

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

The SAVILL Garden and the VALLEY Garden, Thursday 11 May 2006

This visit has been organised by George Freeman

The Savill and Valley Gardens are well known as some of the most outstanding landscape gardens of the 20th century. They are designed to be spectacular throughout the year and we will be seeing them when some of the rhododendrons, azaleas, camellias, cherries and heathers will be in flower.

We will meet in the Restaurant at Savill Garden. Please wear stout walking shoes, and clothing to suit the weather. We will be walking for about 4 hours, well away from the cars. There is no public transport to the Gardens so please come by car. The nearest stations are Egham and Virginia Water (from Waterloo), both about three miles from Savill Garden. The Valley Garden is about 1½ miles from Savill Garden. There is no transport in the park. For those not wanting to walk that far, the ticket will let you back into Savill Garden for the afternoon.

COSTS

£8.50 to cover entrance fee to Savill Garden and our guide. (The Valley Garden is free.)

Food at cost.

Carpark free for garden visitors.

10.30 – 11.00	Assemble at Savill Garden in the Restaurant, coffee, etc and toilets
11.00 – 12.30	Savill Garden walk
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch in Restaurant or picnic in your car
14.00 – 14.20	Walk 1½ miles to Valley Garden
14.30 – 16.00	Tour through valleys, guide Catherine Stevenson
16.00 – 16.30	Walk back to Restaurant and carpark, tea and disperse

The Savill Garden was started in 1932 by Sir Eric Savill in a boggy part of Windsor Great Park. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth encouraged him and he extended it to what it is today covering 14 hectares (20 acres). It is worth visiting at all times of the year but all the spring plants and shrubs should be at their best in May. The new temperate glasshouse was opened in 1995, the Jubilee Bridge in 1982 and the Golden Jubilee Garden in 2002 by the Queen. The new Visitors Centre will be open in June. (Last year REMS saw the herbaceous borders in the summer)

After the war in 1946 Eric Savill, a surveyor by training, and his head gardener, Hope Findlay, started what is now the Valley Garden, extending over 93 hectares (230 acres). To the north of Virginia Water, created in 1753 by the Duke of Cumberland and Thomas Sandby, are several deep valleys with mature trees. Here he cleared the undergrowth to create vistas, and started planting flowering trees and shrubs. The object was to make a flowering forest. Each area has a different characteristic and there is something to see at most months of the year. The valleys are also known for their National Collections, a total of 9, which is the most in one area.

We will walk through most areas and see heathers (and the National Collection of dwarf conifers), bluebells in the azalea valley, rhododendrons, some of the late camellias in the Camellia Garden and more azaleas in the Punch bowl. How much more we will see will depend on the time and what REMS want to see.

There will not be time to walk around the lake and see the ruins and cascade (the Royal Landscape). This is a photo opportunity.

The maximum is 25.

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DIRECTIONS

