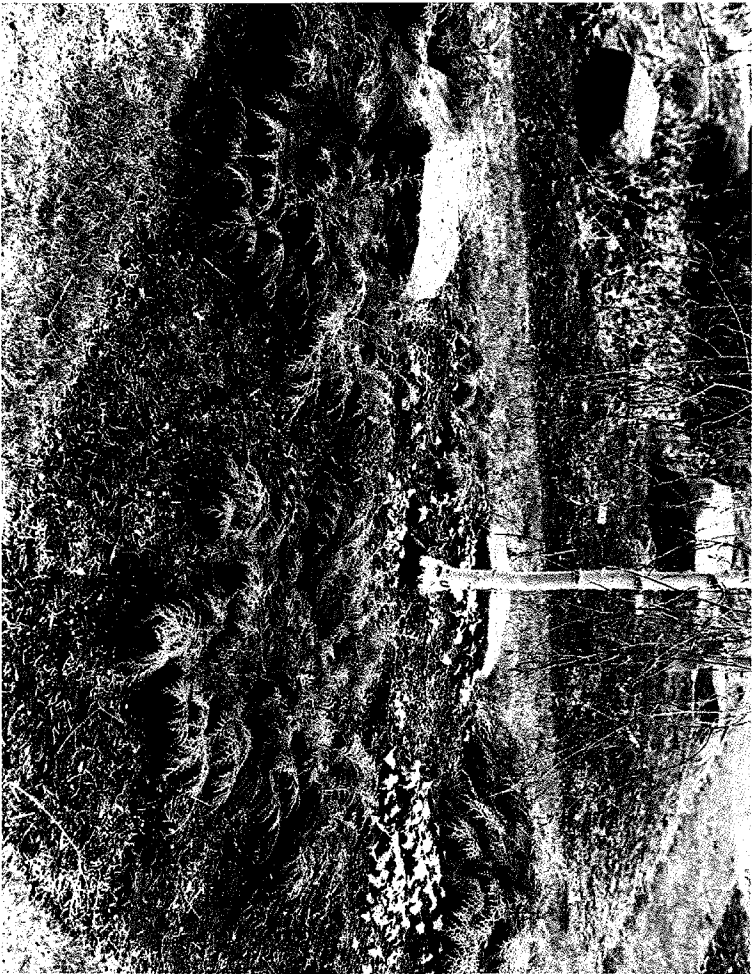


prune. As far as pests are concerned, I could find nothing in the literature regarding any problems, nor have I had any.

Plant in the landscape, three to four feet apart on a slightly raised bed. Use them in conjunction with some of the other conifers such as *Picea pungens* 'Fat Albert' or a small group of three *P. pungens* 'Walnut Glen' and you have a stunning combination that would delight any conifer lover.

Douglas Watkin's garden is located outside Washougal, Washington on about a half acre with a wide assortment of dwarf conifers (with an emphasis on dwarf hemlocks), and ornamental grasses.



Microbiota decussata planted beneath a weeping birch (*Betula pendula* 'Youngii'); The ivy is *Hedera helix* 'Glacier'. The photo was taken in mid-February. By mid-March, after a week of 55° to 60°F weather, the conifers had greened up to a brilliant mint color.

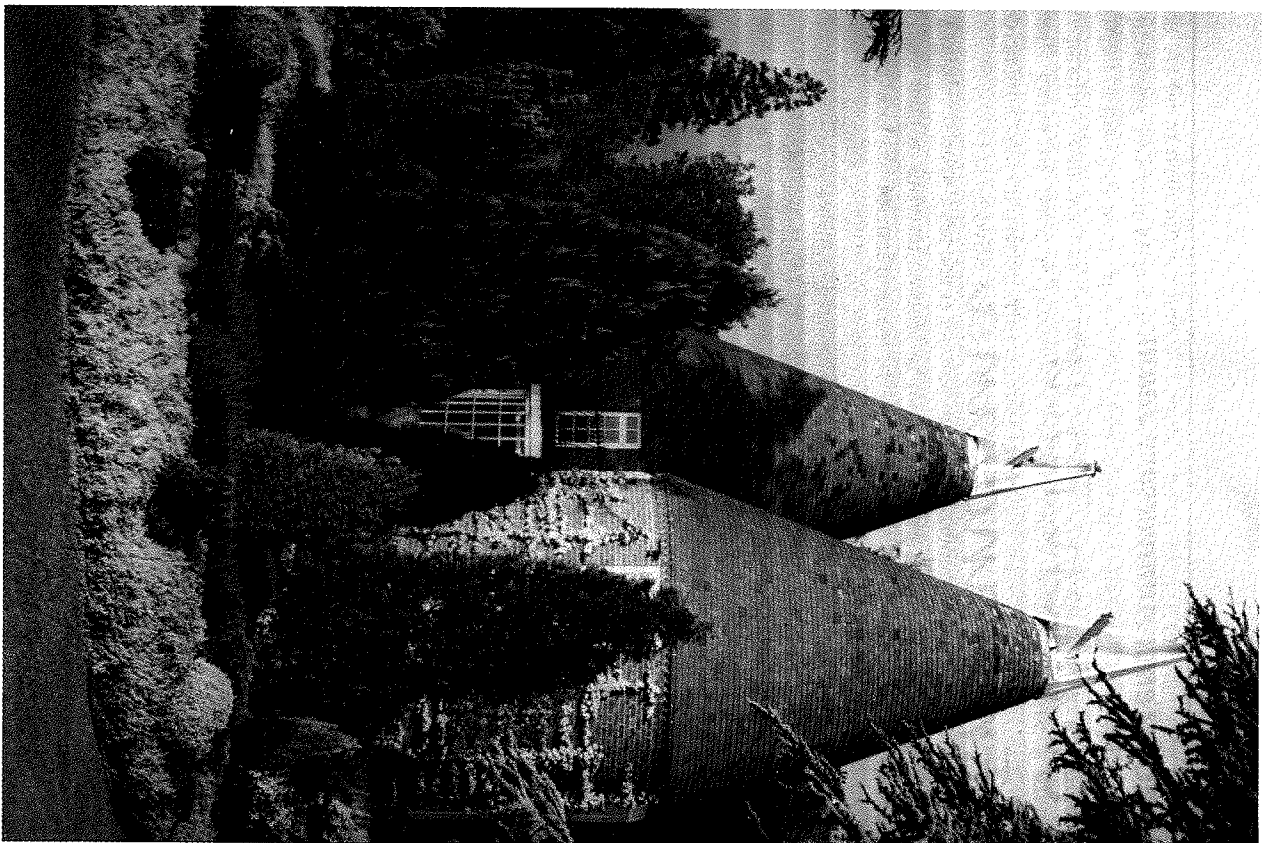
The ACS Tenth Anniversary Jaunt: A Garden Tour of England and Scotland

by Sue Martin, Bill Thomas, Justin "Chub" Harper,
Don Howse, Charlene Harris,
as compiled by Wade Harris

Forty-eight members from the United States enjoyed this tour and some of our British members linked up to share this adventure. The Kenworthy's of Cheshire, Derek Dibbens of Winchester, Robert Handoll of Gloucestershire joined us in England and in Scotland, Peter MacDonald of Auchincruive was our guide for part of the tour. These tour member comments express the fun and adventure we all shared: "The gardens were all very different but exquisite in their own way, the tour couldn't have offered a better selection of gardens to visit," and "Getting to know more ACS members, the good fellowship, the new knowledge gained, the laughter, and sharing made the tour an experience of a lifetime."

Touring England

Savill, the first garden, was a rich tapestry of plantings. This thirty-five acre garden lies on the boundary of the 4,500 acre Windsor Great Park, adjoining Windsor Castle. Originally swampy bottom-land, the garden was drained and planted by Eric Savill, the park's first horticulturist. The water sites were developed into lovely stream and bog gardens. Other outstanding features included a stunning herbaceous border, plantings of hydrangea and rhododendrons, an enclosed wall garden where many climbers were displayed, and fabulous raised beds of alpine and dwarf plants. The overall woodland effect was achieved by maintaining a three-tiered planting effect. This was a wonderful garden despite the rainy, damp morning we encountered.



The Oast House Gardens in Kent.

For conifer enthusiasts, the National Dwarf Conifer Collection was heaven on earth, even in the pouring rain! Also located within the Windsor Great Park, the garden is the national reference collection of dwarf conifers in England. Located in the Valley Gardens section of the park the plants are strikingly displayed in gently undulating beds enhanced with plantings of *Calluna*, *Erica*, and a myriad of dwarf shrubs and perennials. Some outstanding plants in the garden include a large, five-inch diameter specimen of *Abies koreana* 'Hortsmann Silverhocke', a magnificent *Abies procera* 'Procumbens', and a host of *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* cultivars. Most of us felt we needed at least a week to explore this collection!

Wisley was next, the home and showcase garden of England's Royal Horticultural Society. Its earliest plantings date back to the 1800's. After a sunny tour through Wisley's Pinetum, we discovered the outstanding hillside rock garden loaded with dwarf conifers and perennials that originated in 1911. Wisley maintains trial areas for flowers, vegetables, and fruits and its model gardens give inspiration to gardeners and homeowners alike. Also of note were the magnificent herbaceous borders, the rose garden, and trough garden displays.

On a misty morning we pulled into the Bedgebury National Pinetum to tour this extensive collection managed by the National Forestry Commission. Bedgebury is part of a National Collections Network which saves cultivated garden worthy plants from extinction. Bedgebury houses extensive collections of *Taxus*, *Juniperus*, and *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*, with the Lawson cultivars alone numbering well over 150. At the end of our tour we moved from big trees to dwarfs as we browsed the caretaker's private garden.

In Maidstone we lunched at The Horseshoe Pub dating from the 1400's. Next we traveled to The Oast Hurst Green Farm a private garden in Kent. Dwarf and unusual conifers, mounds of heaths and heathers, begonias in full bloom, statuary, waterways, fountains, and a vegetable garden filled this enchanting landscape. Our hosts served tea and light refreshments and invited us to wander through their home, a converted oast house that was originally built for drying hops. Our group photo was taken here.

Known for its spectacular spring and fall color, Sheffield Park was designed by the renowned Lancelot "Capability" Brown, the landscape architect famous for sweeping, natural landscapes and use of water features. This garden contains five lakes and many meandering paths ambling among hundred-year-old shrubs, trees, and conifers. We saw spectacular specimens of *Sequoiadendron*, *Metasequoia*, *Rhododendron*, *Sciadopitys*, *Thujaopsis*, and the tender *Athrotaxis*. We were enthralled by the grandeur and romance of this serene garden.

At Wakehurst we rambled at leisure and explored the gardens in welcome sunshine. As the sister garden to Kew, Wakehurst has many important collections, including the Asian and Himalayan plant collections, the National Birch Collection, and habitat plantings that are artistically blended into a beautiful landscape. Centrally located is a large Elizabethan mansion, providing a backdrop for beautifully walled gardens and a quaint cottage garden. Large specimens of dwarf and species conifers were well displayed in mound beds separated by meticulously groomed lawn areas. It might have been the brilliant sunshine, but Wakehurst was a jewel to behold.

We began our mid-morning tour of the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum in a fog that later gave way to broken clouds and sunshine. Containing over 40,000 plants on 160 acres, it houses the largest collection of hardy trees and shrubs in Britain. There were many unique plants at Hillier, including a *Picea abies* Pygmaea that sported a witches'-broom, and an outstanding twelve-inch diameter specimen of *Acer griseum*. Bill Wells got the award for finding a witches'-broom in a *Picea omorika* near the dwarf conifer garden. A trained specimen of *Sequoiadendron giganteum* 'Pendula' near the entrance was magnificent.

After lunch at The Potter's Heron Pub, some returned to Hilliers while others favored the historical tour of nearby Winchester and the famous Winchester Cathedral. Rounding out a delightful day we visited the small private garden of Derek and Pam Dibbens. They had every nook and cranny filled with rare dwarf conifers. They keep the conifers in pots in the backyard and can relandscape every week if they like, simply by shifting the pots!

Our journey to the Wansdyke Pygmy Pinetum, at Devizes, took us past Stonehenge, the ancient shrine of the Druids. Meeting former owner Humphrey Welch and his wife Elaine was a very nostalgic and historic event for the group. Humphrey Welch autographed his new book for us, *The World Checklist of Conifers*, co-authored by Gordon Haddow. The current owner of the Pygmy Pinetum, Mr. van Klaveren, was also there to greet us. His hospitality and knowledge contributed greatly to our enjoyment of this fine collection of over 1,200 dwarf and rare conifers.

A *Picea abies* 'Pygmaea', remembered from an earlier visit as having a witches'-broom on it with a second broom growing out of the first broom, has subsequently developed a third distinct witches'-broom near the top of the plant. Another outstanding plant was *Pinus rigida* 'Aurea', with bright yellow needles that turn apple-green in the shade.

The Welch's were our guests for lunch. A certificate of recognition was presented to Mr. Welch on behalf of the ACS for his lifetime dedication to dwarf

conifers. A subsequent letter from Mr. Welch tells us that he cherishes this certificate and enjoyed our visit.

After lunch it was on to the Westonbirt Arboretum near Malesbury. Established in 1829, it does not have a concentrated collection of conifers, rather trees are scattered throughout the 600 acres, and the walks and vistas presented were beautifully in harmony with the fall color of the deciduous trees.

Upon arriving at Bressingham Gardens, near Diss, we walked directly to Foggy Bottom, Adrian Bloom's garden, for a private tour. Undaunted by the intermittent rain, everyone broke out the umbrellas and enjoyed a garden described by many as the most beautiful and magnificent garden they had ever seen. The free-form bed design of the garden covers' over six acres, emphasizing conifers mixed skillfully with a tapestry of perennials, heathers, and ornamental grasses.

After lunch at The Old Garden House, a nearby pub, Adrian Bloom autographed books for us at The Bressingham Plant Centre. Adrian Bloom's father, Alan, established the complex and the initial display garden called the Dell Garden, featuring island beds of perennials, conifers, and other woody plants. The Dell Garden has withstood the test of time and is a garden that should be on the must visit list for everyone.

The evening was spent at the University Arms Hotel in Cambridge where we enjoyed one of the best meals of the tour. The evening was highlighted by a Bill Wells' Auction. Seed pods, cones, Bill's gold Alder pin, Simple's art work, and memorabilia of the tour contributed by members topped off this celebration dinner in the truest ACS fashion.

Early the next morning we left for London. Some of the hardy souls opted to take on Kew Gardens in the rain while others chose to shop and enjoy the sights in the city. The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, is over 300 acres and home to extensive botanical collections from around the world. Over 50,000 different plants are housed in the greenhouses, arboretum, nature preserve, and herbarium. Outside the gates is a small book shop, known as Lloyds of Kew, containing thousands of volumes of new and used horticultural books. Kew is known for its research and as a preserve for the world's plants. Several days could be spent exploring the vast collections of Kew.

Some spent the last evening in London tracing the haunts of Jack the Ripper, other enjoyed Indian Cuisine and some prepared to return to the States. Then it was on to Scotland.

