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Virginia Woolf's Garden: The Story Of The Garden At Monk's House



Synopsis

A chronological account takes the reader through the key events in the lives of Virginia and Leonard Woolf, and their deaths. This is allied to an account of the garden and its development, and the creation and development of the key areas of the garden. A wonderful selection of full-colour contemporary photographs, archive photographs, illustrated maps and planting plans take the reader through the various garden 'rooms', including the Italian Garden, the Millstone garden, the Orchard, the Vegetable Garden, the Terrace, the Walled Garden, the Fishpond Garden and the Greenhouses and Conservatories. Throughout there are quotations from Virginia and Leonard's diaries, giving a vivid account of their plans for, views on and activities in the garden.

Book Information

Hardcover: 192 pages

Publisher: Jacqui Small (November 1, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1909342130

ISBN-13: 978-1909342132

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 0.8 x 11.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #310,271 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > English Gardens #64 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Essays #235 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Garden Design

Customer Reviews

Starred Review Monk's House, on the edge of a village in Sussex, became Leonard and Virginia Woolf's cherished weekend and summer retreat. Both were ecstatic over the garden and the pear and apple orchard. Leonard did the designing and most of the work, becoming, as Virginia wrote, 'a garden proud,' while she found immense solace and inspiration in their verdant paradise. He planted mammoth arrays of flowers and vegetables and built alluring brick paths, terraces, and borders to create a series of 'rooms' that made their garden a labyrinth of hidden sanctuaries. Leonard also indulged his passion for ponds and his love of roses and became an avid beekeeper. We learn all this and much more about the Woolfs and their beloved home and garden and their loving marriage in this lavish and thoughtful tour of the property past and present.

Striking archival photographs mix well with Caroline Arber's radiant color shots, and Zoob is the best possible guide, having moved into Monk's House, which is owned by the National Trust, with her husband in 2000, and tended the garden for more than a decade. Her charming and affecting chronicle grants us a new perspective on this remarkable pair of fantastically hard-working and immeasurably influential writers and how profoundly they were nurtured by their gorgeously bountiful garden and refuge. --Donna Seaman

"a thoughtful, intelligent account of restoring the garden at Rodmell as the tenant of the National Trust." "takes the reader on a visually sumptuous tour of the property's famous grounds, uncovering its enchanting patchwork of 'rooms' and offering a fascinating glimpse into the Woolfs' daily lives." "her embroidered plans of the gardens add a delightful extra dimension to the book." "an indispensable treasure for any Woolf fan, Anglophile, or gardener" "an unusual and affecting book" "a glorious amalgam of biography and gardening" "a beautifully presented book ... visual pleasure ... uses [language] engagingly." "Gardeners and Woolf readers will much enjoy her book" "Zoob's admirably passionate approach to the house and garden as an artistic whole has produced an extraordinary book, full of quiet images that exactly capture the beauty of the place...Buy it!" "Zoob's book is enchanting and full of excellent excerpts from the Woolfs' letters and diaries" "touching account" "The book has great charm and terrific photographs, is packed with horticultural information, and gives a delightful account of the domestic life of the Woolfs." "Rich with Caroline Arber's photography (and atmospheric sepia snaps of the Woolfs) the book documents the garden's developments from the Woolfs' time, through the Second World War, Virginia's death and Caroline's own decade-long tenancy. "It remains a place of beauty and solace." "A portrait of their life ... a delightfully layered garden history." "Lovely book celebrates the Woolfs' garden - the first (large picture book) about Monk's House" "this book about a gifted amateur's garden has immense charm" "a thoughtful, intelligent account of restoring the garden at Rodmell as the tenant of the National Trust." "this book about a gifted amateur's garden has immense charm" "her embroidered plans of the gardens add a delightful extra dimension to the book."

Lovingly written, lavishly colored and splashed with a multitude of photos, this is a tremendous book for any Woolf fan. I've only had opportunity to glance through it a few times, but each time I am drawn in; and where I meant to spend only a moment's glance becomes an extended time of sitting, reading, and looking. As far as I can tell, the only open pages in this volume which do not contain a beautiful photograph are the last few pages of sources. This is everything you'd expect of a book

detailing gardens - and then some. Filled with quotes and details from Leonard and Virginia, and coupled with the abundance of well-taken photographs, the book is a labor of love and inspiration. One can practically smell and feel the flowers blossoming through the pages - and the wealth of information strewn throughout, waiting to be combed through, is simply tantalizing. I had no expectations when I preordered this book - indeed, I had very little information on it at all. I'm very glad I made the purchase and can't wait to pirouette through its pages.

If you happen to be a follower of the Bloomsbury Group, and a lover of all things Virginia Woolf, as I have been for the last 40 years, you will simply love this book. It shows the gardens around Monk's House that Leonard Woolf cultivated and cared for. Virginia took advantage of the beauty and serenity that they provided her from within the gardens themselves, or as a backdrop to a view from the house or her writing shed. I can imagine that they provided her with much inspiration for her delicate creative constitution. This book is a must, if you love looking at gardens, and for those who are particularly interested in Bloomsbury, this is an essential!!

Oh this is a beautiful book. I am a long-time Virginia Woolf admirer, fan I guess we say. She is so important to me, I am grateful for her wisdom and her language, cherish knowing her life and her work. Just now I am nearing the end of Caroline Zoob's gorgeous book, growing teary, and not wanting it to end. Zoob combines a "regular" (and finely photographed) gardening book which would delight any garden lover with plans and plants, and a careful study of Woolf's oeuvre, discovering in her research so many references to gardens. I found Zoob's delightful embroideries to be a favorite, and unexpected delight in this book - somehow they seem perfectly in keeping with the Bloomsbury approach to life - art in all forms. Zoob's telling of the last years of Leonard's life at Monk's house also surprised me - in all my reading I'd never read so much about the years after Virginia. It's all so tenderly and expertly told by someone who obviously loved the garden and came to love Virginia Woolf. Thank you for this wonderful addition to my gardening and Woolf treasures. A terrific book.

Perhaps if this book had been properly titled 'Leonard Woolf's Garden' not many would buy it. Regardless of the title, it is a well-written book that weaves the lives and work of the famed occupants of Monk's House with the making of its garden. For gardeners the photos and garden plans are beautiful and instructive. For Virginia Woolf fans this book helps one to imagine her life more intimately with Leonard, with her family and friends, with her writing and with her appreciation for the garden and her husband's hard toil to realize it. A very enjoyable book.

Stunning photos. A special treat for anyone who has read Virginia Woolf's works, biographies about her and has never seen where she lived and wrote. Wonderfully informative text about the creation of the garden and what it meant to both Virginia and Leonard Woolf.

Beautiful, measured, thoughtful. I'm inspired every time I open it to improve my own little garden. Leonard and Virginia Woolf would have loved to see this book, I think.

it is a history of Virginia Woolf's garden by an artist and her husband who actually lived on the property for many years

I loved this book. The presentation is superb and the writing is a perfect match for the exquisite photographs. Highly recommend as a joy to own and to browse.

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