

A Tour of the Garden

Ralph Dutton believed the ancient oaks that can be seen in and around the car-park to be upward of 500 years old. In replanting the park, he was anxious that his own 'little plantations shall not develop into clumps, but into groups of trees. That is to say that each tree shall keep its natural form. This entails, of course, constant thinning, a few trees every year.' As he suspected, it has not been easy to achieve this effect, but it is discernible in some of the clumps.

Access to the Park can be gained via the cattle-grids at the west end of the Long Walk and at the top of the Lime Avenue. Views of the house and garden from the park illustrate Ralph Dutton's concern to ensure that his garden appeared as an organic component of its surroundings.

The walled garden was created in the 1860s on the site of the kitchen garden which provided for the house from the 17th century. It was closed for twenty years, being the tenant's private garden, and was opened to the public for the first time in 2006. It also saw the start of the restoration programme. The tennis court, in the north-west corner, was removed in the winter of 2006 and is now the vegetable garden. The swimming pool that was in front of the visitor centre was filled in and grassed during that Autumn. The visitor centre and shop, formerly an Orchid House, were opened in December 2006. Dependent on money (donations) the remaining greenhouses will be restored and hopefully the greenhouse which once stood behind the cold frames will be re-instated. The north Vista overlooks the site of the Civil War, Battle of Cheriton (29 March 1644) from what were the Parliamentary lines.

The formal garden extends to 12 acres and sits within an 80 acre park itself, contained within the 1550 acre estate. The Church is not part of the National Trust estate but please feel free to break your tour and visit.

Leave the visitor centre past the fine yellow rose 'Dreaming Spires' and *Forsythia x suspensa*. In June turn back and admire *Rosa Alberic Barbiera*, on the visitor centre wall before entering the gate immediately on your left which leads to:

1. The Walled Garden

Entering the garden there is a recently planted herb garden to your left followed by a border containing *Artemesia Limelight* and several *Paeonia*.

The fruit trees around the perimeter, and the espalier-trained apple and pear trees, alternately planted along the central path, some planted in the 1860s. Two new pear trees have been planted either side of the east gate to continue the line. The planting in the herbaceous beds in front of the fruit trees changes but often includes Stachys, Rudbeckia, Lupin, Sweet Pea, Delphinium and Sunflowers. More permanent planting is made up of Yuccas, Hemerocallis, and *Limonium latifolium* 'Blue Cloud'. These plantings together with those along the east wall path reflect the practice of growing cut-flowers for the house in the walled garden.

The north bed is planted with a selection of soft fruit with the tropical looking *Eriobotrya japonica* behind the cold frames. Along the south and east walls can be found Olearia, Escallonia, Choisya, and Wigela. Just to the right of the gate in spring is a good selection of *Fritillera Imperialis*.

Leave the walled garden by the ornamental iron gate leading to the:

2. The Autumn Border

In the spring on the opposite side of the drive from the box hedging, the scarlet *Tulipa* 'Appeldoorn' is contrasted with the double *Narcissus* 'White Lion' and dwarf *N.* 'Suzy', with its tiny orange trumpets. In addition there are three split

corona types, *N. 'Cassata'*, *N. 'Valdrome'* and *N. 'Printal'*.

In May there is *Kolkwitzia amabilis*, with delicately perfumed pale pink flowers. Later in the month the highly-scented *Philadelphus 'Beauclerk'*, the woodland shrub *Neillia thibetica* and the climbing roses and Clematis on the wall are active. The roses, *R. 'New Dawn'* and *R. 'Captain Christy'* can all be seen accompanied by the hybrids of *Clematis viticella* 'Mrs Cholmondeley', 'Perle d'Azur', 'William Kennett', 'Beauty of Richmond', 'Annabel', and 'Niobe'. The uncommon vigorous climbing rose *Rosa sinowilsonii* is grown through a yew tree, and although having a reputation for being slightly tender, survives our wet and miserable winters. Across the drive are groups of Mock Orange species - *Philadelphus satsumanus* and *P. subcanus* together with the more spectacular *Weigela decora*, with its three-coloured flowers. The white *Escallonia 'Iveyi'*, pink *Abelia schumanii* and the pale-pink *Fuchsia magellanica* var. *molinae* can also be seen here in June and July. The tall yellow and brown perennial foxglove *Digitalis ferruginea* and dark blue *Agapanthus* and *Teucrium chamaedrys* (germander). This border is also a showcase late July and August for hardy *Hibiscus* including the varieties 'Woodbridge', 'Bluebird' and 'Diana'. The vivid blue Dayflower, *Commelina coelestis*, and the perfect pale scented bells of the herbaceous Clematis stans sprawl beneath the bluish *Hydrangea aspera villosa*. In this area there are a number of Lavateras, including *L. 'Barnsley'* and *L. 'Burgundy Wine'*.

Moving into autumn, *Hydrangea villosa* is in flower and also *H. quercifolia* 'Snowflake'; the *Abelias* are coming into their own - here you can see *A. schumanii* (pink), *A. grandiflora* and *A. chinensis*, the latter two plants both delicately scented; and of course the hardy *Hibiscus*. Across the drive the less common *Hibiscus paramutabile* with its very large leaves is flowering too. The the *Anemones* 'September Charm', 'Honorine Jobert' and 'Queen Charlotte' can be seen late in the season.

3. The Drive & North Vista

This area of the garden is slightly acid clay which lies above the chalk allowing us to grow *Rhododendrons* and other acid loving plants. At the gated end of the drive near the kiosk is the *Rhododendron 'Diane'* with its pale foliage and creamy-yellow flowers and the pink *Rh. 'Bernard Shaw'*.

Further up the drive towards the house are three *Rh. 'Mrs Davies Evans'* with frilled light mauve flowers and three *Rh. 'Snow Queen'* which combine pale pink buds with large pure white flowers. Further on *Rh. 'Faggeter's Favourite'* and the less spectacular *Rh. ponticum* and its hybrid 'Cunningham's White' complete the picture.

Highclere hollies *Ilex x altaclarensis 'Camelliifolia'*, *Cephalotaxus*, *Podocarpus* and Italian cypresses are a feature of this area.

At the end of the Drive, the scented bells of *Rhododendron decorum* can be seen, and at the bend in the drive you will see a large drift of naturalised foxgloves amongst the yew trees, now being clipped into cloud formations, framing a fine urn that creates a focal point in the North Vista with discrete views into the North Park.

Proceed through the gap in the yews into:

4. The Magnolia Garden

Here you will find fairly common *Camellias*, including *Camellia japonica*, *C. x williamsii* 'Donation', *Azalea mollis* hybrids, *Pieris*, *Enkianthus campanulatus* and a number of woodland underplantings such as *Corydalis solida*, the yellow *Erythronium 'Pagoda'*, *E. revolutum* 'White Beauty' and *Trillium grandiflorum* 'Album'.

Magnolia liliiflora 'Nigra' will be showing its large deeply-tinted tulips, and the ground level plantings consist of *Corydalis ochroleuca*, *Trillium grandiflorum* 'Album', *Geranium macrorrhizum*, *Primula japonica*, *Ajuga reptans*, *Euphorbia polychroma* and two delicate "shooting stars" from the Primula family - *Dodecatheon meadia* and darker *D. pulchellum* 'Queen Victoria'. In May pause by the statue of Flora and admire the Hankerchief tree, *Davidia involucrata*, above your head over the wooden building.

In late June *Digitalis ambigua* is still flowering, the *Hydrangeas* are starting to come out, including *H. serrata* 'Bluebird', *H. preziosa* and *H. veitchii*. You will also see the scented *Primula florindae*, resembling a giant cowslip, and also its red form.

August sees the hydrangea season in full swing with, amongst others, *Hydrangea involucrata*, *H. 'Ayesha'* the large-

leaved *H. sargentiana* joining those already in flower. You will also find *Roscoea*, the dwarf mauve *Astilbe chinensis pumila* and deep pink *Chelone obliqua*, or Turtle-head along with a number of toad-lilies (*Tricyrtis*). Look out for the large Magnolia seed pods and the strange creamy white flowers of the *Aralia*, by the statue, late in the season.

Leaving this area past *Ribes* and *Forsythia*, on your left, follow the path into:

5. The Orchard

In the rough grass of the orchard *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* types interspersed with naturalised *Anemone blanda* are followed by the golden trumpets of *N. 'Unsurpassable'* and the white of 'Mount Hood', the double 'White Lion' and *N. 'Pipit'* The orchard is home to various cherries in April, including 'Kanzan', 'Accolade', 'Mount Fuji', 'Tai Haku,' 'Shimidsu Sakura', and 'Shirofugen', beneath which lies a carpet of *Anemone nemorosa* and *A. blanda* in various shades.

In May the Quince and Medlar trees are blossoming in the orchard and *Camassia leichtlinii* and *C. leichtlinii 'Alba'* may be present in the long grass.

In autumn flowering *Crocus speciosus* can be seen and the crab apple 'John Downie' will be fruiting.

Leave the orchard in the direction of the house and turn left to:

6. The Church Border

The heavily-scented *Sarcococcas* and the snowdrops, winter aconites and crocuses are early season attractions.

The yellow flowers of *Mahonia 'Apollo'*, and startling white clump of *Pachyphragma macrophyllum*, make an early season statement together with the variegated box elder *Acer negundo 'Variegata'*, whilst at the far end you will encounter the split corona *Narcissus 'Lemon Beauty'*. Across the grass path the highly scented hybrid *Viburnum carlcephalum* and *V. farreriis* in full bloom.

In April the fresh leaves of the variegated *Acer Coppidecum* will be prominent and the blue flowered *Muscari 'Blue Spike'* will be prominent under the *Aesculus indica* which will display large white panicles in May.

In mid spring *Choisya ternata*, the Mexican orange blossom, *Weigela florida 'Variegata'* and the Hawthorn variety *Crataegus 'Paul's Scarlet'* will be putting on a show together with the fine *Aesculus x mutabilis 'Induta'*, a relative of the Horse Chestnut with apricot flowers. Nearby *Geranium cantabridgiense 'Cambridge'* and *G. x oxonianum 'Lace Time'* can be seen in bloom.

In June, across the path from the Church Border, the perfumed *Philadelphus 'Coupe d'Argent'* stands close to *Scabiosa lucida* and *S. ochroleuca*, blue and yellow respectively. A *Deutzia* species is in flower and you will observe large drifts of perennial foxgloves - namely *Digitalis lutea* (narrow yellow trumpets) and *D. ambigua* (larger yellow trumpets).

In late July the blue ground-cover of *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides* will be on show together the large-leaved *Hydrangea aspera 'Macrophylla'*.

In late August the tiny-flowered *Aster lateriflorus 'Horizontalis'* will appear together with other *Asters*, *A. novi-belgii* hybrids 'Pink Lace', 'Prof. Anton Kippenberg' and 'Little Pink Pyramid' will open and of course, heralding autumn, are the berries of *Viburnum rhytidophyllum*.

Keeping the Church on your left make your way to the grass path:

7. The Philadelphus Walk

Follow the tall box hedges along the serpentine walk which is at its best in June and early July, lined on either side with various *Philadelphus*, chosen originally for shade tolerance, vigour and a pure white flower. These will include *P. 'Conquête'*, *P. 'Patricia'*, *P. x lemoinei*, *P. schrenkii*, *P. 'Avalanche'* and *P. burfordensis*, many of which carry a fine scent. The winter of 2008 saw the planting of fresh new varieties including *P. Le Moine*, *P. Minnesota 'Snowflake'*, *P.*

'Polar Star', *P. 'Snowstorm'*, *P. 'Sybille'* and *P. Pekinensis*.

You can proceed down the path or turn to your left down:

8. The Dell View Path

A number of plants are on display which are at their best in spring including *Viburnum burkwoodii* and *V. plicatum maressi*. There are a range of ground-covering plants which seem happy in the dappled shade, such as *Geranium himalayense* 'Gravetye', *G. macrorrhizum*, *G. monacense* 'Muldoon' with *Tiarella cordifolia* and *Aquilegia* 'Pleat'. Further round is a re-grown stump of an old Judas tree, *Cercis siliquastrum*, is full of its purple blooms in late April.

Overlooking the Dell small plants of *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Grandiflora' are developing together with *Hydrangea arborescens*. *Buddleja ariculata* will just be showing its spikes of tiny, tubular, sweetly-scented cream in October.

The path ends at the entrance to the Dell where the Philadelphus Walk also gives entrance to:

9. The Dell

This area was once a chalk pit but is now planted for foliage. In the late winter and early spring *Helleborus foetidus*, *H. corsicus*, *Pulmonaria saccharata*, *P. rubra*, *P. angustifolia* azurea, *P. 'Sissinghurst White'*, *Brunnera macrophylla* (looking like a large perennial Forget-me-not), *Leucojum aestivum* and the exquisite *Clematis alpina* 'Frankie', with its perfectly-formed blue and white flowers can be seen.

Even early in the season there is much of interest, from the red bracts of *Euphorbia griffithii* 'Fireglow', and *Astrantia major* 'Sunningdale Variegated'. Other highlights include the rich red-purple young shoots of the ornamental Rhubarb *Rheum palmatum* 'Rubrum' and the copper strands of the small sedge *Carex dallii*. Flowering attractions are the choice herbaceous *Paeonia mlokosewitschii* holding its exquisite lemon yellow blooms to the sun; the rich, dark and creamy *Aquilegia* 'William Guinness' reminiscent in colouring of the drink which shares its surname, the yellow tubular trumpets of *Vestia x lycioides*, planted high up the bank to distance its foul-smelling foliage from the unwary, and the yellow flowering tree paeony, *Paeonia lutea ludlowii* at the entrance. If you are fortunate and the weather has spared the overwintering flower buds the *Paulownia*, with its huge heart-shaped leaves, may well be holding aloft its scented mauve foxglove like flowers. Sweet Cicely gives a slightly wilder effect at ground level with its creamy white umbels, whilst in the foreground you will find the large pink trumpets of *Incarvillea delavayi*. After a mild winter the tenderish *Cestrum newelli* may be exhibiting its bright red flowers alongside *Virburnum Japonica* and *Cestrum fasciculatum*.

By late May the foliage is burgeoning, particularly as the *Rodgersias* (*R. aesculifolia*, *R. pinnata*, *R. tabularis*, *R. sambucifolia*, *R. podophylla*), are now fully in leaf and some are flowering. Other plants grown primarily for their spectacular leaf forms that are also flowering now include the Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Goat's Beard (*Aruncus dioicus*). The stately *Euphorbia cornigera*, the foxtail lilies (*Eremuris*), the tall pale-yellow scabious-like *Cephalaria* 'gigante' and the feathery plumes of a number of Miscanthus grasses, all combine to create the varied textures of this area.

Golden Inulas, *I. helenium* and the very tall *I. magnifica*, and *Ligularia przewalskii* 'The Rocket', *Hemerocallis fulva* 'Flore pleno' (orange), and *H. 'Black Magic'* are offset by the quieter tones of the pale yellow of the Giant Scabious, *Cephalaria gigantea*, the creamy plumes of *Sorbarea arborea*, the large *Euphorbia cornigera* in lime green. Waving amongst everything else, the tall mauve *Verbena bonariense* amid number of summer exotics, including *Cannas*, *Hedychiums* and purple-foliaged Dahlias.

The entrance itself is announced by a large 'Kiftsgate' rose buzzing with bees in early June with *Rosa brunonae* *opposite*.. Other plants of interest are the red and yellow *Aquilegia skinneri*, the red shrubby chestnut *Aesculus splendens* and the small shooting stars, *Dodecatheon maedia*.

Also at the entrance you will find the large leaved yellow flowered *Bupthalmum Speciosum*, varieties of *Dahlia* include 'David Howard', 'Roxy', 'Murdoch', 'Bednall Beauty', 'Moonfire' and 'Bishop of Llandaff'. *Crocasmias* such as *C. 'Lucifer'* and *C. 'Solfaterre'* feature now, with *C. 'Mount Usher'* and *C. 'Vesuvius'* following later. Quieter hues include whites such as *Anemone 'Honorine Jobert'* and *Hosta 'Royal Standard'*, the dark mauve of *H. fortunei* var. *obscura* and the paler *Verbena hastata*, and *Hydrangea villosa*.

Hydrangea villosa is at its best in the damp shade in a setting which contains herbaceous items such as the Toad Lily *Tricyrtis hirta*, *Eupatorium purpureum* (Hemp Agrimony), *E. rugosum* 'Braunlaub', *Anemone* 'Honorine Jobert', and bright orange *Ligularia dentata* 'Desdemona'. *Clematis serratifolia* with its small yellow flowers clothes the pergola at the entrance, the blue flowers of *Caryopteris incana* 'Weeping Form' can be seen on the bank on the left. Stands of *Hedychium* 'Tara' and various *Cannas* including the pink *C. iridiflora* give the borders a warm feeling.

In late August/September *Paeonia mlokosewitschii* will be displaying its brightly coloured seed pods and *Lobelia Tupa* will be showing higher up the bank.

Leave The Dell past the variegated *Cornus contraversa* on your left and continue down the path.

10. From the Dell to Diana

Leaving the Dell you will pass between Tree Peonies, *Paeonia lutea ludlowii*, on either side and a Chinese Red Barked Birch, unusual in this country, on your left. Opposite, beneath the Russian vine is *Geranium x oxonianum* 'Claridge Druce'. Flanking this path you will find climbing roses *R.* 'Bobbie James' and *R. multiflora*, *Phlomis russelliana*, and the orange tinged perennial foxglove *Digitalis ambigua* 'John Innes Tetra'. On the right of the path are *Phlomis longifolia bailanica*, *Penstemon gracilis*, *Iris ensata spontanea* and the yellow shrub, *Jasminum humile*, on the left. Heading south you may pause at the crossroads in the path and this will give you the chance to take in the plants here including *Hypericum Hidcote*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Robinia* 'Roseum', *Kolkwitzia amabilis* 'Pink Cloud' and *Rosa xanthina*. There are also some interesting *Viburnums*, including *V. chingii* and *V. harryanum*. The strange red-brown flowers of *Calycanthus fertilis* are worth searching for too. Various *Stachys* and *Phlomis* are in evidence, and the purple foliage of *Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy' and *Catalpa bignonioides* 'Purpurea' stands out well.

Continuing southwards towards the statue of Diana you will pass a clump of purple *Strobilanthes atropurpurea* and a large patch of the herbaceous *Persicaria polymorpha*, with clusters of small white bells.

Between and to the left of the two large bay trees is a small shade garden containing a number of *Daphnes* including *D. x Goodsoriae* 'Hinton', *D. x Burkwoodi* 'Albert Burkwood', *D. Mezereum*, *D. Albowiana*, and *D. x Transatlantica* 'Eternal Fragrance', with a ground cover of *Epimedium Francheti*, 'Brimstone Butterfly'.

Turn back towards the statue of Diana and make your way to the left of the old Tennis Court:

11. The Tennis Court Garden

To the left of the path you will find *Cistus* 'Paper Moon', *Heptacodium micconoides*, *Alangium Gymnocladus*, *Viburnum Harryanum* and Japanese Hornbeam followed by *Helleborus niger*, *Forsythia giraldiana*, *Syringa chinensis* and *Stachyurus* 'Praecox' opposite the large *Virburnum betulifolium*, white in flower in July and splendid when berrying later in the season.

Further round, on your left you will pass by the small pink blooms of *Lonicera tartarica* on your way towards more perennial honesty and scented *Viburnums*, to your right below the pleached limes, before chancing upon a lovely planting of *Dicentra spectabilis* 'Alba' beneath the exquisite pastel blooms of the Japanese Crab, *Malus floribunda*. You will also pass *Cistus x Acgulari Maculatus*, *V. opulus*, *Choedoparitium stevensonii*, *Syringa palitien megeri*, and a standard *Wisteria chinensis* transplanted from the walled garden in 2008. Opposite the *Wisteria* to the right of the tree paeony is *Philyrea augustifolia rosmarifolium*.

In May a selection of lilacs is on display, which scent the path as you walk through, including *Syringa josikea*, *S. vulgaris* 'Sensation (two-tone purple flowers with a white edge)', *S. vulgaris* 'Charles Joly', *S. x josiflexa* 'Bellicent', *S. vulgaris* 'Primrose', *S. pubescens subsp. micophylla* 'Superba' and *S. chinensis* 'Saugeana'. Also to be seen is the peachy young foliage of *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Brilliantissum' and the pale yellow early roses of *Rosa pimpinellifolia* 'Altaica'.

There is a good stand of herbaceous *Phlomis russelliana* with its whorls of flowers in two tones of pale yellow and gold and the purple foliage of *Cotinus coggygia atropurpurea* and *C.* 'Notcutt's Variety' will have started to make a statement during July. Further round is *Deutzia longifolia*, and behind the bench the green-leaved species of the smoke bush, *Cotinus coggygia*, which many people think is far better in flower than the more fashionable purple-leaved varieties.

Further up the path you will be able to see *Colutea x media* and *C. arborescens* simultaneously in flower and fruit with their large inflated bladder-like seed pods. Later in the season the red-mauve flowers of the sub-shrub *Clerodendrum bungeii* will be seen as you leave this area.

Follow the path and you will come to the:

12. The Temple Garden

In the early part of the season the beds to the south display a number of items of early season interest, including the bulbous *Chionodoxa luciliae*, *C. sardensis*, *C. gigantea*, *C. gigantea* 'Alba', *C.* 'Pink Giant' and *Muscari* 'Blue Spike'. Also in flower here are *Epimedium pinnatum colchicum*, *E. perralderianum*, *Brunnera macrophylla*, *Helleborus corsicus* and *Pulmonaria officinalis*. The small early pink-flowering shrub *Prunus tenella* is a delight.

In April a variety of plants including *Clematis alpina*, variegated Honesty (*Lunaria annua variegata*), the spring pea, *Lathyrus vernus*, *Viola riviniana purpurea* and *Dicentra spectabilis*. *Muscari botyroides* 'Album' form drifts whilst higher up are the purple flowers and leaves of *Malus* 'Profusion', the early white shrub *Exochorda macrantha* 'Snow White', the pale yellow clusters of *Corylopsis veitchiana* and the heavily perfumed heads of *Viburnum x burkwoodii* and *V.* 'Mohawk'.

In May there is plenty in bloom and it is worth noting as well as the less commonly seen shrubs such as *Viburnum phlebotrimum* that there are a number of widely-planted but very effective shrubs in this area, for example *Viburnum plicatum* 'Mariesii'. This is accompanied by its close relative *Viburnum plicatum* 'Pink Beauty' which in April begins with white lacecaps, gradually turning pink over a long period, to be followed immediately by berries which start translucent red. The Kolkwitzias are particularly good, as is a clump of the tall yellow early *Rosa* 'Cantabrigiensis'. Also flowering, in spring, are *Viburnum sargentii* 'Onondaga', *Dipelta ventricosa*, *D. floribunda*, *Calycanthus floridus*, various *Weigelas* and *Spiraea x vanhouttei*. The herbaceous plants *Geranium sylvaticum* 'Album', the pink spikes of *Persicaria bistorta* 'Superba' and the variegated annual honesty create groundcover with the upright form of *Kalopanax pictus* in the background. By June the beds in the Lime Avenue will have taken on a pinker hue from the whites and yellows of April. *Escallonia* 'Edinensis', *E.* 'Apple Blossom', *E.* 'Donard Radiance' and *E.* 'Crimson Spire' intermingle their shades of pink. *Crimson Rosa moyesii*, *R. glauca*, a single pink with greyish foliage, *Leycesteria formosa*, *Syringa komarowii*, *Buddleja alternifolia*, *Diervilla sessiliflora* and *Calycanthus floridus* round off the atmosphere.

In July a particularly good combination is formed from the vertical accents of *Heuchera micrantha* 'Palace Purple' backed by *Digitalis ferruginea* and the summer-flowering shrubby horse-chestnut *Aesculus parviflora*. The smoke bushes *Cotinus coggygria* and *C. coggygria atropurpureum* will also be in flower, as will *Ceanothus* 'Gloire de Versailles' and the large spikes of *Buddleja* 'Pink Delight'. The tall deep blue *Salvia guaranitica*, *Buddleja* 'Nanho Blue', *B.fallowiana* var. *alba*, *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Alba' and the white herbaceous *Clematis* 'Mrs Robert Brydon'.

Late in the season the *Viburnum rhytidophyllum* will have a splendid display of red berries.

Leave the Temple on your right and enter:

13. The Sunken Garden

Spring flowers include *Aubrieta deltoidea*, *Bergenia cordifolia* and *Euphorbia characias* subsp. *wulfenii*. With the rectangular beds filled with tulips and forget-me-nots.

Occasionally the white *Allium triquetrum* will be flowering early and *Allium ostrowskianum*, *A.* 'Gladiator', *A. karatieviense*, *A. schubertii*, *A. rosenbachianum*, *A. multibulbosum*, *A. neapolitanum*, *A. unifolium*, *A. triquetrum*, *A. cowanii*, *A. christophii* and *Nectaroscordum siculum* (formerly *Allium bulgaricum*) will be on display during May. You may have to wait until early June to see *A. azureum caeruleum* and *A. cernuum*. *Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy', may be in flower during late April together with *Iris pallida* subsp. *pallida*. A number of hardy *Salvias* may have started flowering in late May.

The legume *Indigofera amblyantha* and herbaceous *Eryngium bourgatii* will be in full bloom in June and *Buddleja alternifolia*, trained as standards display their lilac flowers.

In July Agapanthus, steely-blue *Eryngium bourgatii* and the white-flowered *Hoheria sexstylosa* will be on display and by the end of the month the rectangular beds of *Dahlia* 'Fascination' will be flowering and will continue until the first frosts.

Against the sunny wall, the *Clematis viticella* hybrids 'Royal Velours', 'Alba Luxurians' and 'Little Nell' flower amongst climbing roses such as *Rosa* 'Etoile d'Hollande' and *R.* 'Bantry Bay'. The raised borders below will come into their own with an assortment of tender and more permanent plantings including *Diascia vigilis*, and Salvias in variety including *S. involucrata*, *S. darcy*, *Scabiosa* 'Clive Greaves' *Linaria purpurea* 'Canon J. Went' appears from time to time. Come the end of August [Salvias](#), including *S. leucantha*, an exquisite mauve and white with blue-green foliage, but very tender, *S. involucrata* 'Bethelii', *S. elegans*, *S. cacaliifolia*, *S. confertiflora*, *S. concolor* and the choice black flowered, tender, *S. discolour* will be in full bloom together with the shrubby varieties I 'Christine Yeo', *S.* 'Raspberry Royale' and *S.* 'Pink Blush'. Here are also the late blue-flowering shrubs *Caryopteris x clandonensis* 'Kew Blue' and *C.* 'Arthur Simmonds'

Convulvulus althaeoides is hardy and thrives here, as does the hardy annual *Echium* 'Blue Bedder' often self-seeding

Leave the Sunken Garden down the steps to The Bastion.

This was one of the last features to be finished, and allows an uninterrupted view across the countryside to the south. The semicircular design encourages you to look in all directions. From here you can also see how the Lime Avenue was clumped to form three informal groups of trees.

Turn right to:

14. The South Border

In June, you will see *Malus coronaria* 'Charlottii', *Abutilon vitifolium*, *Geranium clarkei* 'Kashmir White' and a number of *Iris*es - *I.* 'New Idea', *I.* 'Red Revival', *I.* 'Jane Phillips', *I.* 'Madeira Belle', and *I. plicata*.

Later in the season displays of *Santolina pinnata* (silver leaves and pale yellow button flowers), the small day lily *Hemerocallis* 'Corky', *H. flava*, *Geranium endressii*, *Achillea* 'Moonshine', *Salvia blancoana* (very attractive with small silver leaves and blue flowers) will be seen. Giving height to the border are such shrubs as *Stransvaesia davidiana* and the creamy *Syringa reticulata mandschurica*, a large lilac of tree-like proportions. Another large stand of *Aesculus parviflora* and the Rose 'English Miss' will be seen under the Holm Oak near the sundial.

Don't miss, on the other side of the sundial, the bank of blue Hydrangeas in a pocket of acid soil under the Sweet Chestnut tree.

Return & proceed along:

15. The Long Walk

This path gives a view of Diana, and here you should head back towards the Sunken Garden between the avenue of Irish Yews. The Rose Garden here was re-planted in the winter of 2005 with roses providing a longer season of interest. A plant list is available separately. Another choice shrub in this part of the garden is *Viburnum plicatum* var. *plicatum*, covered in perfect white snowballs in spring.

Make your way up the steps. Don't miss the honeysuckle on the right. *Erigeron karvanskianus* softens the edges of the brick steps and at the top of the steps, to the left, the nodding red flowers of *Akebia Quintata* during Spring.

Turn left up the steps and cross the main lawn to the far end of:

16. The Main Terrace

At this end of the terrace by the statue is an area of heavy shade containing a number of *Sarcococca*, *Podcarpus*, *Cephalotaxus* and *Sambucus Nigra* 'Black Beauty'. In the spring there is a good display of *Scilla sibeireca* under the Horse Chestnut.

Spring

Early season plants are the scented *Daphne tangutica*, the flowering quince, *Chaenomeles* 'Moerloosii' and the climbers *Stauntonia hexaphylla* and *Clematis armandii*.

On the next level down, the Terrace Border displays the Tulips 'Makassar', 'Pax', 'China Pink' and 'Elegant Lady' accompanied by the perennials *Lunaria rediviva* and *Helleborus x sternii* and *H. foetidus* 'Wester Flisk', more scented *Viburnums* and the small but prolific bulb *Tritelia uniflora*. The white-flowered variety of the Judas Tree, *Cercis siliquastrum* 'Album' is particularly interesting in late April. In the spring the viscous spikes of *Paliurus spina-christi* can be seen. You should also find *Erysimum mutabile*, *Iris* 'Far Corners', and *Viburnum plicatum* 'Watanabe' and 'Pink Beauty' flowering here, whilst the rather warmer environment immediately below the house favours such plants as the gold-cupped *Fremontodendron californicum* 'California Glory', *Abelia floribunda*, *A. schumanii*, and *Salvia microphylla* var. *microphylla*. Climbers of interest at this time of year include *Wisteria floribunda* 'Rosea' and the red-flowered *Schisandra rubriflora*. Also at this west end of the terrace are a few fairly common lilacs - *Syringa* 'Katherine Havemeyer', *S.* 'Mme Antoine Buchner' and *S.* 'Mme Lemoine'.

Further along immediately beneath the house the violet-mauve and white of the delightful *Tulipa* 'Ballade' can be found, as can the purple spring foliage of *Acer dissectum* 'Atropurpureum'. In flower in April are the rich blue herbaceous *Buglossoides purpureo-coerulea* beneath the bay window and, further to the west, some *Olearia* 'Coomber's Blue' (Daisy Bushes), shrubs with tiny deep blue or pink daisy-like flowers which we find somewhat temperamental here.

Two pink shrubby *Phlomis* (*P. cashmeriana* with longer, darker foliage and larger flowers, and *P. italica* with pale silvery green leaves and small pink flowers). The yellow-centred white flowers of *Carpenteria californica* are striking, and you will also see the pale yellow bottlebrushes of *Callistemon salignus* and the long red trumpets of *Abelia floribunda* in full bloom. The spectacular but evil-smelling foot-long spathes of *Dracunculus vulgaris*, the dragon lily, are well worth viewing from a distance.

Summer

This is a good period for scent on the main lawned terrace with the roses 'Cupid', 'Albertine', 'Emily Gray', 'William Allen Richardson', 'Alister Stella Gray', 'Queen Elizabeth' and 'Climbing Iceberg' on the balustrade south of the lawn, the small mock orange varieties *Philadelphus* 'Sybille', *P.* 'Albâtre', *P.* 'Snowstorm' and *P.* 'Manteau d'Hermine'. There are some good floribunda roses in the Terrace Border too, especially the carmine-red 'Rosemary Rose', developed in 1954, and the first deep yellow floribunda, 'Allgold', as well as 'Dearest' and more 'Iceberg'. *Cistus cyprius*, *Lavandula* 'Hidcote', *Escallonia* 'Donard Star', *Deutzia* 'Mont Rose' and *Phlomis fruticosa* 'E. P. Bowles' complete the selection of shrubs in flower. Herbaceous plantings include *Salvia x superba* 'Mainacht', *S. bulleyana*, catmint, *Nepeta* 'Six Hills Giant' and the deep red buttons of *Knautia macedonica*.

Here you can find hardy *Agapanthus* 'Headbourne Hybrids' and the pale yellow flowers of *Salvia pinnata* (silver foliage). The dark blue herbaceous *S. x superba* 'Mainacht' is on show as are *Cistus cyprius* (white with maroon blotch). Further along are the pink and white trumpets of *Crinum powellii* and *C. powellii* 'Album'. Also evident are the stunning blue of the Dayflower, *Commelina coelestis*, white *Agapanthus africanus* 'Albus' and the pink bells of Angel's Fishing Rods, *Dierama pulcherrima*, waving in the breeze.

The border under the house contains the climber *Trachelospermum jasminoides* some fine *Salvias*, *Erythrina*, (Coral Tree), with its red flowers, *Convulvulus sabatius* and *Romneya coulteri* and its variety 'White Cloud', resembling a large white poppy or, less attractively, a fried egg. Growing through the Magnolia is *Campsis Radicans* with its red trumpet flowers. Tender perennials like *Argyranthemum* 'Jamaica Primrose', *A.* 'Hopley's Yellow', *A.* 'Vancouver', to name but three, and other slightly hardier species such as *Verbena rigida*, and its variety 'Light Blue', *Commelina coelestis*. *Perovskia atriplicifolia* 'Blue Spire' and a selection of *Hibiscus* comprising the varieties 'Hamabo' (pink/white), 'Woodbridge' (brick red) 'Lavender Chiffon' and 'Admiral Dewey' (double white). The real highlight is always the densely white-felted foliage and pale mauve flowers of *Buddleja crispa*.

Hardy *Fuschias* are in profusion, including *F.* 'Mrs Popple', *F. magellanica* 'Riccartonii', *F. magellanica* var. *gracilis*, *F.* 'Tom Thumb'. *Abelia schumanii* and the corm *Gladiolus callianthus* 'Murielae'.

Crevice & Paving planting

As you walk along the paved terrace you should encounter at your feet the bright yellow flowers of *Potentilla* 'Goldrausch' and the lime-green bracts of *Euphorbia myrsinites* planted in the crevices in the paving. Tiny pale blue flowers on creeping mats of *Pratia pedunculata*, dwarf wallflower *Erysimum* 'Mayflower', *Antennaria dioica* 'Rubra', and pink and white bells of *Onosma albo-roseum*.

Creeping thymes, *Thymus serpyllum* and *T. serpyllum* var. *albus*, *Dianthus*, the pale lilac-blue *Erigeron oreganus*, *E. glaucus* and *E. roseus* and the very fine *Hypericum olympicum* 'Citrinum', a small shrub with glaucous foliage and lemon-yellow flowers. The succulent *Sedum lydium* deputises for mortar between the slabs.

17. The Lily Pond

Nine different varieties of Water Lily are planted here, and a considerable number of goldfish and Golden Orfe. At one end of the Lily Pond are some more *Narcissus* 'Lemon Beauty'. Other bulbs include *Hyacinth* 'Queen of the Pinks' with *H.* 'Ostara' and *H.* 'L'Innocence' planted immediately below the house. The white Tulip 'Pax' is also featured, along with the dwarf *Forsythia viridissima* 'Bronxensis'.

Under the house *Viburnum carlcephalum* ostentatiously spreads its fragrance in April whilst the pink and white variegation of the climber *Actinidia kolomikta* adorns the house next to a nice wall-trained fuchsia-flowered currant, *Ribes speciosum*, and clumps of *Iris pallida variegata*.

In July *Hydrangea Integrefolia* should be breaking into flower. Later in the season *Abelia grandiflora*, *A. schumanii* and *Hibiscus* 'Red Heart' are at their best. Of late season interest are the *Penstemons* and a good salmon-pink *Phygelius* with a red edge and a yellow centre.

A full bed of Iceberg roses is set off with an underplanting of *Verbena rigida*. *Penstemons*, *Echium* 'Blue Bedder' and *Aster thompsonii* 'Nanus' flank the bench.

Proceed down the steps and turn left into the:

18. The Yew Garden

Down the steps at the eastern end of the Terrace the Yew Garden usually displays a hexagonal bedding scheme of forget-me-nots and tulips in the Spring which is replaced with a planting of *Dahlia* 'Yellowhammer' edged with *Hakenechloa macra* 'Albo-aurea'.

Look back towards the house where the cutaway hedge frames the horse chestnut at the far end of the terrace, and in turn the tree is pruned into an arch over the statue, which is silhouetted against the sky. *Skimmia japonica* flourish in the heavy shade either side of the steps down to the Old Tennis Court. Leave the Yew Garden by the steps towards the ornamental gates but pause and allow your eye to be led between the Irish Yews, over the gate, to a clump of *Acer platanoides* 'Schwedleri' in the distance, which provides a natural but constantly changing point of reference.

Turn immediately left into:

19. The Rookery

Early in the season you will see *Magnolia soulangeana* 'Alba' if the frosts have been kind, more scented *Viburnums*, *Mahonia wilcoxii* and the white *Dicentra formosa* 'Langtrees' and *D. eximia* 'Boothman's Variety' with pink blooms and glaucous foliage.

Continuing you will see Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium caeruleum*) and the deep blue *Geranium magnificum*, *Magnolia x loebner* 'Leonard Messel' and *Fuschia magellanica* 'Variegata'.

Recently planted are *Buddleja colivei* and the tropical looking *Eriobotrya japonica*. In the long grass the bulbs *Fritillaria meleagris*, *F. meleagris* 'Alba', *Narcissus* 'White Marvel', *N.* 'Pipit', *N.* 'Trevithian', *N. jonquilla* 'Double Campernella' and some *Leucojums* can be seen with *Scilla sibirica* and *Chionodoxa lucilliae* under the cherry trees. On the main lawn the greenish tinge of the flowers of *Prunus* 'Ukon' and the striking purple young foliage and pale flowers of *P.* 'Shirofugen'. *Hoheria lyallii* is a recent addition on your right as you enter the main lawn.

Make your way to the:

20. North Front of the House

Rhododendron 'Mother of Pearl' stands, in altered soil, at the north front of the house. Also *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Grandiflora' which starts cream and ages through pink over a period of six weeks.

On the North Front of the building the *Pyracanthus* which berry up to 30 feet share the available space with *Hydrangea petiolaris*. On the wall of the west wing is the Chinese Hydrangea vine *Schizophragma Integrifolium*.

Pass between the Yew hedge and the wall into the Tea Room Court yard where magnificent *Magnolia Grandiflora* adorn the wall displaying their dinner plate white flowers in July and August. If you are visiting in May pause and turn left to admire the *Rosea Banksii* scrambling up the west wall of the house. In October the *Buddleja Auriculata* may just be starting to bloom.