

Memorial garden for boy killed by bear

Maggie Ritchie

He was killed in the most shocking of circumstances on a freezing, barren island hundreds of miles from home but now, five years after his death, Horatio Chapple's desire to help others is being fulfilled in Scotland.

The 17-year-old was killed by a polar bear while on an expedition to the Arctic Circle when the animal chanced on his encampment.

Next month, a garden of contemplation will be opened at a Scottish hospital to help patients with spinal injuries come to terms with their condition.

It is only the second "Horatio's Garden" to be opened in the UK and is based on an idea that the teenager dreamed up shortly before setting off on his ill-fated trip to the Norwegian island of Svalbard.

Intent on a career in medicine, Horatio spent the summer of 2011 volunteering at Salisbury District Hospital, where his father is a consultant spinal surgeon, talking to patients and helping to feed and care for them. It was then that he realised they needed somewhere quiet to escape to, where they could contemplate what had happened to them.

Horatio got to work on his idea, devising a questionnaire to ask patients what they wanted from a garden.

His parents, Olivia and David, are now making sure that their son's vision becomes reality at the Queen Elizabeth National Spinal Injuries Unit in Glasgow.

"Horatio loved the outdoors and he was troubled by the thought of spinal injuries patients — many of whom had led adventurous lives like his before their catastrophic accidents — being trapped indoors in a hospital for months on end," Mrs Chapple said.

"[Patients] told him they wanted a really beautiful, accessible garden they could use as an escape, somewhere they could be alone if they wanted away from the busy ward.

"He was really excited



Horatio Chapple was killed by a polar bear. His mother Olivia said he had dreamt of helping others



about this idea of a garden because he felt it was a tangible thing he could do to help people."

Her son was killed on August 5, 2011, while on an expedition with the British Schools Exploring Society. The bear attacked his tent, leaving him

with fatal injuries. It was a tragedy that resonated with many families and in the following days, while the family was in shock, it was Horatio's father who suggested they carry out his son's plans for a garden to commemorate his life.

Five years on, it is still difficult for Mrs Chapple, a GP, to talk about her son's death.

During a tour of the new Horatio's Garden — the first was opened in Salisbury last year and the second will be officially opened by Melanie Reid, the

Times columnist on September 3 — Mrs Chapple described how the family has coped.

"Anyone who has been bereaved knows that the anniversary is hard and inevitably has echoes of the tragedy, particularly in the week leading up to it. That's when I go through everything that has happened and relive it all."

She says the family — Horatio had two younger brothers, Titus, 20, and Magnus, 18 — keep his memory alive through Horatio's Garden, the charity

they set up to raise funds to create gardens for spinal units across the country. "It gives us a way to talk about Horatio. It's been really tough for his brothers, who were only 13 and 15 when he died. I'm aware they also need to get on with their own lives, but they love their involvement with the charity and it gives us all a purpose," Mrs Chapple said.

"Horatio's Garden is all about renewal and hope and how good things can happen when lots of people come together. Out of this terrible tragedy we have created a legacy for Horatio. Being able to go into a garden can make a huge difference to the happiness and wellbeing of someone who is trying to cope in the aftermath of a life-changing accident," added Mrs Chapple, who gave up her career as a GP to run the charity full time.

James Alexander-Sinclair, presenter of the Chelsea Flower Show and a leading garden designer, created the £500,000 Horatio's Garden in Scotland.

The six linked gardens have wide, level pathways with scented plants. There is a fountain at wheelchair height and "pods" where patients and their families can shelter from the rain. Patients can find comfort in a woodland garden planted with silver birches and an ornamental medlar tree and dotted with giant sculptures, all donated by the Chelsea Flower Show, while being able to watch their children in a play park. They can also take part in gentle rehabilitation activities, including garden therapy, art therapy and music concerts.

"I wanted to create a beautiful and restful haven where patients can find much-needed solace," Mr Sinclair-Stewart said. "Their lives have imploded in seconds by the kind of catastrophe that can happen to any of us. They need time alone to adapt to their new circumstances. Gardens are good for the soul."

Mrs Chapple said: "Horatio would have been really proud of this garden — he loved Scotland and spent two summers camping on the island of Lunga, off the west coast."

Eventually, she hopes there will be similar sanctuaries at all 11 of Britain's regional spinal injury centres.

Pheasants, deer and sheep roam estate fit for kings

Marc Horne, Vuyelo Ndlovu

Scotland's most expensive sporting estate, which has hosted kings, queens and US presidents, has been put on the market for more than £25 million.

The Tulchan estate, which has some of the best salmon fishing in Europe as well as two grouse moors and trout fishing, is described as the "ultimate utopia for the passionate sportsman".

The 21,000-acre slice of land in the heart of the Cairngorm National Park, which comes with a 13-bedroom Edwardian lodge, has attracted famous guests including King Edward VII, King George VI, President Theodore Roosevelt and JP Morgan, the American tycoon and banker.

The asking price for the property — owned by Leon Litchfield, the plastics entrepreneur — is thought to be the highest seen on the open market for a Scottish sporting estate, with the average price being less than £5 million

However, Savills, the joint agent for



The Tulchan estate, 40 miles south of Inverness, has played host to royalty

the sale, said that the estate was already attracting interest from around the world. Evelyn Channing, a spokeswoman for Savills, said: "Tulchan is a magnificent Highland estate offering some of the finest fly fishing for salmon in Scotland. It's the ultimate utopia for a passionate sportsman or woman and has a really special magic about it, whatever season you visit.

The estate, 40 miles south of Inver-

ness, has eight miles of double bank fishing on the Spey, a hill loch with brown trout fishing, grouse moors, pheasant, snipe and woodcock shooting, deer stalking and five let farms. It produces its own lamb and beef from a commercial herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle and a flock of blackface sheep.

The estate also has holiday and let cottages, a modern home with six bedrooms, extensive tracts of natural woodland, commercial forestry and a kitchen garden producing fruit and vegetables.

The Edwardian lodge was built in 1906 by George McCorquodale, who acquired the estate from the Earl of Seafield. It later reverted to Seafield ownership until the death of the countess in 1969.

Since then it has been the property of a London-based financial institution, followed by a Swiss businessman, and was bought in 1993 by the present owners. Mr Litchfield, son of the founder and owner of LB Plastics, purchased the estate for an undisclosed sum.

Runners in Ben Nevis Race warned to keep off the grass

Marc Horne

Athletes taking part in an annual race up Britain's highest mountain have been given an unusual instruction — please keep off the grass.

The annual Ben Nevis Race has been run since 1951 but Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the Scottish government's conservation agency, has put part of the mountain route off limits.

SNH is banning runners from entering a section of the peak known as the Grassy Bank — a shortcut which lops 60 yards off the main tourist path about three quarters of the way to the summit — because of fears that they are causing erosion. Transgressors will be disqualified by race officials.

An SNH spokesman said: "We have been involved in discussions with the organisers of the Ben race to identify an alternative to the Grassy Bank.

"Key challenges are runners descending the steep grassy bank — and the associated fact the ground is steep and fragile, and so is eroding.

"If runners continue to descend the slope, particularly a narrow section in

between two older landslides, there's now a real risk of a large slope failure.

"There are also concerns this is causing a scar in this well-visited and spectacular part of the mountain and there have been concerns about health and safety due to the risk of rocks being dislodged."

Mickey Whitehead, secretary of the Ben Nevis Race Association, claimed that the revised route would make the event even more gruelling.

He said: "It will make it a bit harder. In the 1960s somebody came down that way and everybody since has followed.

"But SNH said it is worried about the erosion and not to make it worse. We don't want to be seen to be damaging the area and anybody using the Grassy Bank will be disqualified."

The race up and down the 4,412ft peak is limited to 600 runners and strict rules are enforced. Runners who do not reach halfway in one hour or the summit in two hours are turned back.

Competitors who do not complete the course in 3 hours 15 minutes are barred from taking part in future races.

This year's event is on September 3.