

A U T U M N 2 0 1 5

TALLISTON

T I M E S



Welcome to the *autumn edition* of our quarterly chronicle

By the time you read this, the twenty-five year project to transform the UK's most ordinary house into a gateway between worlds and ages will have about two weeks until its deadline. This will mark the end of many things – but also the start of the future of the house and gardens. I'd personally like to thank everyone who has contributed to the project, either with their skills, crafts, finances, volunteering or even just being a virtual part of the project. Thank you all...

Grand Open House Weekend: 16-18 October

Daily tours

10:30 – 16:00

Time tours of the entire finished house and gardens fully staffed with room occupants and including tea and cake in the Sioux Tipi.

Private views

19:30 – 23:00

Candle-lit private views allowing you access all areas to discover the entire labyrinth of the house and gardens at your leisure.

Accommodation

Affordable packages

For those travelling from afar, we have some great rates on 4* accommodation a minute's walk from the Talliston's front door.

In this issue

The Talliston Story

How to create your very own living, breathing fantasy world

Entire Project Overview

Complete overview of each of the 13 locations of the house & gardens

House and Gardens

Summer progress report from the house (21st June to 21st September)

Food & Drink

Menu and information about the twenty-fifth anniversary dinner

The last days...

The countdown to the final fifteen days of the project





NCE upon a time (actually, at midday on 6th October 1990), I stepped into a three-bedroomed, semi-detached, ex-council house in Essex and started a personal journey that has grown into a twenty-five year project: To take a standard English dwelling and transform it into a wonderland of inspirational locations, each set in a different time and place.

The process to deconstruct each room back to the brickwork and rebuild from scratch, so that upon completion not one square centimetre of the original house remains (that's inside and out) has taken every penny I have earned, over 35,000 hours (a conservative estimate) and brought 1,821 items from 27 different countries (all personally visited) into this little house. Using only those tradesmen essential to compliance with building regulations (structural, electric and gas), the rest of the skills (from carpentry, bricklaying and garden landscaping to the more esoteric like basket weaving, gold leafing and treehouse construction) have been

learned during its lifecycle. During the project, we've also welcomed over 138 other craftspeople, artists, architects and volunteers who have become immersed into what is now a veritable community.

It was quite a brave undertaking, but made more so because the person who started this quarter-century journey – ie. me – could at the start not even wire a household plug. It has been an oft-repeated supposition that the only reason I began this endeavour was because this lack of knowledge meant I had not the faintest of ideas how impossible the task ahead actually was!

Escaping the ordinary

If there is one inquiry that crops up amongst the endless rounds of 'what do the neighbours think?' and 'who does all the dusting?' and that is the question of: 'Why?' This is a difficult one, as it seems to assume that there's a reason to art. I mean, why did Leonardo da Vinci paint the Mona Lisa? But art does have a message, and here I can help a



My Talliston

MY FAVOURITE ROOM

There are two answers to this, as it depends on how you frame the question in your mind. The favourite in terms of achievement is the Haunted Bedroom, as the woodwork and construction, the plasterwork and fabrics were easily the most complex of the rooms. In terms of the location I love the most it is The Office as I have written three novels in this space and embodies the feeling of escape that Talliston represents to so many people.

MOST PRECIOUS OBJECT

The first object that I bought that still resides in the house is a pottery wizard in blue clothing and grey hat carrying book. It was one of only a handful I brought from my parents' house into Talliston at the beginning of the project and still own. I must also mention the daily journal I have written for every one of the 9,132 days spent constructing the house and gardens.

BEST LOCATION VISITED

When I bought the house my world travel had consisted of one flight to Menorca, with the rest of my holidays spent in Cornwall as a child. Now I have extensively travelled across the UK and around the globe. Of these, here's the highlights:

- Best Location: Tibet
- Best Restaurant: The Witchery, Edinburgh
- Best Hotel: Belle Grove Barns, Westhall, United Kingdom.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After the grand open weekend on 18th October, I am taking a complete break for a couple of months to reorganise life after Talliston. Getting back to writing is top priority (especially the fictional story of the house that I've been planning) and sorting out Talliston's future and financial independence.

little. If the project says anything it is that the extraordinary lies within the ordinary – that we can achieve anything our mind's imagine.

But I wasn't sure that this was a completely satisfactory answer. And then I was on a plane to New York and found myself watching Edward Norton and Naomi Watts in *The Painted Veil* (a story of a doctor swapping aspidistras and velvet drapes for the cholera-infested backwaters in 1920s China). And in the opening, while Naomi was explaining how she dislikes being given cut flowers as why would anyone give her dead things), there was the same question: Why place so much effort into something that is going to die? Why put so much effort into something I am going to lose? Why spend so much time? So much money? And for what purpose? It is the question that I have asked myself many times, and know what I'm really asking is: "What is life?"

Everyone should ask themselves this question, and know that there are no wrong answers, that everyone will respond differently. What matters is not what the answer is but that the question is asked. For me, Talliston asks: "Why cannot the whole world be like this?" What's so strange about trying to create a life that is wonderful, that is magnificent and excellent, before the time comes when I must say my farewells. Why place so much effort? Why cut flowers, why scent each area, why travel hundreds of thousands of miles to fetch objects for the house... Why? Why? WHY!

Here is the why. The what and the how. Because that, to me, *is* life. And here only a few days from finishing Talliston, life has never felt more rich, more wonderful – or for me, so alive.

The Phases of each Room

Phase I: Design, planning, sourcing and gutting room ready for building work.

Phase II: Major building work and structural.

Phase III: Primary furniture and fittings.

Phase IV: Secondary furniture and fittings.

Phase V: Details and hard-to-find objects.



| # | Common name | Original room | Element | Season | Almanack | Real World Name | Opposition Room | Opposition Element | The Moment | Real World Location | Room scents |
|----|-------------------------|----------------------|---------|---------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | The Labyrinth | Front garden | Earth | Autumn | 1st Moon: Hunter's Moon (Of Man) | The Old Rectory | The Fountain Courtyard | EARTH vs WATER | Wednesday 13 October 1852 06:01:11 | Great Dummow, Essex, United Kingdom | Floral Notes: Floral |
| 2 | The Hall of Mirrors | Hall & stairs | Water | Autumn | 2nd Moon: Blood Moon (Of Man) | Palazzo di Ombre | The Haunted Bedroom | WATER vs FIRE | Tuesday 24 November 1992 02:42:16 | Sacro Monte di Varese, Lombardy, Italy | Fresh Notes: Fruity |
| 3 | The Watchtower | Living & dining room | Fire | Autumn | 3rd Moon: Raven Moon (Of Birds) | The Mead Hall of T'w-á-Gán | The Starhouse | FIRE vs AIR | Wednesday 14 December 1887 05:11:23 | Snowdonia, Wales, United Kingdom | Woody Notes: Dry, Woods |
| 4 | The Voodoo Kitchen | Kitchen extension | Earth | Winter | 4th Moon: Wolf Moon (Of Beasts) | Mansie L' Estrange | The Room of Dreams | EARTH vs AIR | Tuesday 4 January 1954 07:34:36 | Bayou St. John, Louisiana, USA | Floral Notes: Soft Floral |
| 5 | The Boathouse | Bathroom | Water | Winter | 5th Moon: Snow Moon (Of Nature: Sea) | The Lightkeeper's House | The Treehouse Sanctuary | WATER vs AIR | Sunday 9 February 1986 08:29:06 | Tranøy, Hamarøy, Norway | Fresh Notes: Citrus |
| 6 | The Fountain Courtyard | Back garden | Water | Winter | 6th Moon: Eagle Moon (Of Birds) | Tigh Samhraidh | The Labyrinth | WATER vs EARTH | Sunday 26 March 1933 11:45:21 | Boyne Valley, County Meath, Ireland | Woody Notes: Aromatic |
| 7 | The Cabin | Garden shed | Earth | Winter/Spring | 7th Moon: Storm (Of Nature: Land) | Wisbedjak Lodge | The Office | EARTH vs FIRE | Friday 9 April 1948 13:07:05 | Kingsmere Lake, Saskatchewan, Canada | Woody Notes: Mossy, Woods |
| 8 | The Starhouse | Conservatory | Air | Spring | 8th Moon: Hare Moon (Of Beasts) | The Waystation at Tzu | The Watchtower | AIR vs FIRE | Monday 8 May 2282 14:59:12 | Shiretoko Peninsula, Hokkaido Island, Japan | Oriental Notes: Oriental |
| 9 | The Haunted Bedroom | Master bedroom | Fire | Spring | 9th Moon: Thunder Moon (Of Nature: Sky) | Ravensbrae Manor | The Hall of Mirrors | FIRE vs WATER | Monday 26 June 1911 17:23:49 | Stonhaven, Scotland, United Kingdom | Fresh Notes: Water |
| 10 | The Room of Dreams | Guest bedroom | Air | Spring | 10th Moon: Honey Moon (Of Man) | Eish Al Kamar | The Voodoo Kitchen | AIR vs FIRE | Saturday 16 July 1977 18:56:01 | Alhambra, Grenada, Spain | Floral Notes: Floral Oriental |
| 11 | The Office | Box-room | Fire | Summer | 11th Moon: Owl Moon (Of Birds) | Trevelyan Ven | The Office vs The Cabin | FIRE vs EARTH | Monday 5 August 1929 21:18:09 | New York, New York, USA | Floral Notes: Soft Oriental |
| 12 | The Treehouse Sanctuary | Attic | Air | Summer | 12th Moon: Stag Moon (Of Beasts) | Sun Phra Phum | The Boathouse | AIR vs WATER | Saturday 25 September 1965 23:17:51 | Kampong Phluk, Tonlé Sap, Cambodia | Fresh Notes: Green |
| 13 | The Tipi | Tent | Shadow | Summer | 13th Moon: Oak Moon (Tree of Life/Night) | Bah-Hak-T'kh | None | SHADOW | Now | Monument Valley, Arizona, USA | Oriental Notes: Woody Oriental |

| # | Common name | Object | Opposition | Real World Location | Room Scents |
|----|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | The Labyrinth | Vintage brass astrolabe and horograph | Opposition: Almanack | Leimnoff: Lubrinath | Earth-Sea stone |
| 2 | The Hall of Mirrors | Brass domed lantern clock | Opposition: Oracle | Leimnoff: Oak | Earth-Sea stone |
| 3 | The Watchtower | Victorian Vienna wall clock | Opposition: Mirror | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 4 | The Voodoo Kitchen | Bakelite kitchen wall clock | Opposition: Ceramic Palmsistry Hand | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 5 | The Boathouse | Neptune's tide indicator clock | Opposition: Fishing net | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 6 | The Fountain Courtyard | Mythological sandal clock | Opposition: Porch carves | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 7 | The Cabin | Black Forest cuckoo clock | Opposition: Mounted horns | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 8 | The Starhouse | Sumerian star chart tablet | Opposition: Silver birch tree | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 9 | The Haunted Bedroom | Waterbury Art Nouveau brass mantle clock | Opposition: Bed canopy | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 10 | The Room of Dreams | Elgin travel alarm clock | Opposition: Bronze scales | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 11 | The Office | Art Deco walnut mantle clock | Opposition: Ceiling grille | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 12 | The Treehouse Sanctuary | Metamex Doreham mantle clock | Opposition: Woven ceiling above altar | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |
| 13 | The Tipi | Silver and gold pocket watch | Opposition: Navajo Medicine Bag | Leimnoff: Beehive | Earth-Sea stone |

Room overviews

The complete overview of each of the thirteen locations of the house and gardens, including the various names, leitmotifs, occupants, clocks, elements and opposition rooms. Each location is both a sacred site and trapped within a moment of history; representing the very last magical places on earth.

Using these tables, touring Talliston can be tailored to the individual's specific interests and allow guests to explore its physical, spiritual and historical pathways – while illustrating the deeper stories and settings at work in constructing the labyrinth of the house and gardens.

Summer project news

21ST JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | 21ST SEPTEMBER

We look back over what's been happening at the house during the past three months.



The Starhouse

CONSERVATORY | AIR

Last of the major rooms to be constructed was the conservatory – a transformation from concrete driveway to crystal vivarium melding traditional tea house and Jazz Age décor to form a recreational garret. The reason this was left to last was twofold: firstly, this space has doubled up as a work and storeroom while other areas of the house have been in progress; second, that of all the rooms, the balance of simplicity and being set in the future (Monday 8 May 2282 to be precise) would take all the skill we're amassed building the house thus far. The Starhouse is the opposition room to The Watchtower – swapping dark, stone and Victorian clutter for light, glass and Japanese minimalism.

August saw a big spate of research into traditional Shinto gardens, tea houses and temples. The layout, rules and format of such spaces began to form the details of the overall plan. With time and budget restraints on all sides, every week challenges and compromises were encountered, met and thwarted. The location of our waystation is Shiretoko Peninsula, Hokkaido Island, the most northern of the Japanese provinces. The arkspace apartment room is dually located on D'Arkadia, the near-space



Over 40 handmade and painted lattice ceiling panels were constructed, then hung with silk lanterns – and an opium table created, inset with a brass astrolabe

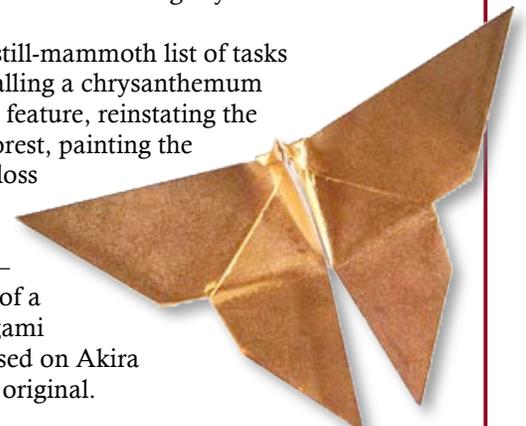


Juggling the futuristic with the fantastical: the entrance wall to The Starhouse with its Art Deco wallpaper and hatchway door

laboratory for the Malorian family, and also docked at the Tzu Waystation, dirtside.

During a six-week period, including two volunteers weekends, over 4,000 rivets were added to the room, the red wall created (including a gorgeous porthole hatch made by Mark Hoskin to our designs) and a Rosewood opium table painted, distressed and inset with a brass astrolabe showing the planetary bodies. With no time to source directly from Japan, dragon ware tea services, trays, golden altars and trappings had to be hunted down in the UK and Europe, all the while juggling visits, photography and tours to keep the coffers from running dry.

Next on the still-mammoth list of tasks includes installing a chrysanthemum granite water feature, reinstating the silver birch forest, painting the entire floor gloss black (and three days drying time) – and creation of a rabble of origami butterflies based on Akira Yoshizawa's original.



Twenty-five years in the making, here's your chance to visit
'Britain's Most Extraordinary Home' (The Sunday Times)

ONE WEEKEND
ONLY!

Your invitation to step inside the magical world of

TALLISTON

HOUSE & GARDENS

*"See it and you still
won't believe it!"*

*Be amazed by this incredible house and gardens
transformation at one of our candlelit evenings*

FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY
16TH – 18TH OCTOBER 19:30-23:00

Private view, buffet and drinks tokens
~~WAS £35~~ NOW £28 per person

20% OFF

Tickets available in person at Saffron Walden Tourist
Information Centre or online at www.saffrontickets.com

ALL GOOD FRIENDS

Where we ask our Friends a little about themselves, their interests and why they visit the house...



THERESA SNOOKS

What's the appeal?

Tell us a bit about yourself.
I'm a music, theatre and art-loving mother of two beautiful, brave and crazy (grown-up) daughters, and wife of an equally beautiful, brave and crazy (not quite grown-up) husband. For the last 20 years I have worked for an amazing educational touring theatre company based in the wilds of East London (arctheatre.com) and together our small team is absolutely passionate about tackling tough issues with young and old.

Where did you first hear about Talliston?

Ah, well, we stumbled upon the wonder that is Talliston online somewhere (as you do!) and agreed we had to visit, as it was exactly the kind of work we are into! We love anything immersive and creative – theatre performance, art installation, storytelling, any participative arts – we particularly love engaging in 'other worlds' and have been massive fans of Punchdrunk for over ten years. Dennis Severs' House has also had a special place in our hearts, so Talliston was a very exciting new find for us!

What events have you attended?

We first ventured to Talliston one dark and frosty night, just before Christmas 2012, for the 'End of the World' party. My beloved 'Pre-Raphaelite' dress finally had its second outing (in 20 years!) and I even managed to climb the stairs to the Treehouse Sanctuary without any mishaps! We've since returned for a murder mystery evening, and have also (half) slept in the Haunted Bedroom (of our own choice!)

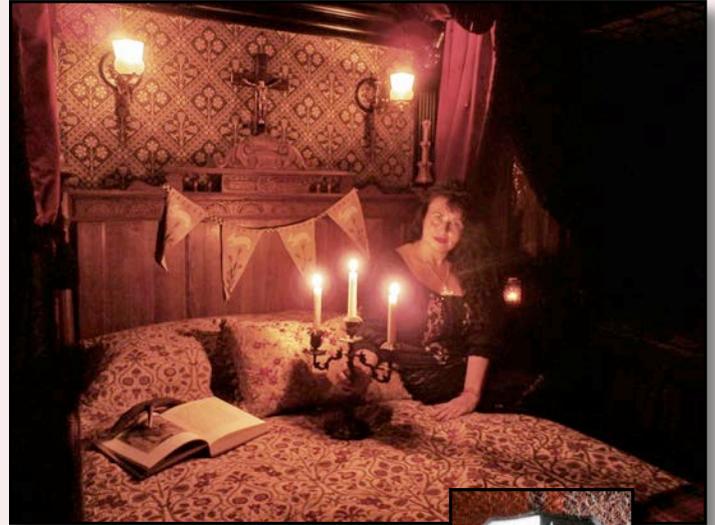
What's the appeal?

Everything about Talliston is simply remarkable. From the thought-processes, lives and stories behind the whole concept, the endless, painstaking sheer hard work that has gone into making that vision a reality, to the overwhelming depth of attention-to-detail – it's just stunning. You can't call it just a house: it's a living, breathing creation and once visited, a little bit lives on in you...

Have you met anyone interesting?

Oh, I think everyone at Talliston is really interesting! It's a natural magnet for writers, artists, creatives and people who enjoy developing their imagination! We've met some lovely people there who are all genuinely inspired by the place. I'm sure it helps to feed into other people's lives and work.

What do you like most about the house and gardens?



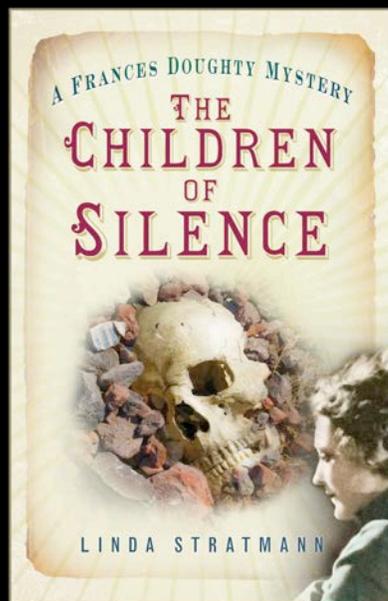
Hard to sum really, but the beauty, romance, glamour and enchantment Talliston is

quite exceptional. It's been built with such love, belief and passion. Every bead of sweat (and occasional swear word?) has been worth it – it simply drips inspiration! Work like this is very rare. And sexy. It's very sexy! ☺

What's your favourite room?

Hmm, well there are a couple of new rooms to visit since we last came... but probably the Haunted Bedroom! We are partial to a ghost story and a bit of

up
of



THE NEW FRANCES DOUGHTY MYSTERY

'A gripping and intriguing mystery with an atmosphere Dickens would be proud of',

LEIGH RUSSELL

www.thehistorypress.co.uk

The
Mystery
Press



Twenty-fifth Anniversary Dinner

Five-course Peter Pan themed feast to celebrate the end of the project



Neverland menu

Each course inspired by a Neverland scene

◆ **Apetiser :** Faerie Hors D'Oeuvres

Ring of pixie dust coated mushrooms on a crisp base and bed of cress

◆ **First :** Mermaid Soup

Lagoon of smoked haddock chowder with mermaid tails, accompanied by Skull Rock bread selection

◆ **Entré :** Red Indian Pow-Wows

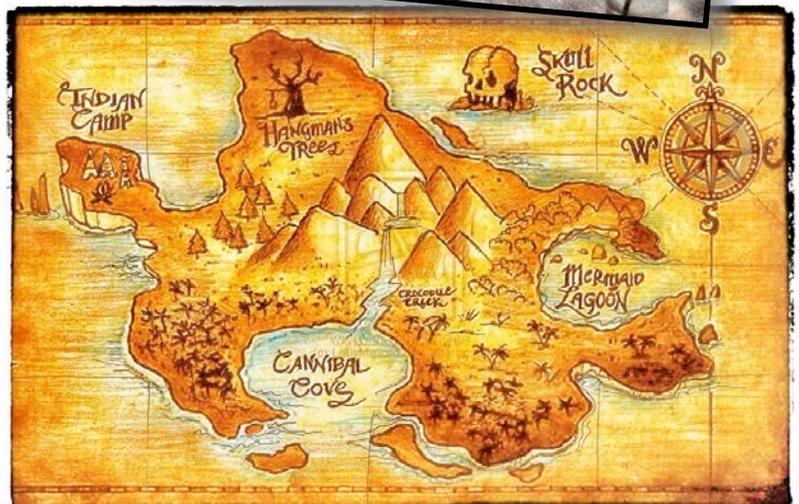
Barbecued buffalo and pepper kabobs presented as tipi and war arrows

◆ **Main :** The Lost Boys' Feast

A veritable cavalcade of food including a dish inspired by each and every one of the thirteen room in the house & gardens of Talliston

◆ **Dessert :** Pirate Pudding

A rum and banana masted galleon with mousse filling and chocolate cannons





The last days...

The final fifteen days of the project

In just over a fortnight, Talliston will be completed – in whatever form that takes. At 12 noon on 6th October, the project to transform Britain's most ordinary house into a magical waystation of times and places will be done. After that deadline, no more objects will be added, and only upkeep and maintenance of the rooms and gardens will be undertaken.

Why not follow the countdown clock in The Project pages on the house and gardens' website!

www.talliston.com
info@talliston.com | 07760 171100

OCTOBER 1990 🌿 THE SECRET LIES WITHIN 🌿 OCTOBER 2015

TALLISTON'S TRAVELLING WONDER*

Now you can experience all the magic of the house in your own home!



Talliston's thirteenth location is a mystical Sioux Tipi – the wandering room that allows all the magic and wonder of the house and gardens to travel anywhere in the world. Created as a way of spreading the secret

of Talliston, this summer a brand new venture is launched upon the unsuspecting world.

From today, ladies and gentlemen, you will be able to summon the Tipi for your very own grand afternoon tea party or dinner experience. Either indoors or out, Chef Marcus and the supper club crew will be whisked to wherever you are and magically concoct a fabulous feast right before your very eyes.

It's all the handcrafted unique menus, gorgeous presentation, fine china and meticulous atmosphere and experience of the Talliston Supper Club – just over at yours! Truly a travelling wonder!



For an information pack, email: info@talliston.com

