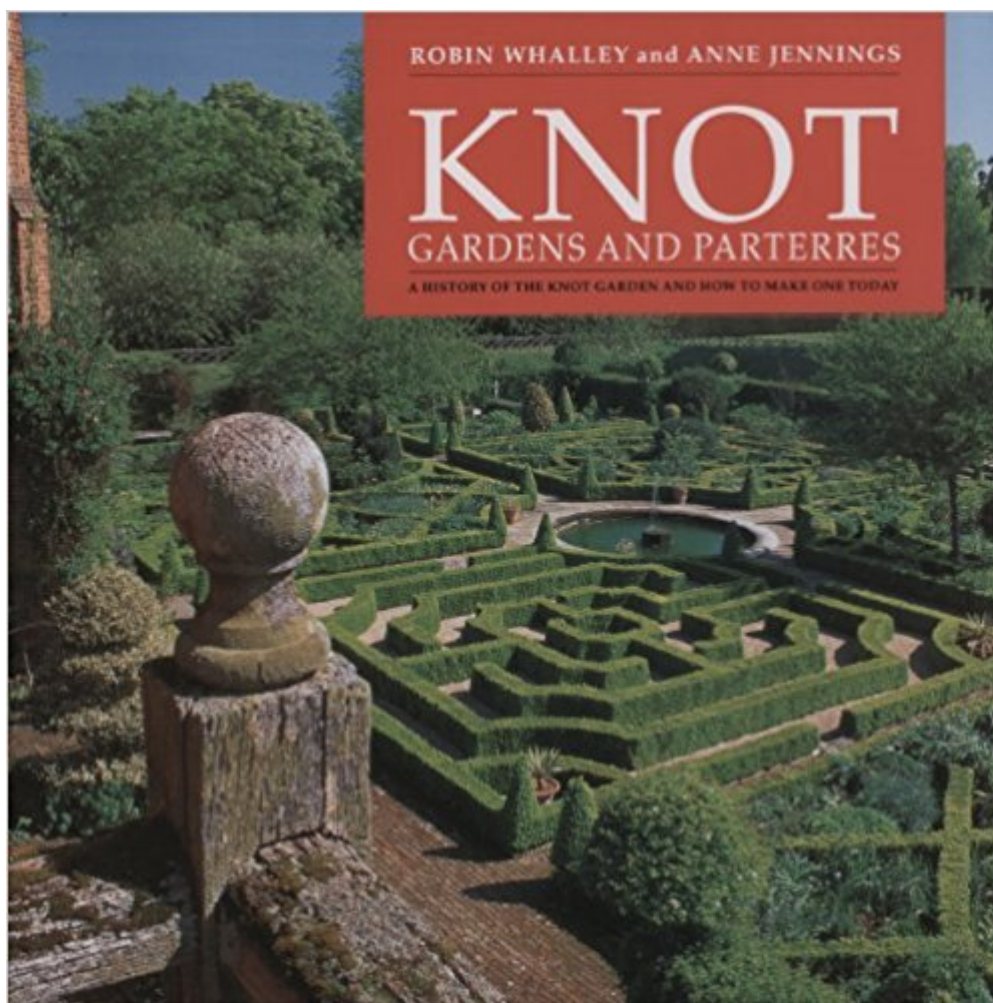


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# Knot Gardens And Parterres



## Synopsis

This work on knot gardens and parterres is written in two parts. The first unravels the tangled story of the knot garden as it transforms itself from the curious knot of Tudor times into the great embroidered layouts of the 17th century. The English landscape all but obliterated formal patterns but they emerge again with the flamboyance of the Victorian parterre. Here, fully illustrated, is the alternative history of British gardening; a story that embraces all the decorative arts. At last it is possible to see how the designs used in weaving, embroidery, carpentry, glazing and plasterwork appear again and again mirrored in the garden.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Australians Don Leever and Lindsay Megarrity have managed to do what so many of us would like to do: up sticks and move to a warmer climate, spending our days doing what we love best - gardening. Back in 1988 they discovered Venzano in Tuscany, the last and least interesting-looking on their list of properties to view. They were instantly smitten and once they had sold up in England, embarked on what was to become a challenging project to create a home and garden in what appeared to be an inhospitable and overgrown patch of land. Set amidst the Tuscan countryside, Venzano was, and still in parts is, an ancient Etruscan ruin, its only redeeming feature being its own water supply - something rare in that arid part of North West Italy. From humble beginnings the men have created a garden paradise and in the process educated the local Italians into creating their own gardens by demonstration. The locals help to run the nursery now set up on site and a

neighbour rules with a firm rod over the vegetable patch. Don is becoming a leading garden designer in Italy and Lindsay still finds time to do his RHS Gold Medal winning botanical illustrations in this peaceful setting. This account of that regeneration is by garden writer Stephanie Donaldson who has regularly visited Venzano, watching the transformation slowly take place. It is a highly personalized tale of the trials and tribulations faced by the two men as they strove to create some sort of order from the land, which until their arrival, nature had taken back as her own. Accompanied by variable photographs, occasionally mis-labelled, the book also includes a short section on dry garden plants together with cultivation details. Interspersed in the main text are tips on germination and propagation of particularly difficult plants such as *Romneya coulteri*. However, the real content of this book is the story of Don and Lindsay's determination to achieve the dream to which they aspired. It is an inspiration to all dream-seekers and an eye-opener to the realities such a move entails. From its first creation in Ancient times, the knot has been symbolic of love and strength. Depicted from earliest times in ceramics, mosaics, tapestries and textiles, it was eventually transposed into what we now know as knot gardens in Tudor times. Probably originating in Italy its idea was carried back to Britain via France and implemented in the various palaces and courts of the time. Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey especially were fond of knot gardens, trying to outdo both themselves and the French in their complexity. Wolsey in particular created gardens "so enknotted it cannot be exprest". However, their popularity waned in the eighteenth century with the advent of the great landscape gardeners who regarded them as too fussy and they were only resurrected more than a century later in a newer form during the Victorian bedding excesses. Robin Whalley's fascinating history of these formal gardens is informative, well-researched and beautifully illustrated with both old design plans and paintings, the latter often the only reference point to be found in the archives. Anne Jennings follows on from this with the practicalities of designing and implementing your own knot garden or parterre. Regardless of a garden's size, these adaptable garden features can fit into any scale and Anne gives an in-depth look at which plants to use, for both edging and infill, together with aftercare advice. Suitable for formal, informal and contemporary gardens, the appetising photographs will whet the appetite and fire the imagination. This book, published in association with the Museum of Garden History who has a particularly attractive knot garden taken from a seventeenth century plan, is for both the garden historian and those interested in making their own special knot garden.

The knot garden, or parterre, can be eye catching, brashly exuberant, romantically nostalgic, or quietly simple and chic. The appeal of the knot garden is timeless and with space often at a

premium, a knot garden provides a tremendously attractive design solution. Knot Gardens and Parterres is divided into two sections. The first unravels the history of this genre from Tudor times and its "curious knot" - to the famous historic patterns of the 17th Century designs for which certain "Sun Kings" are renowned, and beyond to the flamboyance of Queen Victoria's garden affectations. The second section confidently takes the reader through the design process, plant selection, and future care and maintenance. It is an exceptional book on the topic. I refer to it frequently. It has served as the inspiration behind several of my designs.

I have waited years to acquire this book. No local library carried it, and you only get a couple of pages to browse through online. I finally purchased this book used. Thank goodness for that - although it is enjoyable and a nice book, the quality of the paper, and number of colored photographs do not merit a publishers' price of \$50! I would price it at maybe \$30 to start. Find a used copy!

What does this book have to do with Don Leever and Lindsay Megarrity? The editorial on this book refers to a book written by Stephanie Donaldson who chronicles the efforts of these two folks who, literally, "start from scratch" in a garden in Tuscany, and produce a masterpiece of knot gardening. "The real content of this book is the story of Don and Lindsay's determination to achieve the dream to which they aspired." is the quote from the editorial review and then it goes on into a history of knot gardens and how to create your own by Robin Whalley and Anne Jennings. I truly thought I was buying a book relating the experiences of Don Leever and Lindsay Megarrity, especially when the editorial referred to the book being written by Stephanie Donaldson and even relating that there were actual photos that were taken showing the progress made. Am I the only one fooled by what I thought I bought?

Compiled in one place is this informative book on Knot Gardens and Parterres. From pictures of gardens throughout Europe to a step-by-step walk-through of creating your own, including plant suggestions, this is a great tool for someone interested in installing Knot Gardens and Parterres, as well as a gorgeous coffee table book for those who just enjoy this form of expression in the garden.

I purchased this book several years ago and absolutely LOVED it! A friend borrowed it and now I can't remember which one borrowed it...so I'm purchasing another one for me and one for a dear friend for his Christmas present this year.

this is an absolutely wonderful book all about the 'old' art of Knot Gardening. You'll definitely want to read this book to find out all about the history of this fascinating form of gardening and how to create one in your own space! Great photographic examples fill the pages-a definite "must have" for any gardener!

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