

LATCHETTS GARDEN HISTORY

Rebeka and Laurence Hardy bought Latchetts in 1957 although they did not really move in until February 1958, when Laurence left the Navy.

In 1957 it had been vacant for a year and was in a very run down state. The front lawn was long grass and full of molehills.

The drive was badly surfaces and bordered by ditches and brambles and old barbed wire fences.

The Studio was used by the farmer for storing mangle -wurzles and old machinery.

Initially we had help from Frank May, a bus driver, who spent about eight hours a week in the garden, mainly in the vegetable part.

In 1991 we established a long term relationship with Roger Platts who won several gold medals at Chelsea and, in 2003, won 'Best in Show'.

In 1999 Rebeka came up with her most ambitious plan to date, namely to build a walled Millennium Garden, complete with a water feature consisting of a Chinese marble ball 'floating' on water.

Having completed the Millennium Garden we looked to develop the area below the Rose Bank and engaged Gill Chamberlain from 'Garden Rescue' to produce a Prairie Planting Scheme.

The following table outlines the improvements made over the years.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	
1961	Mary Tyler designed courtyard and wall round yew tree and steps which was carried out by F G T Manners and Mr Hope, a brilliant craftsman	
1969	Built Tennis Court	
1973	Built Swimming pool 18000 gallons	
October 1987	The Great Storm.	
1990	Laid brick surround to swimming pool	
July 1991	Resurfaced Tennis Court	

June 1992	Built steps from top terrace to lower terrace and from middle terrace to swimming pool, and did away with grass lawn.	
October 1992	Border above courtyard planted by Will Ingwersen	
May 1993	Courtyard grass removed. New paving laid by Jupps	
May 1993	Built ruined wall and two ponds	
1993	Pruned yew tree after damage from Great Storm.	
July 1994	Built new wall at end of main lawn. Done by Mr Payne from Philpotts using FLB stone.	
November 1994	New Greenhouse.	
August 1994	Roger Platts designs and supplies Oak Pergola and steps, work done by Jupps	
1994	Removed rhodos on edge of drive adjacent to farm buildings. Nigel Phillips built a new dry stone wall and prepared the planting plan	
1995	Jupps extended pool paving to south and created new steps from middle terrace	
April 1996	Completely stripped the vegetable garden, brought in top soil and re-laid out with Roger Platts	
August 1996	First NGS opening	
Sept 1996 to 97	Pond created by David Hope using FLB sandstone slabs	
July 1997	Plan for Entrance wood	
July 1997	Chilstone - 2 Doves, Fish, Lion ,Stone Seat	
July 1997	Yew tree died and removed. Pergola built by Roger	
1997	Drive resurfaced by J.Chaplow	
July 1998	Steps from lower garden, plans, construction, plants	
March 1999	Built Ha-Ha adjoining drive. Mainly done by Joe	
March 1999	Created new Rose Bank. Brought in lots of subsoil and topsoil. Roses from Roger.	
July 1999	Naiad statue and plinth from Redwood Stone	
August 1999	Fourth NGS openings. 450 visitors	
August 1999	Arbour	
August 1998	Bought bronze pheasant by Laurence Edwards from Hannah Peschar	
October 1999	Entrance wood visits and plants	

November 1999	New Alton Cedar greenhouse	
1999	Rhodo border, new camellias and rhodos	
Aug 1999	Stainless steel water feature	
June 2000 - May 2001	Created Millenium Garden	
June 2000	Added Hartley lean to greenhouse on west wall of Millennium Garden.	
Feb 2002 - 2003	Prairie Planting	
	Summer House built by Gary and John	
	Furniture	
September 2003 to May 2006.	Create Mound Garden. Built Mound, dug Sunken Garden, started Gravel Garden	
2013	Did not open at all. A year of maintenance and improvements.	
2014	Created Sensory garden in place of Colour Garden	
2014	Built 'Pagoda' next to Mound.	
May 2014	Decided to 'downsize' and sell Latchetts and move to Storrington. Put on market through Savills.	
August 9th	Last main ngs opening-our 18 th year Over 1000 visitors including children	
August 13th	Last group visit.	
November 11 th & 18th	Move to 22/23 Orchard gardens Storrington	

NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME

In 1996 we were approached by the East Sussex Organiser for the National Garden Scheme and asked to open the garden in August. With some trepidation we agreed and opened for two days with a total of 353 visitors.

Over the years following we increased the openings to two in May, two in June and two in July as well as the two in August.

We also had an increasing number of private coach parties including some from abroad as our reputation increased.

In 2006 we raised over £9000 becoming the top private garden in East and mid-Sussex and held this top place until we closed at the end of 2014 by which time we had raised £212,316 for the NGS and some other charities including our local church at Danehill.

ngs Garden of the Week:

Latchetts:

'something new round every corner'.

By our gardening correspondent

OPENING UNDER THE world-famous National Gardens Scheme this Friday and Saturday is Latchetts, Danehill. This remarkable 5 acre garden, owned and very much the brain-child of Rebeka and Laurence Hardy, has the distinction of being the NGS's largest fund-raiser in the whole of East & Mid Sussex.

And one of the many reasons visitors return to Latchetts year after year is that the garden is for ever evolving. Major features like the Millennium Garden (full of plants that grow in the Holy Land), the Sunken Garden (with its water lilies and painted murals) and the Circle Garden (with five amazing water features) have been created over the last few years, and every season there seems to be something new to look out for.

Essentially though, Latchetts is a lovely garden set in glorious countryside. To the west, beyond the lawns, the borders and the ha-ha are wonderful views to the neighbouring hills. Near the house is a woodland stream with waterfalls and pockets of small pools, meandering its way to a much larger pond through an undergrowth of ferns, hostas and gunneras. Further on there's the rose and prairie gardens. And beyond? Well, come and see for yourself...and be surprised!

Or you could just come for the homemade cream teas...£3.50 for as much as you can eat!

All proceeds go to the National gardens Scheme, which has been opening fine gardens to the public to raise money for charity for 80 years. Last year over £1 million was sent to cancer relief and care charities with a further £½million going to nursing and gardening charities. All gardens open under the scheme can be found in the NGS Yellow Book (available from good bookshops) or online at www.ngs.org.uk.

Latchetts, Freshfield Lane, Danehill RH17 7HQ (5m NE of Hayswards Heath, SW off A275) is open on Fri & Sat August 10 & 11, 1.30 – 5.30pm, adults £4, children free.

