

VISIT REPORT - BOWOOD HOUSE & GARDENS, CALNE, WILTSHIRE
Thursday 20 September 2012

David Jones - Social Secretary

The sun shone throughout the day, the temperature was ideal and the journey to and fro almost to the minute each all contributing well to a highly successful day out for all present. Bowood House & Gardens, owned by the Marquis & Marchioness of Lansdowne, is one of the hidden treasures of Wiltshire designed by Henry Keene and Robert Adam in the 18th century. It is set in a glorious area of outstanding natural beauty with distant views to the chalk downlands.



A very warm welcome awaited our arrival including morning coffee with biscuits. We then divided into two groups for the conducted tour of the Private Walled Gardens, one led by the Garden Designer and the other by the Head Gardener. Both tours proved to be very interesting and informative, covering the four acres separated into four sections. Such tours have only been made available this year, definitely an added bonus to our visit. It was a unique experience and very *The House & Herbacious Border* worthwhile!



Lunch was taken in the Main Restaurant, nicely prepared and only for our group. The Cold Buffet offered many varied options, a good selection of food choice followed by tempting desserts. Coffee or tea followed before continuing our visit. Full compliments

to the Chef and the Waitresses were well received and greatly deserved!

The Walled Wild Flower Garden



The afternoon was "free time" for each person to explore the House, Grounds (designed by Capability Brown), Arboretum, Lake and Cascade at their own pace. The House itself has many attractions including a Chapel, famous Terraced Gardens, the Adam Orangery and Library, Dr Joseph Priestley's Laboratory (where he discovered oxygen) and a Sculpture Gallery. There are also a fine collection of paintings, costumes, watercolours, porcelain,

jewellery plus

The Library the Wedding Chair of Queen Victoria and Napoleon's death mask. The grounds were designed by Capability Brown with gently sloping lawns stretching down to the lake, cascade and Doric Temple.

All in all a fascinating day out blessed by good weather and companionship. A very nice atmosphere prevailed from start to finish, thanks to all concerned for the support received!