrally placed flight of stone steps provides both a further link and an east/west vista through the garden. A gravel walk extends along the east side of the lawn below the terraces.

To the north-west of the Studio a level concrete terrace to the south of the workshop, which adjoins the Studio to the north-west, supports a painted-timber sculptor's turntable, while to the west, a recessed area sheltered by a mature magnolia which was planted c 1950 by Hepworth, contains a stock of stone. To the south-west of the workshop a flight of concrete steps flanked to the north by Shaft and Circle (1973) ascends to the north walk which in turn ascends gently west and north-west to reach a lean-to greenhouse at the north-west corner of the garden. An ornamental tile-edged bed below the north wall of the greenhouse is planted with tender climbers, while Dame Barbara's collection of cacti is also preserved in its shelter. The greenhouse also contains original plaster models for three bronzes and 1960s upholstered tubular-framed chairs. The greenhouse is framed by ornamental trees, shrubs, and ferns which also serve as the setting for Image, a stone sculpture of 1951-2. The greenhouse served as a studio for John Milne before Hepworth acquired the western section of the garden in 1965 (guidebook).

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The upper or west terrace walk leads south from the greenhouse, parallel to the western boundary of the site. The walk is planted with mainly evergreen ornamental trees and shrubs, beneath which further sculptures are arranged, including the blue marble Poised Form (1951-2) which is placed to the west of the walk aligned on the central steps and east vista. To the south, the upper terrace walk is aligned on Garden Sculpture (Meridian) (1958), which is complemented to the south-east by a group of mature cordylines and a steel rod sculpture, Apollo (1951). To the south-west of the walk a small area of lawn is enclosed by groups of bamboos; this is the setting for a monumental six-part bronze sculpture, Conversation with Magic Stones (1973). The south walk runs parallel to the southern boundary of the site which is screened by mixed ornamental trees and shrubs including a specimen copper beech and Ailanthus. Further sculptures are arranged against the shrubbery to the north and south of this walk. The middle terrace comprises a gravelled walk which is crossed at its central point by the east/west cross-walk. To the south-west of the crossing a simple bench comprising a concrete seat supported on blue brick piers overlooks the lower lawn to the east. The gravel walk is flanked by mixed ornamental planting and specimen trees including oaks and a weeping pear. The walk is aligned to the south on Bronze Form (Patmos) (1962).

Stone steps flanked by a pair of mature specimen cordylines descend east from the middle terrace to the lower terrace. This comprises a concrete-flagged walk to the south-west of the lawn which leads north to the monumental bronze Four Square (Walk Through) (1966), a sculpture which comprises square panels with inset open circles which, from particular points in the garden, frame views of the sea; this is Hepworth's largest work (ibid). To the south-west of the lower terrace walk a concrete-lined pool of irregular form is edged with rustic stones and ornamental planting; a narrow rustic stone bridge extends across the pool from east to west, while an ornamental flowering cherry is trained above the water. The surrounding east-facing slope is planted with further mixed ornamental shrubs, ivy, and herbaceous plants, and is retained above the concrete walk by rustic stone walls. A group of sculptures including Torso II (Torcello) (1958), Six Forms (2 x 3) (1968), a circular stringed sculpture Spring 1966 and a bronze, Corymb (1959), is arranged to the west and south of the pool, and is framed by the adjacent planting. A further sculpture, Figure for Landscape (1960), stands at the north-west end of this lower terrace against a background of cordylines and evergreen shrubs.

The lawn below the lower terrace slopes gently from north-west to south-east and is separated from a gravel walk to the south, east, and north by two informal stone-edged beds; that to the south-east is planted with yuccas and statuesque evergreen shrubs, while that to the north-east is planted with roses and a specimen Chusan palm. The lawn itself supports, in addition to the monumental Four Square, two further sculptures: Two Forms (Divided Circle) (1969), and a horizontal piece, River Form (1965). Further sculptures including Core (1955-6), and Fuge II are placed among the planting to the south-east of the lawn, while a circular sculpture, Sphere with Inner Form (1963), terminates the east/west vista through the garden. To the south-east of the outer, eastern walk, a single-storey summerhouse of timber and glazed construction contains the artist's bed and is surrounded by ornamental shrubs, many with fragrant flowers. To the north of the summerhouse, a recess to the east of the walk is enclosed to the east by a low rendered wall which is painted a pale blue; this contains a simple bench seat and 1960s garden chairs and tables and formed part of Hepworth's original garden plan. The recess is flanked by ornamental flowering shrubs. The eastern walk continues north-east to reach the stone steps which descend to the lower studio room, before turning west to join the northern walk.

The garden was created by Barbara Hepworth from 1949, and was extended to the west in 1965. The artist was responsible for both the designs and much of the surviving planting which shows careful selection of plants with interesting textural and sculptural qualities. Hepworth frequently retained an artist's cast of works completed in Trewyn Studio for display in the garden, which today (2000) contains three large stone carvings dating from the 1950s and a group of eighteen bronze sculptures of various dates.

#### REFERENCES

B Hepworth, *A Pictorial Autobiography* (1970) Some Statements by Barbara Hepworth (1977) S Pring, *The Glorious Gardens of Cornwall* (1996), p 53 D E Pett, *The Parks and Gardens of Cornwall* (1998), p 53 Register Review for Cornwall, (English Heritage 1998) *A Guide to the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden*, guidebook, (Tate St Ives, nd) *A Horticultural Guide to the Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden*, guidebook, (Tate St Ives, nd)

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Maps Garden plans published in guidebook

OS 6" to 1 mile: 2nd edition published 1908

Description written: October 2000 Register Inspector: JML Edited: April 2001

## Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.