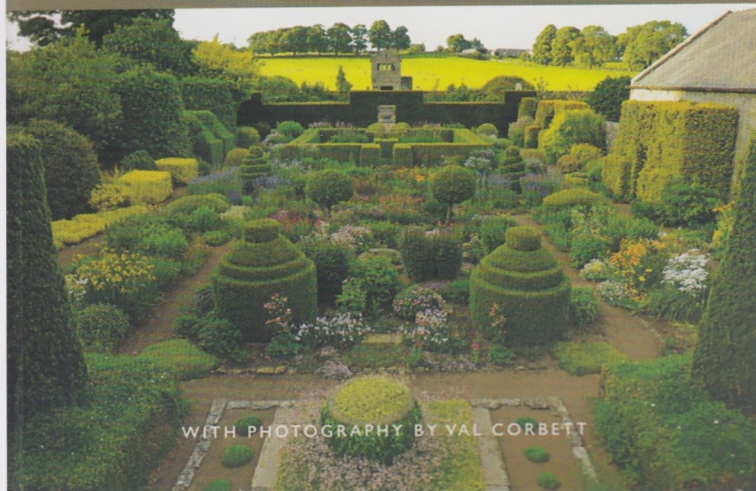


FRANK LAWLEY
HERTERTON HOUSE AND
A NEW COUNTRY GARDEN



*Herterton House and A New
Country Garden, Frank Lawley,
Photography by Val Corbett*

Pimpernel Press 2015, £30.00

Although this is primarily a garden book I know that many members, and especially their spouses are very interested in garden design and plants. Furthermore, not only are the author, Frank Lawley and his wife Marjorie, members of the Society they have a fine collection of oak furniture and carpets that complement the gardens.

When the book came out originally last year it had a brilliant review in the Financial Times by the incomparable Robin Lane Fox. A new reprint is soon becoming available.

Herterton is on the estate of Wallington, Northumberland, now a National Trust property. The Lawleys have rented the early 17th-century farmhouse and an acre of garden from the Trust for the last 40 years. The first three-quarters of the book concerns making the garden but, for RFS members, it is really the last quarter of the book that holds most gems, for that is the part that deals with the rescue and furnishing of the 17th-century 'house' that had become a barn by the late 20th century.

The 'house' had not been lived in since the last farmer, a Mr Forster, had moved out in 1709. Gradually it became one of the farm buildings and the story of returning it to a habitable form is fascinating – not least the discovery and

recovery of some mid-17th-century chimneypieces from derelict local buildings. Frank Lawley is also knowledgeable about Oriental carpets that in turn had an impact on their garden design and colouring. Both Lawleys are accomplished needle-workers and their handiwork may be seen on some of the furniture in the photographs.

Marjorie Lawley heard about the Regional Furniture Society in c. 1990 and joined as much in the hope of learning about vernacular furniture for their house as she knew about cottage plants for the garden. There are some delightful accounts of RFS AGMs and visits, along with discussions concerning the origin of furniture. They soon realised that there was little known about North-East England furniture but there was a growing awareness of Cumbrian and Lake District Furniture and this was what they pursued.

It is a fascinating book with superb photographs of both the garden and the interior. It is as much a story of a wonderful marriage as of making a home and garden. An absolute delight.

Treve Rosoman