



Precision courtyard gardens, a pagoda-style aviary and the traditional Scots ogee roof of the corner tower are defining features of Broadwoodside.

# SQUARE ROOTS

*With its perfectly geometric and carefully considered planting, Robert and Anna Dalrymple's garden is a lesson in Italianate style*

WORDS ANTOINETTE GALBRAITH | PHOTOGRAPHS RAY COX

# H&G FORMAL SCOTTISH GARDEN



Delicate scented geraniums are protected under the gatehouse arch. For a similar tiered pot stand, try Harrod Horticultural, 0845 402 5300, [harrodhorticultural.com](http://harrodhorticultural.com).

Ten years ago, Robert Dalrymple had no intention of moving house, but then his wife Anna noticed a For Sale sign at the end of a farm track close to their East Lothian home. "We had made a wonderful garden and I wasn't keen to leave it," says Robert, "but our four children had become increasingly interested in ponies and we had no land to cater for that."

Agreeing to look at the property that Anna had seen, he found a derelict farmstead amid fields of wheat. Called Broadwoodside, it had just one tumbledown cottage that was habitable, but both it and the ruins of the other buildings had a beautiful outlook and seemed to have plenty of potential.

Robert, a book designer, was persuaded to move and began work on the gardens at the same time as the buildings. "We had to do this as the courtyard gardens are so integral to the buildings," he says. Indeed, entering the property through the arched gatehouse, the first thing you see is the Upper Courtyard Garden. Designed in a chequerboard pattern, it comprises 25 squares, each filled with a lollipop-shaped *Acer platanoides* (Norway maple), lawn or cobble setts. "We wanted plenty of shape that would look good in the winter, which is long and dark this far north. So each tree has evergreen underplanting – gennander, rosemary, pachysandra, box or yew – with bulbs adding a touch of colour over a long period in the first half of the year," says Robert.

The south-west facing walls of the barns on the north-east side of the garden were opened up to create a covered eating and entertaining area. "In the summer, the effect is surprisingly Italianate for southern Scotland," Robert says.

The Lower Courtyard Garden is situated to the south-east of the Upper Courtyard Garden. For this Robert had a vision of contrasting herbaceous planting, but Anna put her foot down. "With three daughters, she wants to keep the space for the wedding marquees," he says. So the garden is filled with lawn, traversed by a flagstone crossing path and surrounded by classic herbaceous borders.

Outside the enclosure of buildings, which date from the mid 17th century, a flagstone path leads to the gatehouse. Flanked on either side by pollarded limes underplanted with aquilegia, brunnera and *Euphorbia polychroma*, the miniature avenue is a lively contrast to the traditional yellow ochre limewash of the building walls.

In 2002, two years after completing the Courtyard Gardens, the Dalrymples settled down to the job of creating the Cottage Terrace and beyond. Backed with a generously planted herbaceous bed, the Terrace overlooks the vegetable garden, where the layout of vegetables on one side and cutting flowers on the other is kept simple to blend with the surrounding farmland. In summer, an arcade of willow arches adds a romantic touch to the rectangular pond, which is fed by the rainwater that runs



With the prospect of family weddings in mind, the Lower Courtyard Garden is kept simple, with lawns edged in digitalis, salvia and kirengeshoma.



The cast-iron finial on the Dogs' Tomb was rescued from buildings which were demolished to make way for the new Scottish Parliament. LEFT Tulips add bold daubs of colour above dense planting in the squares.



Willows framing the rectangular pond are cut back every year, but in summer grow to a height of nine feet.

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Standing amid fields of wheat, Broadwoodside was a derelict farmstead when the Dalrymples first saw it, but it had a beautiful outlook and lots of potential.



off the pantile roofs. "It seemed a good idea to derive some benefit from all the rain we get," Robert says.

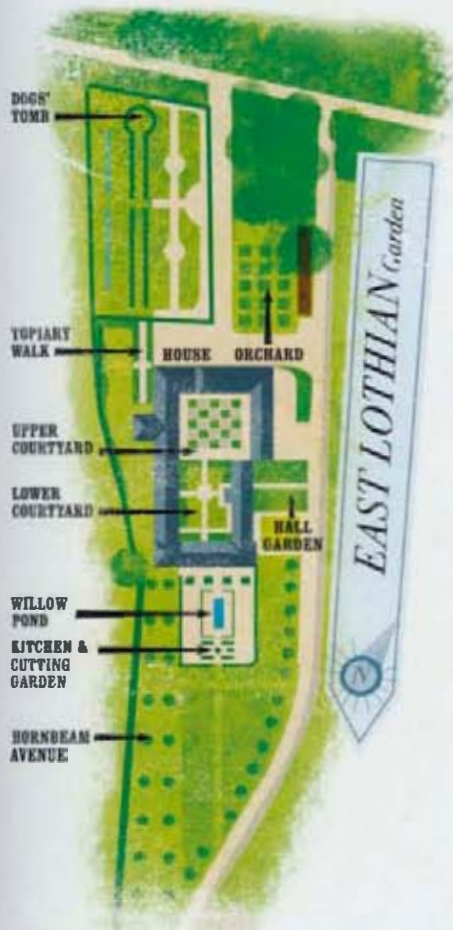
Beyond the main buildings, where the land opens up, Robert, with the expert help of gardener Guy Donaldson, has planted and maintained woodland and a series of walkways. An old lime avenue leads to the Temple, an early Victorian portico from Strathleven House, Dunbartonshire, which was dismantled during the restoration of that property and re-erected here in 2000. It is one of a number of follies and installations in the surrounding farmland that make a stroll through Broadwoodside exciting and inspirational all year round. ■

**CENTRE LEFT** Inspired by George Carter's gates made from garden implements, Robert customised the door to the kitchen garden using painted garden forks.

**CENTRE RIGHT** The Temple is one of many magnificent features that grace the 200-acre landscape.



An avenue of pollarded limes, underplanted with purple and blue aquilegia, brunella and euphorbia, leads through the Hall Garden to the old farmhouse.



## GARDEN GUIDE

**ORIENTATION** South-west facing courtyard gardens and landscaped grounds at 650 feet.

**SOIL TYPE** Heavy clay.

**SPECIAL FEATURES** Aviary in the Upper Courtyard; early Victorian portico; Dogs' Tomb with cast-iron finial; sundial by Michael Harvey.

**VISITOR INFORMATION** Open 4 July 2010 with the Gifford Gardens under Scotland's Gardens Scheme, 0131 226 3714, gardensofscotland.org.



Topiary lines the path to the kitchen door. For similar antique bronze pots, try Lasso. 020 7394 2100, lassco.co.uk

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