



# Treereife

## House and Gardens

**Fiona Read** discovers the timeless charm of a fine Queen Anne manor house, and its delightful surroundings.

**Treereife**, first opened to the public in 2002 and continues to add new features, and improvements as the years progress.

Dating from the early 18th century, the house itself has an architectural elegance not often found in West Cornwall. Together with the tastefully designed gardens, the estate has a timeless quality reminiscent of an idyllic, pastoral setting for a Jane Austen novel.

The literary connection is a significant one as Charles Valentine Le Grice, who came to own Treereife through marriage some 200 years ago, was not only a prolific writer and poet in his own right, but also a contemporary and friend to Coleridge and Wordsworth.

Monthly poetry events, featuring both local and international poets, have been hosted by the current occupant, Tim Le Grice, set up '...to promote and foster the understanding and enjoyment of poetry in Cornwall'.

Upon leaving the car park, the approach to the house takes you past a curious pair of pigs, and a sloping field with horses in it. On the left, is an unusual Medler orchard. An informative board explains that the trees planted here in January 2003, were once widely cultivated in Tudor times, and bear a fruit botanically similar to a cross between a pear and a hawthorn. When picked in October the flesh of these dark greeny-brown fruit is still hard. Keeping them cool until the pulp softens and mellows is a process called 'bletting'. This pulp can be made into a jelly or preserve, or folded into whipped cream and sugar to make a delicious dessert.

Originally, the layout of the gardens was extremely formal, reflecting the symmetry of the house and the fashion of the times.

Later, this was altered to create a landscaped park area, a terraced section and a large walled garden. The final transformation took place in 1999 with major re-planting and refurbishment having been undertaken by family members. What used to be a lawn immediately to the front of the house, now boasts an intricate parterre. Designed by Lyn Le Grice, the pattern was inspired by the ornate Italian plasterwork ceiling found in one of the bedrooms overlooking the garden – the intention being to mirror the interior outside. Individual beds, divided by gravel paths, have been planted



*Caption Caption Caption Caption Caption*

