

# GLORIOUS GARDENS

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Publications and Promotions

The severe shortage of water in the Western Cape and consequent water restrictions have reduced gardens in the Cape to bleak shadows of the spectacular summer splendour of previous years. Gardening enthusiasts have to watch helplessly as hours of painstaking effort and work are destroyed by the merciless summer heat without enough water to refresh their embattled gardens.

A visit to the local public library might just lift the spirits of these frustrated souls and turn them into enthusiastic armchair travellers as they admire horticultural highlights and green wonderlands, currently denied them, on video. A selection of famous European gardens are featured in several videos available from the Central Film and Video Collection of the Western Cape Provincial Library Service.

## Famous European gardens

### **The great gardens of England**

'Produced through the courtesy of the National Trust for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, this videotape features three of England's most famous gardens. Hidcote Manor is located in the lush landscape of the Cotswolds. Noted for its sculpted hedges, the many gardens of Hidcote Manor were conceived and designed by American-born Lawrence Johnston. The medieval Mottisfont Abbey hosts the National Trust's collection of antique and 19th century roses under the care of renowned rosarian Graham Stuart Thomas. The gardens of Sissinghurst Castle in Kent were the creation of literary legends Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson. Their son, Nigel Nicolson, is on hand to provide

commentary and personal reflections about the reconstruction of the castle and the development of its gardens, especially the famed White Garden. Magnificently photographed, this videotape captures the history and splendour of these gardens at the height of their perfection and is complemented by John Joss's narration.' (*Library Journal*)

### **The lost gardens of Heligan**

'Capturing the most enchanting moments from the television series, this beautiful video tells the story of the magical re-awakening of one of nature's Sleeping Beauties. Heligan was one of Cornwall's glories, a botanist's paradise that had simply fallen asleep after the Great War. It remained that way until Tim Smit and his dedicated team started the mammoth task of returning it to its former glory.' (*Channel 4 Video catalogue*.) Originally a six part series, it was edited down to 90 minutes for its video release. The Service also purchased 10 copies of the book based on the series.

### **Past and present preserved.**

### **The National Palace Het Loo, Apeldoorn**

A programme in a thirteen-part series that provides an introduction to a variety of Dutch museums. Situated on the edge of one of Holland's most beautiful scenic areas, the former royal palace Het Loo was built in 1685 for the stadholder King William III. The last ruling monarch to live there was Queen Wilhelmina and in 1971 it was declared a

national monument. Restored to its former splendour, it was opened to the public in 1984. The film provides a brief tour of the estate's magnificent gardens and illustrates how details of the design are repeated in the interiors.

### **The story of Kew Gardens**

Founded in 1761 by Princess Augusta and Lord Bure, Kew Gardens is one of the great botanic institutions of the world. Occupying 300 acres along the banks of the Thames, it houses a selection of some 50 000 different kinds of plants. Narrated by Sir Huw Wheldon, this programme provides an introduction to this horticultural treasure house. It traces the growth of the gardens over the years, highlights the contributions of various directors and presents a guided tour of its most prominent features and milestones. Also included is a visit to Wakehurst Place in Sussex and the programme emphasises both Kew's attraction as a pleasure garden and its scientific facilities.

## Related titles

### **\*The Academy at Longleat**

### **The Queen's garden**

### **\*The watercolourist's garden**

Promote these videos in a display with books on famous gardens and the countries they are situated in to transport your readers to botanical wonderlands. It might take the minds of your library patrons off their scorched gardens and provide them with inspiration once water resources allow them to put their green fingers to work again!

\* Not available in the Central Collection, available on request as inter-library loan via the PALS information system.

Note: Reviews by Freddy Ogterop, Film/Video/DVD Selector of the Western Cape Provincial Library Service.

