

HERTFORDSHIRE GARDENS TRUST



**AUTUMN
NEWSLETTER 2019**

Garden Visits 2019 – Ellie Johnson

This year our garden visits took us to Essex and Suffolk, to Sussex, and to Northamptonshire.

The number of unusual plants at **Green Island Gardens** in Essex flummoxed most of us: *Rhaphiolepis x delcourii* and *Loropetalum* 'Firedance' to name but two! We enjoyed delicious home-made food by the owner, Fiona Edmund, served by her student sons in a large marquee. The garden at **Polstead Mill** was attractively designed and, later in the year, the walled kitchen garden would have come into its own. Lucinda Bartlett had baked a good choice of cakes to send us happily on our way home.



Lucinda Bartlett welcomes HGT members to Polstead Mill



Board walk and wisteria arbour at Green Island garden

Pashley Manor in Sussex was a beautiful garden in a wonderful setting, comprising differently designed and planted areas, which we saw at their best at peak rose flowering time. Delicious lunches and teas were taken on the large terrace overlooking rolling lawns, extensive ponds and floriferous borders.

Roses at Pashley Manor



The natural swimming pond at the Old Rectory, Quinton



Uniquely, our visit to Northamptonshire, postponed because of an appalling weather forecast, was re-arranged for what turned out to be the hottest day of the year! **The Old Rectory** at Quinton was a splendidly designed and dramatic contemporary garden with many surprising areas. The natural swimming pond with its stylish bridge looked extremely tempting in the heat of the day. We were grateful for the air conditioned restaurant at the Boat Inn at Bruerne. At **The Menagerie** we were shown around the garden by its owner and designer, Alexander Oliver. Winding paths took us through exotic plantings to two thatched, round, small houses with nearby ponds. Tall arched hedges led back to the main Grade II listed, 18th century house. We were glad to close the visit with afternoon tea in the shade.



Roy Johnson and Trevor Beale at Pashley Manor Garden, 2019



One of two thatched round houses with its pond at The Menagerie garden

Sadly, the visit to Northamptonshire is to be **Trevor Beale's** swansong as a much valued member of the Garden Visit team. Ellie Johnson recalls the tea party in the garden at Thundridge Hill House, seventeen years ago, when Sonja Fillingham, Trevor Beale and Roy and Ellie Johnson were invited by Christopher Melluish to set up the team. During the early years the team pretty much learned on the job, with Trevor Beale, supported by his wife Susan, as an outstanding organiser. Trevor's experience as a hotelier, running the West Lodge Park Hotel at Hadley Wood stood him in good stead when communicating with garden owners and coach companies. His meticulously organised visits were universally enjoyed by HGT members, who will fondly remember his relaxed style with the microphone on the coach, describing the background of the gardens and their owners to be enjoyed as the day unfolded. The team will miss his involvement in their planning meetings, but hope to enjoy his company with Susan at Hertfordshire Gardens Trust events in the future.