

Carolside Gardens visit

14 June 2023



A group of 27 met on a glorious day at the 18th century Carolside House, which is situated by the River Leader near Earlston. The house is set in beautiful parkland and is flanked by wooded hills.

After coffee had been served the President welcomed the group, which included several guests and a member attending her first field trip, and said that the visit would not be guided with attendees free to walk around the gardens and the parkland at their own pace.

A door leads into an elegant, elliptical walled garden which has a main area with extensive herbaceous planting, and several compartmentalised areas, including an orchard, a parterre, a Secret Garden, a Winter Garden and Herb Garden backed by espaliered pear trees and roses. Glasshouses are set on the south facing wall. Five full time gardeners are employed, along with a part-time adviser who has over 20 years' experience working at the Botanical Gardens in Edinburgh.

The visit was, perhaps, a few weeks too early as Carolside's historical collection of ancient roses, including a National Collection of pre-1900 Gallica roses, had not yet come into full bloom. However, with so much of interest of those present, this did not detract from the gardens' beauty.

The description by Kenneth Cox in *Scotland for Gardeners* as “one of Scotland’s finest private gardens” seems to be entirely justified and the Club is most grateful to Mr and Mrs Foyle for granting permission to visit their magnificent gardens.

