

my favourite PLACE

MELBOURNE HALL & GARDENS, DERBY

By Andrea Jones



PHOTO: ANDREA JONES

'It's a little piece of heaven in the middle of the country'



One of the world's foremost garden photographers and author of *The Garden Source*, Andrea Jones loves to return to her special place at Melbourne Hall & Gardens, near Derby. www.andrea-jones.co.uk

I first visited Melbourne Hall in May 2016, and the gardens were mindblowing. Atmospheric mists were rising off the lake and the sea of candelabra primulas was stunning. You get very good light there and fantastic sunsets; I think because there's so much water in the area.

It's known as one of the best surviving 18th century English gardens. The owner, Lady Ralph Kerr, is an established artist with a wonderful eye for colour, mixing perennials I would never have thought of. The borders beside the Millstream are a mix of lemon, lime and lilac, with yellow tree peonies and soft blue irises combining magnificently.

Over time I've got attached to it. I've explored it with my camera, but the planting is ever-changing.

The very beautiful birdcage is not a birdcage at all, it's a wrought-iron arbour designed by Robert Bakewell. When a fountain recently broke, they discovered that it was an original elm pipe that had sprung a leak - the fountains were installed in the 1700s!

I particularly love the arboretum, which includes a daimio oak - *Quercus dentata* 'Carl Ferris Miller'. I was fortunate to meet Carl in Korea about 20 years ago and it was wonderful to find one of his trees in this splendid garden context. It retains its leaves for ages and the colour is extraordinary in autumn light.

There's the most fabulous wobbly yew hedge and tunnel that allows shafts of light to illuminate the path beneath.

The evergreens were originally formal but became less so due to manpower shortages around World War One. I love these layers of history and structure; the formality, the beautiful wobbly hedges; the painterly colours in the border and amazing trees that are dotted all around.

What I love about Melbourne Hall more than anything else is the people. I travel a lot for work and this oasis of warm, friendly people, fascinating animals and beautiful gardens is like driving off the motorway into Narnia, a little piece of heaven in the middle of the country.

■ **Melbourne Hall, Church Square, Melbourne, Derby DE73 8EN; www.melbournehallgardens.com.**

Garden NEWS

Address Garden News, H Bauer Publishing, Media House, Lynch Wood, Peterborough, PE2 6EA
Tel 01733 468000
Email gn.letters@bauermedia.co.uk

Garden News magazine is published 52 times a year by H Bauer Publishing, registered address Academic House, 24-28 Oval Road, London NW1 7DT. Registered number LP003328. No part of the magazine may be reproduced in any form in whole or in part, without the prior permission of Bauer. All material published remains the copyright of Bauer and we reserve the right to copy or edit, any material submitted to the magazine without further consent. The

submission of material (manuscripts or images etc) to H Bauer Publishing, whether unsolicited or requested, is taken as permission to publish that material in the magazine, on the associated website, any apps or social media pages affiliated to the magazine, and any editions of the magazine published by our licensees elsewhere in the world. By submitting any material to us you are confirming that the material is your own original work or that you have permission from the copyright owner to use the material and to authorise Bauer to use it as described in this paragraph. You also promise that you have permission from anyone featured or referred to in the submitted material to it being used by Bauer. If Bauer receives a claim from a copyright owner or a person featured in any material you have sent us, we will inform that person that you've granted us permission to use the relevant material

and you will be responsible for paying any amounts due to the copyright owner or featured person and/or for reimbursing Bauer for any losses it has suffered as a result. Please note, we accept no responsibility for unsolicited material which is lost or damaged in the post and we do not promise that we will be able to return any material to you. Finally, while we try to ensure accuracy of your material when we publish it, we cannot promise to do so. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage, however caused, resulting from use of the material as described in this paragraph.

COMPLAINTS: H Bauer Publishing is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (www.ipso.co.uk) and endeavours to respond to and resolve your concerns quickly. Our Editorial Complaints Policy

(including full details of how to contact us about editorial complaints and IPISO's contact details) can be found at www.bauermediacomplaints.co.uk. Our email address for editorial complaints covered by the Editorial Complaints Policy is complaints@bauermedia.co.uk.

SUBSCRIPTION QUERIES: To contact us about subscription orders, renewals, missing issues or any other subscription queries please email bauer@subscription.co.uk or call our UK number on 01858 438884 for overseas call +44 1858 438884. To manage your account online visit www.greatmagazines.co.uk/solo

BACK ISSUES: To order back issues please call our UK number on 01858 438884 for overseas call +44 1858 438884