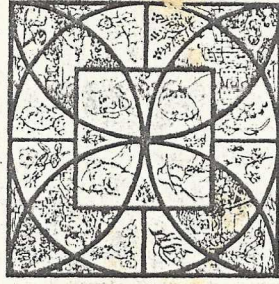


TO THE MANOR BORN



Chenies Manor — pint sized castle and glamorous gardens

AN ENGLISHMAN'S house may be his castle but his real home is in the garden, it is where he feels most at home — in wellies up to his knees in dirt making sure it is blooming wonderful come spring.

In the case of Chenies Manor near Rickmansworth, there is the best of both worlds: a castle and some pretty special gardens.

The house — which is open to the public two afternoons a week — is a mini-castle. Complete with a battlemented tower it dates from the thirteenth century, it even runs to a dungeon which features a hole at the top through which the guards used to pass bread and water to the poor wretches below.

The sixteenth century exhibition on the history of English gardens which opened this week in the new West Wing of the house.

Mazes

The exhibition, called *The English Pleasure Garden*, traces the changing style of English gardens through the ages from the first formal Roman ones — all shrubs and pillars with gravel and no grass, although very beautiful — through to Jacobean and the Hampton Court style Elizabethan gardens with their famous mazes which must have been perfect for courting couples to lose chaperones in.

Chenies has an early maze which unfortunately, from a fun point of view, would only do for hamsters or mice as its 'walls' are barely inches high. Apparently the original mazes were little more than a design of small paths which



The Dried Flower loft. Mrs MacLeod Matthews (left) with Mrs Susan Bronkhorst who designed the garden exhibition

monks traced as an aid to meditation.

Internationally renowned rose grower, Dick Boswell, opened the gardens exhibition. Unfortunately for him, the exhibition concentrated on everything but roses.

Botanical Artists.

Her paintings themselves are freer and more impressionistic in style than many scientifically accurate flower paintings, although

they still aim for similar botanic accuracy, but they are nicer, and more colourful, to hang on the wall than some of the stiffer, stricter scientific illustrations of plants available from Horticultural Society artists.

Chenies Manor and gardens are open to the public from 2pm to 5pm from April to October. Chenies village is on the A404 between Rickmansworth and

Amersham.

For real garden fans, who like to visit England's numerous public and private gardens, there is a new guide book, published by the English Tourist Board, *A Guide to English Gardens*. The book is worth looking at as it lists over 500 gardens up and down the country, as well as garden holidays, garden centres and nurseries, and gardens for the disabled. Price £1.99.



The Sunken Garden