

SPRING OUTING

Wednesday 13th May 2021

The Haslemere Gardening Society visited

Haslemere
Gardening
Society

Compton Acres, Poole & Abbotsbury Sub-Tropical Gardens in Dorset



Compton Acres is a large privately owned garden in Poole, Dorset, England. It was founded in 1920 by Thomas William Simpson, an entrepreneur who had become wealthy through the manufacture of margarine. The gardens consist of five themed sub-gardens: an Italian garden, a rock and water garden, a heather garden, a Japanese garden and a less formal garden called the "Wooded Valley".

Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens originate in 1765 and have developed into 8 hectares (20 acres) site with exotic plants, many of which were newly discovered species when they were first introduced. There are formal and informal gardens, with woodland walks and walled gardens; in addition, the gardens also contain certain "zones" that exhibit plants from different geographical areas.



At last, on the 12th May 2021, after waiting nearly two years since the last coach trip, members of Haslemere Gardening Society were able to meet and enjoy an outing postponed from last Summer. We obeyed the rules at present in force and so the coach had fewer passengers, socially distanced and all wore masks. The coach set off from Haslemere Hall at 8.30 am en route for Compton Acres in Poole, Dorset, a privately owned garden set on a steep hill and including a wooded valley. The weather was very much better than had been forecast with some lovely sunny spells making exploring the many and varied elements of the garden very enjoyable. Each corner held a new and delightful view where the plants seemed to have been placed exactly in the right place. Water runs all through the garden and it includes an atmospheric Japanese Garden, a rocky water garden and a more formal Italian garden planted with beds of uniform tulips supported by amazing bright blue forget-me-nots. After a very enjoyable morning, we were back in the coach for Abbotsbury Subtropical Garden. A great contrast to the first visit with unusual shrubs and plants which although coming from sub-tropical regions of the world seemed very happy in the warmer sheltered climate that prevails in that part of the south coast. The garden had originally been planted as long ago as 1765 and has developed since then as new plants have been brought back to this country. The fact that the threatened rain did come during the afternoon did not spoil the visit as the warm damp made it feel more tropical. At both gardens, there were fine selections of well-priced plants for sale and many members went home with lovely souvenirs of the trip. It was a most enjoyable day and everyone was very grateful for the opportunity of getting back to some normality.