

**THE SUNKEN GARDEN AND FISH POOL
COLEORTON HALL
CREATED BY MR. JOE CAPENOR**



BY SAMUEL T STEWART - MARCH 2022

The old "Sunken Garden" at Coleorton Hall with its fish pool at the bottom is worthy of recording, as it was created nearly 90 years ago by a gentleman whose family played an important part in the more recent history of Coleorton, although it was recorded in the Leicester Evening Mercury (8th July 1955)..... *that the Capenor's name occurs in the parish records as far as they go back to the early 1600s and it is believed generally that the Capenors' came over from France with the Beaumonts.* The author has not been able to find any records to substantiate the latter.

An excellent photograph of the Sunken Garden taken c.1980 is shown on the front cover. It was actually situated in a corner of the former "Winter Garden" designed by Wordsworth but later encompassed within the grounds of the "Cedar Residence" built when the N.C.B. purchased the hall in 1948 as its East Midlands Headquarters. The location of the Sunken Garden is shown just above the trees on the LH side of the aerial photograph, and on the far RH side of the bottom photograph.



Once again, the newspapers have come to the rescue by providing some background information on the creation of the "Sunken garden and Fish Pool" in addition to the Capenors:-

Transcribed from the Burton Observer & Chronicle - Thurs 20th May 1965

Mr & Mrs Joseph Capenor of "High Dene", Gelsmoor, Coleorton will be celebrating their golden wedding on Saturday. For many years, Mr. Capenor was on the gardening staff at Coleorton Hall, when it was the family seat of the Beaumont's, and he continued in this occupation when it was taken over by the N.C.B. until his retirement some years ago.

On Saturday, with other visitors, Mr & Mrs Capenor were looking round the beautiful gardens, and then made a sentimental journey to the "Sunken Garden" in the area of the grounds which was landscaped by the poet William Wordsworth.

Mr. Capenor told me how the lovely little garden came to be created. The cavity had been excavated on the instruction of Sir George Beaumont for the construction of a swimming pool. Then Sir George went on holiday, and his death occurred whilst he was away.

Following his death, Lady Beaumont did not wish to proceed with the swimming pool scheme, so Mr. Capenor suggested that the hole should be converted into a sunken garden, and he spent many months perfecting it.

That the work was well done can be seen from the photograph on the following page which shows him standing with his wife, Mrs. Gertrude Capenor on the edge of the pool in the garden. With Mr & Mrs. Capenor when they went to the garden was their son Bill (inset) who followed in his father's footsteps on the gardening staff at the hall.



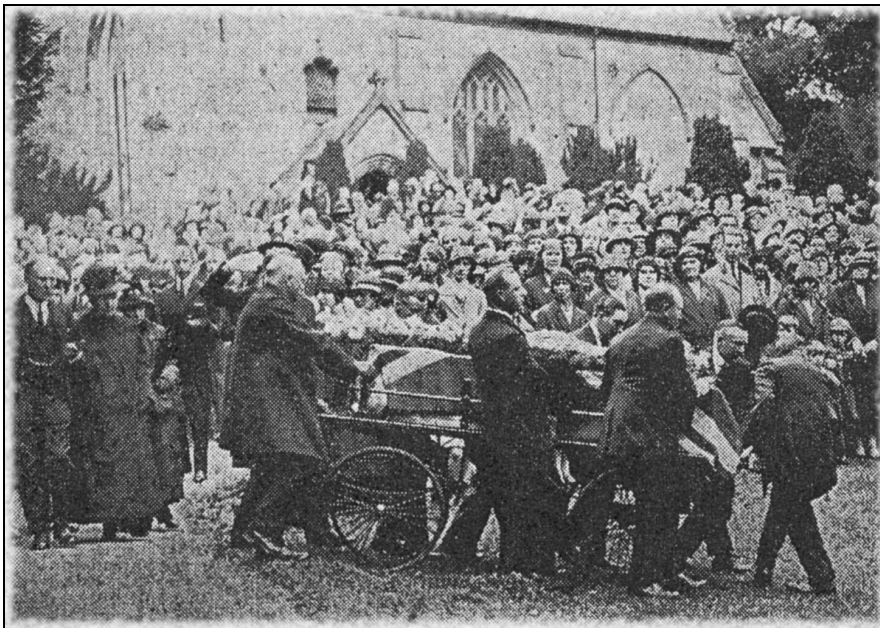
Mr & Mrs Joseph Capenor - 1965



Bill Capenor - 1965

The Beaumonts referred to in the newspaper article was Sir George Arthur Hamilton Beaumont, 11th Baronet of Stoughton and his wife Lady Renee Muriel.

Below is a photograph of Sir George's coffin being taken to the graveside on Oct 5th 1933. He died Oct 2nd 1933 at the age of 52, Joseph Capenor being one of the bearers



Taking the coffin on the bier to the graveside, borne by Messrs, J.J. Knight (oldest tenant), J. Capenor, R. Walker, and E. Toon. Sir George's mother, the Lady Dowager (Dame Lillie Ellen) is following the bier

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