

## **GARTHGYNAN**

**Ref No** PGW (C) 37

**OS Map** 116

**Grid Ref** SJ 143 554

**County** Denbighshire

**District** Denbighshire

**Community Council** Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd

**Designations** Listed building: Garthgynan Grade II

**Site Evaluation** Grade II\*

### **Primary reasons for grading**

Well preserved small seventeenth-century walled garden adjacent to house, with banqueting house, raised terrace and bee boles. Fine views from the terrace and banqueting house. Below a terraced orchard and former ornamental fishponds.

### **Type of Site**

Formal walled garden, orchard and fish ponds

### **Main Phases of Construction**

Mid seventeenth century, with earlier foundations, possibly of the late sixteenth century or early seventeenth century

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

Garthgynan lies on a low hill to the south-east of the village of Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd. The house is approached by a track off the B5429 which crosses the Dwr Ial stream by a small stone bridge. A short straight drive branches off the track and leads to the north front of the house. The approach is bounded by a bank on the west side, and the area around it is planted with a mixture of deciduous trees. The track continues past the house approach to the farmyard, passing a dry pond on the left.

Garthgynan is a brick built two and a half-storey house with a three-bay entrance front. The house has been considerably altered over the years. The first house was built of stone which can clearly be seen on the south and west sides of the house. Three quarters of the west gable walls are stone, with stone mullioned windows. The top half of the gable end walls on the west side are brick, possibly dating to the seventeenth century. However it can clearly be seen that the front of the house has been extended and the roof pushed out, using brick again. Even the corbelling details of the seventeenth-century brick building remain encased in the eighteenth-century extension. The windows on this side are stone mullioned. Recently one was unblocked and re-instated. The north and south fronts were altered yet again in the nineteenth century by replacement windows and brickwork patching. There are three sets of enormous star shaped ribbed brick chimneys plus a smaller set of the same shape. A stone adjacent to the house has a date stone of 1658 which obviously does

not belong to that building but could relate to the house. Other date stones on farm buildings include 1698 and 1702 all with the initials WW denoting Williams Wynn.

A complex of utilitarian outbuildings lies to the west of the house. These include a nineteenth-century cart shed with a wooden dovecote attached, a smithy, and a courtyard of cow byres. These buildings are of mixed ages, mostly nineteenth century. To the south is a stone built mill, partly of nineteenth century date. To the north of the house is a pond built into the retaining wall of the north approach. It has two small square openings with a wooden beam above built into the wall. Although the pond is now dry, presumably when the water level was up these openings would have been accessible for waterfowl allowing them access to the enclosed area on the north side of the house.

The pleasure garden at Garthgynan is a small walled garden attached to the house on its south side. Like the house, parts of the lower parts of the walls are stone, possibly dating to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. The brick walls, terrace and pavilion relate to the second stage of rebuilding of the house, the mid seventeenth century. The north-south boundary walls of the garden contain a notable set of 31 small bee boles. A privy was built into the eastern wall in the nineteenth century and decorated with an older piece of decorated stonework.

The garden can be approached from three directions, either from the house, or by a door in the west wall or a door in the north wall next to the house. A banqueting house in the south-west corner of the garden has a star ribbed chimney similar to those on the house on one corner. The corresponding corner of the garden has a square portion apparently missing. What remains looks like the survival of the lower walls of a similar garden building. The two buildings are joined by a raised turf terrace, from which there are fine views to the south. It is bounded by a steep grass scarp, with three flights of stone steps spaced at equal intervals up it.

In the centre of the garden is a small stone edged pond. The central area of the garden is half lawn whilst the rest is laid out with a mixture of vegetable and flower beds in small plots. Against the east wall there is a line of small square beds, with a shrub border across the front of the corresponding west wall. Perimeter and cross gravel paths run through the garden.

Outside the eastern perimeter wall narrow terraces descend a steep bank, known as the orchard. There are still some old fruit trees here. Lying against the bottom of the bank is a rectangular former pond with banks on three sides. Just beyond the rectangular pond runs the stream Dwr Ial. At either end of this canal-shaped pond is a circular channel around a mound of turf. Another canal-shaped pond with a bank on its west side runs in the direction of the mill to the south.

## Sources

### Secondary

Hubbard, E., Clwyd (1986), pp. 208-09.

Walker, P., and W. Linnard, 'Bee boles and other beekeeping structures in Wales', Archaeologia Cambrensis, CXXXIX (1990), pp. 56-73.

