

Late Summer Visit to Norton Priory & Ness Gardens

Saturday, 22nd July, 2023—Cost £29.00

08.45, Depart The Barlow, Edgworth : 08.55 Bromley Cross Station Return: 18.30 pm approx.



Travelling by coach from Edgworth or Bromley Cross we visit Norton Priory first and will enjoy tea/coffee & biscuits on arrival. You are then free to enjoy the Priory Museum.

Once home to a medieval church, this is the most excavated monastic site in Europe. Explore the 12th century undercroft with beautiful vaulted ceiling, museum and the priory ruins showing the layout of the medieval buildings of Norton Priory founded in 1134. Wander through the ancient woodlands and see where the monks had their herb garden. Lots of picnic tables in this area.

In the other direction, another short woodland stroll takes you to the Walled Garden with its many attractive features including a rose-walk, herb garden, orchards and the National Collection of Tree Quince.

There is a nice shop and café here too which you might like to use if you like an early lunch, though I am informed that the staff can't cope with large numbers at once so a late lunch might be better at the café at Ness where we travel to next, or bring a picnic, the choice is yours.

Ness Gardens

Arthur Kilpin Bulley (1861-1942) bought the Ness Estate in 1898 and began to develop the gardens. He soon opened part of the grounds to the public. He sponsored George Forrest to search NW Yunnan in China for plants for his own garden at Ness and for his new venture, Bees Ltd. The commercial seed and plant nursery established in the potting sheds at Ness. Forrest named many plants after Bulley including *Iris Bulleyana* and *Primula Bullyana*, both still growing in the rock garden at Ness.



Following his death in 1942 his daughter bought her brother's share of the house and estate. And presented the whole estate to the University of Liverpool alongside a small endowment. The Declaration of Trust between Lois and the University of Liverpool required that the University "maintain and keep [Ness] forever as a public park and flower garden." An agreement honoured to this day with increased emphasis on research, conservation and education, reflecting Bulley's original interests.

The grounds are extensive and varied so there will be something to suit all needs. Lunches can be purchased in the café and there is a very nice shop to satisfy the needs of the shopaholics amongst us. There is also a very good, reasonably priced plant nursery here.