

U3A Gardening group September report for Forum

In September the gardening group visited Harewood House and Gardens on the outskirts of Leeds. As we arrived at Harewood House we were greeted by a representative who gave us an overview of the attraction and we were all given maps to make the most of the day. The representative had also arranged a shuttle bus to take those Members who preferred a lift to their initial destination.

Many of us started off at the Courtyard Café which had a well organised team with homemade treats available. In all there were 3 places to eat including the Terrace Tearoom and the Bothy Teahouse.



At 11.00am some Members watched the feeding of the penguins which was very entertaining. Two of the penguins were moulting and apparently do not eat at this stage, one of the penguins was 30 years old. The penguins are moving off the site to a new home due to changes in animal welfare requirements.

When Edwin Lascelles started building Harewood House in 1759 he wanted nothing but the best for his new home. He employed the finest craftsmen of the time: York-born architect John Carr, fashionable interior designer Robert Adam, England's greatest furniture maker Thomas Chippendale and visionary landscape gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Walking around the House, we were able to see Renaissance masterpieces, exquisite family portraits by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Lawrence and Richmond, as well as a fine collection of Sèvres china, among many other delights.

There were extensive paths down to the lake area. The walled garden at the far side of the lake was a delight with areas for growing vegetables, fruit herbs and flowers. Produce from the walled garden is used in the cafes including courgette muffins and soups and blackberry cake. The Himalayan Garden is a peaceful space with many fine trees, shrubs and flowers which would look different in each season. There is a fine terrace garden with intricate parterre and a delightful herbaceous border which had an interesting display of dahlias and other late season plants. There is also a rather magnificent statue taking pride of place in the centre of the terrace.



On Friday 6th October we will resume indoor meetings at the Stainton Village hall, starting at 2.00pm. Our speaker will be Ruth Starr-Kebble a botanist who will be talking about the project to restore wild flower meadows in Teesdale.

In November we will have Tim Marshall, Head Gardener of the Raby Estate to talk about the plans for their gardens.

In December we plan to arrange a visit to a house with a Christmas theme, details to be sent in due course.

Julie Archer and Kate Keen