



HISTORIC GARDENS Newsletter

Number 54 — April 2020

Edited by Gillian Mawrey

Strange Times

In these strange times, our plans for an exciting ‘new style’ Newsletter have had to be put on hold. Here’s one in the old format – and even that somewhat simplified. We’ve concentrated more on essays than on smaller items as we suspect you may have a certain amount of enforced leisure to be filled.

You will also find a section where, courtesy of the internet, we suggest how you can escape your confinement by visiting the world’s finest gardens without leaving the comfort of your own computer. Perhaps you will be inspired to visit these lovely places in reality once the crisis lifts.

Please send us your coronavirus stories, inspiring or saddening, so we can publish them next time. We’re planning another Newsletter for early summer.

Many apologies for the late appearance – for reasons nothing to do with coronavirus – of Issue 40 of *Historic Gardens Review*. We’re all working hard on Issue 41, it’s going smoothly and should appear on schedule. Let’s hope there will still be a printer to print it – and an international postal system to distribute it!

Stay well — and bon courage!

The bushfires in Australia have been pushed out of the headlines, but we should not forget their impact. Although Sydney and Melbourne received most of the coverage, other areas of the country were also hit. Garden historian and heritage consultant Trevor Nottle reports on their effects in South Australia.

The recent disastrous bushfires across much of Australia did not cause any serious damage to historic gardens in the Adelaide Hills that I know of, but the effect of flames and radiant heat has been extensive. When the danger had been brought under control in January, I went out to see how gardens and garden plants had fared.

The blaze nearest my home in Crafers began at Cudlee Creek and, in a fast moving arc of wild fires, covered land between there, Lobethal and Woodside before it was extinguished by teams of volunteer firemen helped by water bombers and helicopters carrying large bags of water scooped from reservoirs and dams. The area is hilly and densely settled with many small farms, orchards and vineyards.

Most of the settlements were founded between the 1840s and the 1880s so there is much evidence for modest home gardens of the Victorian era. The landscape is largely still a product of those times. Boundary hedges of hawthorn are common between farms, supplemented with dog roses and briars.

Shelter belts of *Pinus radiata* and *Cypress macrocarpa* mark the crest lines of many hills, while in the gullies made by summer-dry creeks English oaks, elms, willows and ash have multiplied and spread. Gardens are composed of low boundary hedges of laurestinus, hawthorn, plum, quince and privet, with simple internal cottage gardens with bush roses, numerous bulbs, specimen camellias, perhaps a pair of Canary Island palms or cotton palms, trimmed bushes of plumbago, May-bush, geraniums, lavender, rosemary, and perhaps a climbing bougainvillea or scrambling jasmine.

While none of these are in any way remarkable, they do set the tone and create the streetscape of numerous towns and villages, many of which are roughly 150 years old. This means that their trees and hedges are large and mature, providing habitat, shelter, shade, greenery and ambience. Many are now gone.

What has been destroyed or severely damaged is the amenity that was created by the melding of cultures established in the 19th century. Prussian religious refugees, English investor land owners with ambitions to create their own Establishment, Cornish copper miners, shepherds, drovers, all shaped the landscape and the towns with contributions of Prussian sensibility and neatness, English parkland trees, drystone walls, stone-built barns and cottages, orchards of apples, pears, cherries and plums.

Replanting will probably be focussed on the impact of climate change and designing gardens that are as fire retardant as possible.





Bella D’Arcy Reed, who died last December, was not only a fine writer but a doughty campaigner on behalf of both the handicapped and historic gardens. In her final months, she also canvassed for a second Brexit referendum. Here is a shortened version of a text about Climate Change that she intended for England’s County Gardens Trusts, but which is just as applicable to garden organisations everywhere.

Our politicians are re-arranging the deckchairs on the Titanic. It isn’t that no-one knew, including politicians, but it was easier to ignore in our world of short-term profits, wars, the rise of the right-wing, sexism and racism, domestic issues like getting enough food, having somewhere to live: I could go on. Perhaps our politicians are overwhelmed, the elephant – soon, perhaps, to be extinct – has crowded them, and us, out of the room. Or, like death itself, we all know it’s going to happen, but we spend our lives as if it isn’t.

So where are the horticultural and garden organisations on Climate Change? What is their role in keeping the urgency for change on the front pages, keeping alive and upping the campaign, pushing the politicians?

The doyen of these in the UK is the Royal Horticultural Society. It has done surveys and reports, encouraged communities and designers to be more aware, to re-cycle. It has given advice on drought-resistant planting, and then when the floods started, changed tack to ‘knowing your plants’. In 2017 it published a report, ‘Gardening in a Changing Climate’, the title innocuous enough, in line with the RHS’s constitutional purpose, gardening. But the report contains stuff which is far more alarming than its anodyne title; you only have to flick through the pages to see diagrams where the graph lines all rise, and much steeper over the last decade, the last two/three years. Then the words: on page 8, within the executive summary, is the sentence “It is theoretically possible that in the future, much of the UK could be frost free in some years.”

So far, so mild. But within this report which seems to be merely ‘advice’ for gardeners, much along the lines of ‘what to do in your garden this week’, are the devastating facts. If you extrapolate them you go beyond the shores of the UK.

“Gardens are not isolated entities. They exist in a wider landscape and comprise an element of that environment” and “it is now 95 to 100% certain that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century.”

In the case of Gardens Trusts, has any one of these a policy about Climate Change? I don’t just mean using recyclable cups at meetings or emailing rather than printing newsletters and the

like (though that's a start). I mean pitching in, writing to politicians, campaigning? Trusts have spent the last 20 years or so researching and recording historic gardens, helping in their restoration and maintenance for future generations. Shouldn't we be acting to ensure there are future generations able to live, eat enough, work and enjoy the environment?

The RHS report again: "some historic gardens and properties are finding it challenging to introduce efficient adaptation strategies because the problems of climate change are still not sufficiently understood... Maintaining historic accuracy of gardens willgenerate a conflict between historic conservation and adaptation." And a final paragraph: "the important contribution of gardens to our health and well-being... adds weight to the argument against a growing trend for 'garden grabbing'. Consequently, policy makers at both a national and local level should prioritise the importance of maintaining green spaces and private gardens in new housing developments."

Is that all? After 81 pages? A bit lame after all that scientific evidence. Shouldn't the RHS be making a fuss about the Environment? Shouldn't it be alarmed at the scientific evidence in this very same report? Isn't that last statement re-arranging deckchairs as the Titanic goes down?

And shouldn't Gardens Trusts be on board – to protect their own work, at the very least? Shouldn't we be collating our own regional evidence, publishing reports? Generating our own campaign? 'Caring about our green spaces' in an active, positive way – before there are no longer enough to soak up the carbon dioxide, feed the bees? Our planet will adapt, it will still be around, whatever happens – but will we?

*The full RHS report can be found at
www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/RHS-Gardening-in-a-Changing-Climate-Report.pdf*



Trees

**Dr Cerian Webb, an epidemiologist from the
Department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge,
explains her work researching how disease spreads from
one tree to another.**

I still remember my disappointment and trained polite gratitude when a family friend brought a promised box of conkers for my sisters and me to play with, which turned out to be filled with acorns (sorry Aunt Ruby!).

Follow this by the surprise that, whilst waiting for a student who was late, I asked the others, all studying natural sciences, to identify the trees on the avenue outside their college. (They were London Planes, *Platanus × acerifolia*, which have a distinctive bark.) One said they had no idea, one asked if they were oaks, while the student who arrived late asked if they were "acorn trees". I went back to my research group and expressed my disappointment in the students' knowledge, only to find that many of them admitted that they would not be able to identify more than one or two tree species.

I am a mathematical epidemiologist funded by Defra (the UK government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to study tree diseases. With trees, modelling disease spread presents very different problems from dealing with human diseases. Trees may be patiently



standing in one place – but the pests and diseases affecting them are willing travellers.

Routes of transmission vary between pests and diseases. *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (Ash dieback), which is gradually killing off European ash trees, can rapidly spread long distances via windborne dispersal of fungal spores, while the natural spread of other fungal pathogens with heavier spores tends to be local. For example, *Ceratocystis platani*



(Canker Stain of Plane) spreads along avenues via connected roots and watercourses, but pathogens such as *Xylella fastidiosa* use vectors to move

from host to host. Some destructive pests of trees, such as Emerald Ash Borer, can move long distances via active flight leading to rapid expansion of infested areas, but others, like the female Oak Processionary Moth, fly much shorter distances resulting in slower spread.

For most pathogens the appearance of a pest or pathogen in a new area can often be attributed to human-mediated spread via the movement of contaminated wood and saplings, and through hitch-hiking on vehicles and clothing.

To try and predict how diseases will spread and whether control is viable we need better information on the host location. Whilst satellite and aerial data may be able to provide large coverage, they cannot yet reliably distinguish between species. This is important as many diseases and pathogens can only survive on specific hosts. To model disease spread effectively and develop control strategies we need distribution maps broken up by tree species.

A range of initiatives around the world makes use of citizen science to map trees but there are always questions around data accuracy. In March 2019 we set up a tree trail in collaboration with Cambridge University Botanic Garden as part of the Science Festival with three core aims: to find out how much people already know; what tools might help with tree identification; and to engage all ages in taking more time to look at the trees around them.

We selected ten common species, such as the Scots Pine (*above left*) and the Sessile Oak (*above right*), hid the labels and offered participants a choice of mobile phone apps and paper resources to help them identify the trees. Most of the trees were not yet in leaf, but this allowed participants to discover how leaf buds and bark vary between species. In spite of poor weather, including hail (*below left*), the trail was very popular. People of all ages (*below right*) enjoyed the challenge and commented on how it gave them a new way to enjoy the gardens and a greater appreciation of the variation between tree species.

Our plan was to run a new trail in March 2020 but Covid-19 got in the way and this year's Cambridge Science Festival had to be cancelled. Around the world, parks are closed to prevent people congregating but we can use the time to develop resources to teach others that a tree is not "just another tree" or to build up our own identification skills and plan future trails.



Some useful resources:
www.botanic.cam.ac.uk
www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk
www.treezilla.org
www.opentreemap.org
www.observatree.org.uk





Jens Haentzschel continues his exploration of Erfurt's horticultural history. Watercress cultivation had been a tradition in the city for almost 400 years. But this speciality had long disappeared – until Ralf Fischer got his old family nursery back into shape.

Watercress is a perennial aquatic plant that flowers and is harvested from May to September and is propagated by seeds or cuttings. For growth, the cress roots need fresh and above all clean water. The 'blades' is the name for the artificially created watercourses, built with a slight gradient so that the water can flow through without loss of temperature. Important as the water is, so is the substrate. Watercress only needs hold, which the plant finds on sand or in mud. Regular fertilization is also important.

The watercress itself does not need an advocate. It has superpowers. It is a vitamin bomb, high in vitamin C, rich in iron, phosphorus, iodine and even calcium. Its mustard oil content inhibits bacteria and viruses. The spiciness and pungency of its flavour is reminiscent of radish, to which the cruciferous plant is related.

Watercress has been cultivated in Erfurt since 1630. What began very naturally became increasingly commercial and was regarded by more and more gardening families as a good income. It was Christian Reichart (1685-1775), the son of a wealthy Erfurt family and founder of German horticulture, who perfected the system of cultivation in the areas and fields outside the city. He combined the watercourses for growing watercress with dams for other vegetable varieties, thus ensuring higher yields.

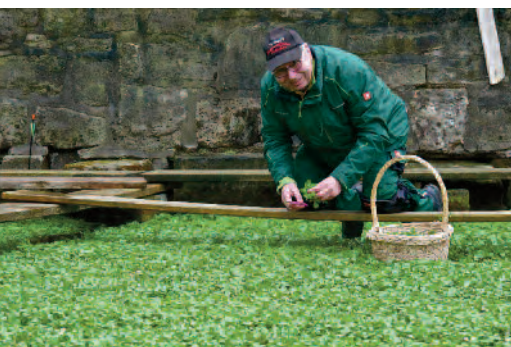
Years later, the spicy cress had another great advocate. Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte was so taken with the herb during his stay in Erfurt in 1808 that he unceremoniously took two gardeners, named Nottrodt and Zugwurst, to Versailles to grow watercress according to Erfurt's example.

The small river which flows through the whole city of Erfurt is the Gera. Rich in minerals and nutrients, thanks to nearby springs, it contains tens of thousands of plants that glow green from afar. The spring at which the watercress-growing area is situated is called the 'three wells', reminding us of the three springs which unite here.

In the 1960s, the area under cultivation in Erfurt was around 20,000 square metres. Up to 44 tonnes were harvested at that time. Watercress was profitable and was even used in the pharmaceutical industry. With the nationalisation of many farms and the retirement for ill health of Ralf Fischer's father in 1974, the tradition of cultivating this vegetable slowly ended. Many blades were buried, others left to lie fallow.

Erfurt owes the return of this green speciality to the initiative of Ralf Fischer, whose grandparents and parents used to walk on the 'blades'. He reconstructed a blade after the land was returned to his family – thus





fulfilling a dream for his father and grandmother. Fischer, an electrician by training, began to revitalise the spring water with *Nasturtium officinale*, the botanical name for watercress. Since then, he has been on his boards in winter, harvesting the vitamin-rich speciality.

Fischer cuts between six and eight kilos every week, which is enough for regular customers and local restaurants. As he details, "500 square meters of blade area does not make a huge profit, but in good years we harvest three to four kilos of watercress per square metre. Depending on the season, it's worth just under 30 euros a kilo."

Gardening is a balancing act and for Ralf Fischer this is literally part of his daily business. As soon as he enters his watercress plot, he becomes an acrobat, walking on the slippery and wobbly wooden planks. (Fischer helped diligently with the harvest as a child and often fell into the water – but it is only a few centimetres deep.) Centimetre by centimetre, he kneels on the planks that represent his world and, with a sharp knife and routine movements, harvests the tufts of watercress. Hanging over the water for minutes on end, he fills his basket with a real superfood.

After the harvest is over, he uses a wide board with holes, through which water can flow, to push the roots and cress tips protruding from the water back under the water surface. This protects the plants from sticking out of the water and drying out, and from frost in winter.

Fischer takes rotting horse manure, which is spread on the seedlings and removed three weeks later.

The plant has to be protected from wild ducks with nets, and environmental influences take their toll. For a good ten years now, problems have been accumulating when the spring water is polluted. Fischer explains: "On some days it really stinks in the blade, and I can see that the plants are suffering. Then you can watch the green leaves turn yellow and I have to finish harvesting early."

He adds, "There are some plant viruses, and even downy mildew sometimes causes us problems. In 2016 we had to empty the entire blade and destroy the infected plants after a fungus was detected. The reason was the unkempt environment around our blade. This meant no yield and no income."

Today, the 67-year-old is the last of his guild, because only this one blade is left. In 2006, 5.5ha were officially listed as a landscape feature, to preserve the active and decayed cress blades as a unique horticultural form of use. Since 2013, the traditional cultivation according to Reichart has even been registered in Erfurt's register of monuments.

Watercress is clearly a matter close to Ralf Fischer's heart and he has created on the site a small watercress museum describing his family's history. (<http://www.erfurter-brunnenkresse.de/>) Currently, he revising his exhibition in the courtyard and in 2021 there will be lectures here. "I will not cut back the watercress completely next year, I want people to see something. The watercress not only has a past, it should also have a future."

**In this time of lockdown and isolation
Richard Mawrey offers some suggestions
for garden visiting from your desk
or armchair.**

Virtual Gardens



Ninfa



Keukenhof



Singapore



Melbourne

Spring has come! Just the time of year to visit gardens. Daffodils still with us and tulips coming into flower, magnolias in full bloom and the trees just in leaf. For readers in the Southern Hemisphere, the summer heats are over and a mellow autumn makes it pleasant to venture out to enjoy the late flowers and autumn foliage.

There is, obviously, one small snag. Almost all of us are under house arrest, driven there not by some Orwellian totalitarian dictatorship but by an invisible and deadly scourge. The lucky ones have their own garden; the less fortunate a much bleaker outlook.

But, thanks to the internet, we can still visit gardens, only this time we have to do so virtually. Though we miss the fresh air, the scents and the birdsong (but see below), it is a vast improvement on trying for the umpteenth time to read *War and Peace*, or papering the spare bedroom.

Almost all major and a lot of less well-known gardens can be visited, even if only on YouTube. Some last just a few minutes, while Waddesdon offers over 100 films via (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq4U-qE5SXMmMPSBDwGhTnA>). Whatever we choose, it gives us a chance to travel to far-flung gardens which time or money may have put out of bounds.

Start with a wallow in the inspirational. Why not Giverny in France (www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjWx2WNXFF4) or the idyllic Ninfa in Italy (www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMssohopSzo)? Maybe seek inspiration for your vegetable garden with Villandry in the Loire Valley (www.chateauvillandry.fr/en/explore/an-overview-of-villandry/videos/) or contemplate a sculpture or two with the Boboli Gardens in Florence (www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EXv52979Rs) or, if you're planning tulips for 2021, admire Keukenhof in Amsterdam (www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqMA5s-N1Uw).

You could try a global tour of the world's best botanical gardens. Reluctantly, I cannot recommend the Oxford Botanic Garden's website which is too fiddly to be enjoyable: similarly, Washington DC could do better. So start in the UK at Kew (www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioG_Vfh0Kxw&feature=emb_logo) and Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Garden, which has lots of the spring blossom we're all missing (<https://www.rbge.org.uk/visit/virtual-spring/virtual-spring/>).

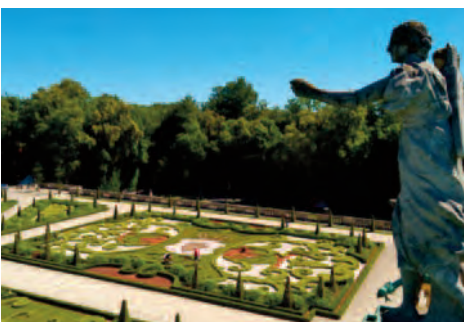
Then, by way of Italy's Padua (www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1XK46hov1o), travel to Singapore (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jk2v4MkNjEE), then Australia for



Kenroku-en



*Longwood (photo courtesy
Daniel Traub)*



Wilanow



Hever



Hagley

Melbourne (www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSEE3u4AWnQ). After moving on to Hawaii (www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtZ0dcUzGX8) you can end up in Chicago (www.youtube.com/watch?v=aV0Ryaw0hGc&feature=emb_logo).

Now it must be said that the quality is not universally high and you may have to 'skip ads' at the beginning. Sometimes there is commentary. Like our own Garden Review pages in the magazine, Yellow Productions 'tours' such as Singapore Botanic, cover aspects such as facilities for food; sometimes there is music and, occasionally, background sound, such as birdsong.

Have you a taste for palaces? France's Versailles beckons (<http://en.chateauversailles.fr>), and Het Loo in The Netherlands (www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EXv52979Rs). England's Hampton Court offers equal splendour (www.youtube.com/watch?v=691z6a9bnNU), as does Germany's Sans Souci (www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXm36Qf-hCE), and even the Vatican (www.youtube.com/watch?v=3O64u719OrU).

When the news is bad, the calm of a Japanese garden may be the answer, as with Kenroku-en, in Kanazawa (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d9sIoO60nA>), Kōraku-en, in Okayama City (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_ImAp21aAE), or Rikugi-en, in Tokyo (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SR2e8_ySvxo).

You might also like to visit the gardens of other supporters of the Historic Gardens Foundation. There's Longwood (you may recall Andrea Brunsendorf's diaries in the Newsletter) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxZZ3k8LdHY>) or, while still in the States, Brooklyn Botanic Garden (www.youtube.com/watch?v=fD32mihcpu4). You could journey from Wilanow in Warsaw

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRkjzl0NR2s) to Glasnevin in Dublin (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilqInkW0UBU>) via the Château de Valmer in the Loire Valley, where there is another super vegetable garden (<https://www.chateaudevalmer.com/en>).

Back in England, there's Hever Castle in Kent (www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNO9ICiC1PU) and Hagley Hall in Worcestershire (www.hagleyhall.com/hagley-park/videos/), or you can cross the Channel again and enjoy the twice-annual plant show at Beervelde in Belgium (www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUu8E--eKto).

And finally a walk in the park. In most countries the public parks were among the first things to be shut down and some have been turned over to medical uses. A huge field hospital is being constructed in Central Park, New York, but you can remember it in its prime (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCoB4xi-UdY>) (a nice long one this) or fly back with Peter Pan to a happier past in London's Kensington Gardens (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpuVB4sm-Pw>).

This is only a taster. The possibilities are (almost literally) endless. So, surf the net and give the V for Victory sign to the Virus!

Gardens for Gloriana by Jane Whitaker
Bloomsbury Academic. 332 pages. £20.00.
ISBN 978-1788-31119-9.

Books

‘Gloriana’ was one of the many flattering epithets given to England’s Queen Elizabeth I, whose long reign (1558-1603) saw her travelling constantly throughout her realm, frequently staying in other people’s houses as well as in her many royal palaces. In this book Jane Whitaker describes the Queen’s own magnificent gardens and those made by courtiers to impress her.

Such places were far more than the knot gardens conjured up by the word ‘Elizabethan’: there were arbours, mounts, mazes, fountains, fish ponds, wildernesses, avenues, fruit, water, herbs, heraldic emblems and banqueting houses. Although many of their owners were more genuinely interested in horticulture than they are usually given credit for, they were mainly looking to create settings for outdoor entertainment – for fun. And not forgetting the hope of preferment.

From the moment the Queen crossed the boundary of an estate to the moment her host bade farewell she expected her senses to be cajoled with sights, music and scent, and her considerable brain exercised with masques and pageants offering flattering classical allusions. The more corporeal pleasures of dancing, hunting and dining *al fresco* were important, too. And sometimes there were fireworks!

None of these extraordinary gardens survives intact, and to help us imagine them we have to look for other evidence: paintings, sculpture, maps, and the written word in the form of diaries, account books and the literature of the time, much of it long-forgotten. (Dr Whitaker’s text, with its copious quotations, made me realise how many of these lost authors have quite justly fallen into oblivion; they are almost literally unreadable.)

Of this book’s 332 pages only 212 contain what she actually has to say about her subject, the rest being the title pages, lists of the plates and figures, a preface, endnotes, short biographies of the owners of leading houses mentioned in the text, a list of plants grown in England in the early Elizabethan period, a bibliography and an index. What a pity that the paper used for some of this could not have been put towards publishing the book in a slightly larger format, one that would have enabled the detail of the illustrations to be more easily visible.

I found myself playing an endless game of ‘Where’s Wally’ trying to spot something the author was trying to draw to my attention: for instance, the “knots, ponds, an orchard, banqueting house and mounts” she mentions in the caption to Plate 1, Ralph Treswell’s 1587 map of Holdenby House in Northamptonshire, which is reproduced 10x8cm, although the original covers two folio pages: about 60x48cm.

Alternatively, why did they not zoom in on the delightful detail of the house and garden? I did this easily (*right*) by searching for ‘Holdenby’ in Northamptonshire’s online archives and downloading the map for free.

I would also have hoped for more on foreign influences on these gardens. Only in the chapter on plants, in some ways the most interesting part of the book, is the role of Europe discussed in any depth. For me, the book’s strength lies in the way it set me pursuing subjects I ought to know about but had never heard of: Sir Thomas Lee’s Quarrendon in Buckinghamshire, for instance, (although I go to nearby Aylesbury several times a year), or the gardens created by Henry VII. Did that notorious skinflint really spend money in this joyful way?

Gillian Mawrey



Those of us lucky enough to have a garden or balcony can find consolation in our confinement by pruning and potting. So here are a few Practical Books to inspire or help.

**Grow Fruit and Vegetables in Pots by Aaron Bertelsen
Phaidon. 240 pages. £24.95. ISBN 978-0-7148-7861-4.**

The author is a cook and gardener at Great Dixter, in Sussex. Here he grows an incredible variety of edible plants in an equally amazing variety of containers. The recipes sound delicious and not too complicated, and there's a good deal of helpful basic information (eg on sowing seeds) which make this a book for those new to gardening as well as the more experienced. He cites many friends who also grow food without having a garden, and he makes it all sound very easy – though I did wonder how much of his own work is supported by other gardeners at Great Dixter.



**The Five Minute Garden by Laetitia Maklouf
National Trust. 176 pages. £9.99. ISBN 978-1-911358-91-6.**

Maklouf is a blogger, whose advice assumes that, clamouring for attention, you have children who may (or may not) be receptive to 'helping' in the garden. Her mantra is that you should not be deterred by how much work needs to be done out there – just make sure you tackle it in 5-minute slots *every single day*. Her views often differ from Bertelsen's (on the merits of all-purpose compost, for instance) but overall hers is probably a more realistic approach for anyone who doesn't have a professional garden team working nearby.

**Cottage Gardens by Claire Masset
National Trust. 176 pages. £14.99. ISBN 978-1-911358-92-3.**

Masset starts by tracing the development of the cottage garden style, from something purely utilitarian with everything intended for food or medicine, to today's much more artificial blend of flowers, herbs, fruit and vegetables, where the aesthetic takes precedence over the culinary. She then describes 20 cottage gardens in England and Wales, all open to the public, and many of them interesting not just for their plantings but for their history or associations. Beatrix Potter's garden in Cumbria (*above*), for instance, Thomas Hardy's in Dorset and Virginia Woolf's in Sussex. There is sensible advice here, too, if you yourself are planning to go down this particular horticultural path – a path which, as Masset shows, does not necessarily lead straight from the garden gate to the front door. Nor does it have to be edged with lavender – and there are many other things to grow if you don't like hollyhocks.

**Tudor Book of the Garden by Tudor Times
Graffeg. 192 pages. £15.00. ISBN 978-1-91265-466-6.**

This is a weird book. The bulk of its pages (22-175 and 180-191) are laid out for readers to write themselves, to record their own Tudor garden month by month, to create lists of their favourite gardens or just to make notes. The remaining pages also consist of lists – of Tudor gardens in England and Wales (the rare survivals and many 'in the style of'), of plants known in Tudor times, of plants mentioned in Shakespeare, of books about Tudor gardens and of books published in the Tudor period – all available elsewhere. After a while, the word 'Tudor' also begins to seem weird – and the whole concept best avoided.

GM



If You Remember...

If you enjoyed the article on the gardens of Książ castle in *HGR 40*, you might like to know that the castle cats have their own Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Koty-z-Zamku-Książ-428896500555481>) – *and* their own fan following. There are reports of a big furore when the volunteers who look after them decided that some of the moggies were being murdered – but, happily, the fuss seems to have died down.

In *HGR 38*, the National Trust's Prior Park, the famous 18th-century landscape garden near Bath, Somerset, was a 'Pessimist' item ('Keep out of the Park'). A vast horde (shoal? army?) of an introduced species of American signal crayfish was devastating the lake, river banks and Georgian dams. The NT has managed to raise the necessary £2.2m for the essential engineering and landscaping measures; so, coronavirus permitting, restoration will start this year and the crayfish will meet their match.



And more good news, this time from Croatia. At the time of Maria Marić's piece in *HGR 39* ('Experiments in Tranquillity') the restoration of Lokrum Botanical Garden was only at the project stage. Now, funding of Kuna 3.8m (£500,000) has been provided, the Lokrum Reserve Public Institution has taken over the garden and engaged landscapers from Zagreb, work is under way, 725m of paths have been restored, and some 195 new species planted. Benches, information panels and a proper entrance portal will follow.

Jenny Simpson Randall's article on the Jack London State Historic Park at Sonoma, California ('Fruitful Endeavours' *HGR 39*) ended on a rather downbeat note with threats of closure. Since then a determined effort has been made to replant the Upper Orchard, using saplings grown from cuttings of the old quince, apple and cherry trees. The Park volunteers were joined by a squad of employees of the Kenwood Winery (helped by Randall herself) and the Orchard is back on the way to recovery.



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HISTORIC GARDENS REVIEW

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