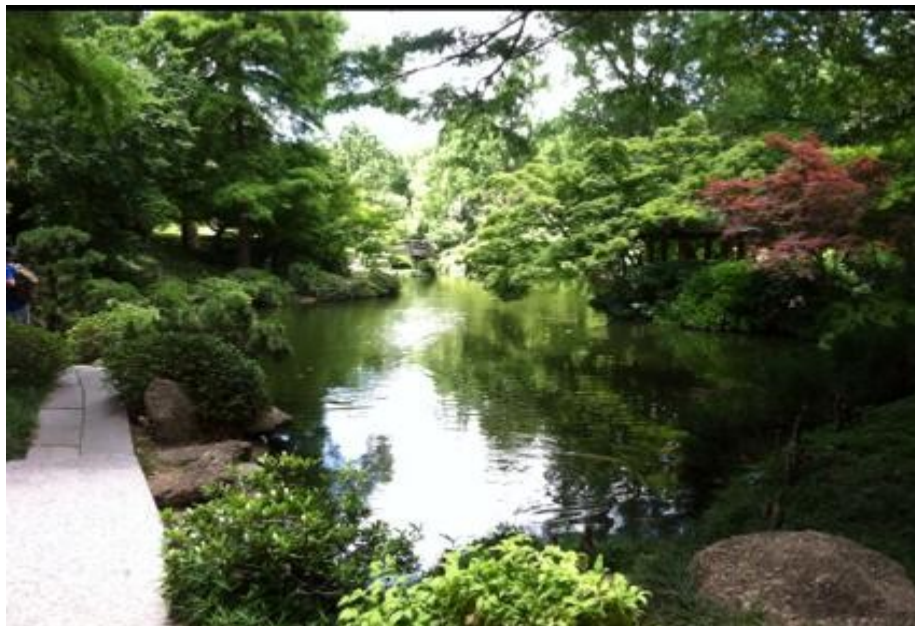




Special Travel Edition Newsletter

Fall 2014



*Photo from the Ft. Worth Botanical Gardens, visited by Lucille Rzucidlo.
(<http://fwbg.org/>)*

Road Trip! Members of the Norwood Evening Garden Club took some exciting trips this spring and summer and are kindly sharing their experiences with the rest of us! Not only did we travel north, south, east and west in the continental United States, but some ventured across the ocean to visit famed exotic gardens. Read on to see where we went and start making plans for next year.

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Coastal Maine Botanical Garden

by Debbie Schulz

Last summer Jim and I had a wonderful visit to the Coastal Maine Botanical Garden in Boothbay, Maine, only 3½ hours from our home in Norwood. The Garden opened in 2007 and has 100,000 visitors a year. Open year round from 9-5, admission is free Nov. 1 – March 31 and \$14 the other months (\$12 for seniors).

We spent many hours there and walked every trail. The list of things I loved there is quite long but I'll try to share it. I loved going from a formal lush perennial garden then down the hillside to a rough trail along the shoreline. Sculptures show up in the most unexpected sites. Smooth troughs of stone beg you to run your hands over them. The Birch Alleé is in its early stage but your

mind's eye can already see how wonderful it's going to be. Many different varieties of birches together form a wonderful straight alleé.



The similarity and the differences in the varieties lined up in a double row invite you to walk up even if the free shuttle is going by and you have already walked up from the shore. Along the shore, we came upon a fairy garden and added our fairy house to the village.

The new Bibby and Harold Alford Children's Garden was very fun even for those young only at heart. Little wooden blue

jays sit on the tree fort overlooking the garden and large stone whales spouting water greet you at the beginning of the garden.

I walked a stone labyrinth barefoot in the Vayo Meditation Garden. The guide suggested walking with bare feet to feel the



stones of the path and fully experience the labyrinth, which I did.

Many of the garden beds have plants that I have in my own yard. It was very interesting for me to see how lovely common perennials can look when the plantings are professionally designed. It made the gardens very approachable and doable for your own yard. I saw for the first time a purple clematis planted to grow with a red rose. It was stunning. As I sat on the bench to enjoy it, many people stopped to take a picture of it. It wasn't very large, it was just beautiful.



We stayed all day and enjoyed our lunch outside in the stone terrace. The menu was limited but featured fresh vegetables grown on site.

I will go back and visit the Coastal Maine Botanical Garden and urge you to visit it as well. Spend a long weekend in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, and enjoy New England.

<http://www.mainegardens.org/>

The Munich Botanical Garden

by Lorraine Devine

In the 19th century, a botanical garden was created in the center of Munich, Germany. However, due to the city's air pollution, growing plants became difficult there, so in 1914, many of them were moved to the New Botanical Garden next to the Nymphenburg Castle in the west of Munich.



Nymphenburg Castle Estate

Created by Karl Ritter von Goebel and Peter Holfelder, this botanical garden covers an area of 54 acres and contains 14,000 plant species. There are 15 greenhouses, each one dedicated to a specific climate or region. Visitors can see slender palms, giant cacti and beautiful water lilies by simply walking from one greenhouse to another, finding plants from humid tropical regions, mountain forests, cool tropical regions and deserts. Both children and adults are fascinated by the carnivorous plants, and they enjoy watching the yellow and red-eared turtles lounge lazily on top of logs in the orchid house. In a terrarium greenhouse, everyone tries to find the two sleeping green iguanas, Iggy and Pop. Marsh plants and colorful fish share the ponds in the water plant house.

After walking past the beautiful courtyard, visitors find numerous outdoor gardens

including the rose garden, the seasonally colorful flowerbed garden and a lily pond. The arboretum has a collection of woody plants from around the world. The Great Pond has a marsh and heath garden with lush aquatic and marsh plants. In the Alpine garden you can see the beautiful but tough and persistent flowers that withstand the most adverse conditions in the mountains above the timberline. Most parts of the grassland are kept wild without mowing, so you can experience a real German flowering meadow.

Over half a million people visit the Munich Botanical Garden each year. It serves as an educational institution for formal education and further training of gardeners as well as botany and phytology students of Ludwig-Maximilians University Munich.

Orchids in the greenhouse



Cacti in the greenhouse



<http://www.botmuc.de/en/>

Gardens of Virginia and DC

by Fran McNulty

While visiting my sister this summer in Alexandria, Virginia, I visited three gardens, two in Alexandria, and one in Washington, D.C.

On July 24, we visited “River Farm”, headquarters of the American Horticultural Society in Alexandria. The farm is a 25 acre historical site along the Potomac River. It has formal, natural woodland, wildlife, children’s, calming, and meditation gardens. The plants are selected for color, texture, and resistance to pests and diseases. My favorite garden was the vegetable garden, as all of the vegetables are trellised upward.

On July 26, we went to Washington, D.C. to view and tour the Franciscan Monastery. Their gardens consist of 42 acres of inspiring and peaceful gardens. The rose beds are spectacular and consist of yellow, white, pink, and red colors. The monks have done all of the gardening since 1898. Time has passed, however, and the monastery has professional gardeners to help now.

In addition to the rose garden, there are shade gardens of many shade perennials

and annuals, with benches for sitting and meditating. It was a wonderful place to visit. It is an oasis of peace.

On July 29, we went to Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria, Virginia. This is a Fairfax County Park dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the area’s horticultural, historical and natural resources. It encompasses 31 acres, and the public is invited to stroll along a quarter-mile brick walk with 20 gardens and a historic home. In 1977, John Moss bought the house and 540 acre farm. Over the years, the farm was broken up and the last owner was the Straights family, which created and dedicated a horticultural park of 20 garden areas. Many of the plants are native to Virginia, mixed with plants from as far away as New England, but the growing season is 2-3 months longer than here. You can visit in any season and see plants in bloom. The day we were there, families and summer school children were in the park. The children’s garden held their interest and they were obviously enjoying themselves.

My Garden Road Trip in Virginia was inspiring and educational. My sister and I had fun and enjoyed each garden.



<http://www.ahs.org/about-river-farm>

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring>

English Garden Heaven

by Martha Emerson

Never in my wildest dreams were the gardens of Sissinghurst, Great Dixter and Hidcote Manor in my travel plans, but on July 11, 2014 on a misty damp day I walked through the Sissinghurst archway and won't soon forget my sheer euphoria! From July 10 to July 16 we also saw Kew Royal Botanical Gardens, Hever Castle, Igham Mote (pronounced item), Emmetts, Chartwell (Winston Churchill's county home), Mottisfont Abbey and others.



Ten of us joined "The Royal Oak" society for free entrance fees, and were driven around the south of England in a 15-passenger box bus with the back seat removed for our suitcases.



When the insurance company found out that a 75 year old woman was the driver, luckily it was too late to stop us! We drove through downtown London, out to the countryside on expressways, and on smaller and smaller roads to get to the gardens. More than once the roads were one lane with pull outs for passing, crops would brush the bus and there was a grass strip between the tire tracks. Yikes! Two drives were over two hours, one even longer, but the others were easy. The gardens were big and intricate, dense in design and plant material, meticulously manicured by devoted gardeners, and we walked 4 to 8 miles every day. All of

us are still giddy with delight that we had this experience.

Sue Parry Davis made all the arrangements which included private tour guides, nightly charming pub reservations, and 4 sets of bed and breakfast accommodations. Less than 3K covered all my expenses. Due to Sue's demeanor, we were treated as important garden guests. She organized this trip for the delight of it and is contemplating another, but without the "beast" (box bus). She provides a full English breakfast and rents bedrooms on the top floor of her row house for £50 a night. NEGC members are welcome to go on her next tour, so let me know if you want to be kept informed.



Sue is an impressive scholarly English business woman, supremely energetic, detailed, organized and, most importantly for us, a master gardener with a passion for visiting gardens. Phyllis Moir is the current president of the Natick Garden Club. Sue, our guide and driver, was Phyllis' English house mother 40 years ago in Hampstead England, home of Keats.

One day I will have my best pictures organized for a whirlwind view of the gardens; right now the sheer volume would put all of you to sleep, but I hope you enjoy these few pictures of Sissinghurst.



<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sissinghurst-castle/>

Sampling Sonoma Valley

by Maureen T. O'Brien

A resplendent day in May provided an ideal opportunity to explore the wine and gardens along Route 121 and Highway 12 in [Sonoma Valley](#), California. The bucolic landscape, complemented by beautiful gardens, enhanced our wine tasting foray. Lined with vineyards, the scenic drive is a delightful alternative to the crowded Route 29 in Napa Valley. This suggested itinerary (with hyperlinks) introduces you to some of the leading wineries in this region.

Start your journey at [Cline Cellars](#) located on the site of a [Miwok](#) Indian Village and the first camp of the [Sonoma Mission](#). Before entering the tasting room located in an 1850 farmhouse, explore the beautiful gardens that contain over 5000 rose bushes, willow trees, ponds and other intriguing features. *Wine recommendation: Cline Cellars Live Oak Zinfandel**

In the town of Sonoma, pick up a picnic lunch at one of the quaint shops surrounding the largest plaza in California, a [National Historic Landmark](#). Unlike many plazas, lawn and benches provide cool respite under magnificent trees. While there, join a tour at [Sebastiani Vineyards](#), the only Sonoma vineyard that remained in operation during Prohibition. While no longer family-owned and the gardens are unremarkable, the building is beautiful and the tour enjoyable. Beautiful hand carved barrels are particularly impressive. *Wine recommendation: Sebastiani Cabernet Sauvignon (Alexander Valley)**

At the [Kunde](#) Family Estate, acres and acres of poppies amid rows of grape vines in



early May provide a glorious welcome to the property. At the entrance to the tasting room, beautiful naturalistic gardens and a pond with fountains invite one to linger on the patio. Opportunities to attend wines tasting elsewhere on its grounds evince the love of the land by its owners. *Wine Recommendation: Bob's Red**

Rolling lawns and majestic trees provide an ideal location to have your picnic at [Chateau St. Jean](#). Formal [garden](#) rooms, evocative of those surrounding Mediterranean villas, provide a gracious welcome to the tasting rooms. Look for the exquisite formal arrangements tucked in niches along the way. *Wine recommendation: Chateau St. Jean Chardonnay**

Saint Francis befittingly occupies a central position in the pocket garden at [St. Francis Winery](#). The mission-styled tasting room overlooks an expansive natural landscape with wind sculptures fronting vines nestled under the mountains beyond. *Wine recommendation: St. Francis Merlot, Behler Vineyard**

TIP – Many vineyards charge for their tastings. Don't hesitate to share a tasting with a fellow traveler. You will enjoy the same experience and a wider variety of wines while staying fresh for your next stop.

**These recommendations merely reflect reasonable priced wines we tasted, imbibed and enjoyed and are not selected according to any rating system. There are many wineries to explore in Sonoma Valley and those discussed here are only a small sampling of the many brands in the valley.*

(Photos below from winery websites)



D.C. in January

by Rita Russo

In the bitter cold of January, 2014, I was in D.C. and interested in satisfying my yearning for plants and summer. The United States Botanic Garden is a very short distance from the White House and was exactly what I needed. I spent several hours touring every nook and cranny and feeling very envious of the flowers and profusion of green everywhere I looked. It



was warm and humid, and just what I needed to chase the winter doldrums. My favorite was the orchid display. They were magnificent.

The historic Lord & Burnham greenhouse contains two courtyard gardens and 10 garden rooms under glass, totaling 28,944 square feet of growing space. A state-of-the-art completely automated environmental control system achieves a perfect range of day and night temperatures and humidity. In 2001, the Conservatory was modernized while retaining its architectural character. Aside from a modest addition at the rear of the building, its exterior remains largely unchanged from its 1933 appearance when it was originally built. It is a little gem in the heart of Washington, well worth the time, especially in winter!



<http://www.usbg.gov/>

An Unexpected Pleasure

by Rita Russo

In mid-July, I was looking for something to do with a friend and found myself at the Heritage Museums and Gardens in Sandwich, Massachusetts. A lifelong resident of the state, I had never heard of them. Their website accurately describes the gardens as “one hundred spectacular acres of labeled trees and shrubs, designed gardens, beautiful flowers and sweeping lawns.” The grounds and gardens are meticulously groomed. It was absolutely perfect, and a delight to my gardener’s soul.

The gardens are known for the 150 varieties of rhododendron, some of which were still in bloom. There was a riotous display of daylilies, a large collection of blooming hydrangeas, many hostas, and flowering trees, shrubs, and plants of every description. While a complimentary shuttle is available, we walked the grounds, not wishing to miss a single thing.

I did not go there for the museums, but I did peruse the three buildings housing antique cars, Americana, and (my favorite) a carousel museum with a fully operating ride in mint condition. The informational displays and exhibits were both novel and fascinating. Everything was extremely well done.

Admission is \$15, seniors \$12. There are hands on activities for children and a newly built tree house. The Magnolia Café on the grounds offers delicious salads and sandwiches for a modest price. For the shoppers, there is a lovely gift shop. If you have not been there, do yourself a favor and go. It is open year round and offers a variety of activities and events.

www.heritagemusandsandgardens.org



Pearl Fryar's Topiary Garden

by Vivien Bouffard

We were on the second leg of our October trip to visit family in Hilton Head, SC, when we stopped at a rest area supplied with tourist info. After deciding we'd definitely stop at the Sweet Potato Festival being held that day, I opened a brochure at random and saw a blurb about this topiary garden that just happened to be down the road from the Festival. I had read about this property years ago in *Horticulture* magazine, so obviously we had to stop and see it.

Mr. Fryar started working in his back yard 40 years ago, after getting bored with his shrubs and taking a quick lesson at a local

nursery on how to shape topiary. He never stopped and now his yard is full of interesting shapes and sculptures that he made from "found" objects.

On the day we visited, he was hosting a Red Cross benefit, but we were unfortunately not able to stay long enough to see him give a demonstration of his technique. He seems to be a gentle soul: carved into his lawn are giant letters spelling out "LOVE, "PEACE & GOOD WILL."

The photos at www.pearlfryar.com are undoubtedly better than mine, but these will give you an idea of this fun, idiosyncratic property that is now included in the Garden Conservancy rolls.



Keukenhof – The Garden of Europe

by Jim Schulz

If you like order and careful planning, then there happen to be seventy-nine carefully planted acres of flowering tulips, daffodils, narcissi, hyacinths, and whatnot of almost any color palette that might inspire you. If you are into disorder or a less cultivated, wild approach, well, maybe this isn't much to talk about.

South of Haarlem and southwest of Amsterdam (in the Netherlands) is the Garden of Europe, aka Keukenhof.



The Keukenhof Tulip Gardens could claim to be the world's largest flower garden (although the Flower Garden of Dubai might take exception to that title). But to be sure – this one is big enough.

Come springtime, the meandering wooded gardens are visited by some 800,000 flower-lovers, who come to soak up the blaze of color that envelops the park, its greenhouses, brooks and shady ponds and winding paths. It's truly a memorable sight.

Keukenhof has millions of tulips, along with narcissi and daffodils, hyacinths, bluebells, and many other blossoms perfectly in place and blooming exactly on time. There must be a virtual army of growers and landscapers, waiting to swoop in to freshen up any drooping, or – heaven forbid – broken bloom that might mar the presentation.

On the grounds, you can look at the vista in two manners. The expertly intertwined compartments, or garden rooms, or with a wider chromatography of landscapes. The picture below shows a garden room cared for, it appears, by a particular grower – M. J. de Groot.



You will also see garden arrangements purposefully planted with a wide range and variety of various complementary plantings. This small picture is a close up of another garden room. Count the number of different plants and then count the number of colors. Finally, look for a weed.



The park is laid out in walkways and paths, and the walkways lead you from one room to the next. So just step onto a walkway, and put one foot in front of the other. You are led from one room to the next. Each room is different and special in its own way.

Here is a walkway that might be called the yellow brick road. Only it's not yellow.



When you have seventy nine acres, you can set up gardens as far as the eye can see. This picture can only show the distant views, the wooded gardens and the winding paths. It's not showing the colors of the gardens, and can only hint that the brown triangle on the right opens up into a pond.



Special exhibits are held in the pavilions around the site, and there are cafes and refreshment stands throughout.

Many displays in the exhibits are focused on the growers showing off their cultivars. Many are gardening presentations. Sometimes, they add whimsy.



Keukenhof is open only in the first two months of spring, when the spring flowers are in bloom. In 2014 it was open from 20 March to 18 May. The best time to visit may depend on the weather conditions, but is usually mid April. Plan accordingly.



And, oh yes, you can bring your dog.

<http://www.keukenhof.nl/en/>

Thanks to everyone who shared their travel experiences with the Club. Be sure to follow the links provided for more information about these wonderful sites.