

The Newsletter of the
IRISH GARDEN PLANT SOCIETY



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EDITORIAL

A most sincere “Thank You” to the contributors to this newsletter. As ever, as the deadline approaches, a certain panic sets in; I e-mail some; telephone others; plead pleasantly; cajole ruthlessly and pray that there will be enough material and material of a high enough quality to make the newsletter interesting to the members. As always, (so why do I panic?) the material turns up. E-mail has delivered some of the promised and coerced articles, the post others and then...those treasures: the unsolicited articles. What a delight it is to have these. These are as the presents the child receives on a Christmas morning or on a birthday. They are undeserved and unmerited and arrive simply through the goodness of someone’s heart. They bring to the newsletter that variety and interest that the editor can never bring alone. They reflect the interest of the writer and bring to the members a different flavour of material. So, my wish for the future is that I shall receive more of these wonderful gifts, which will certainly be appreciated by me and, I have no doubt, will certainly be appreciated by the readers. Thank you so very much.

Paddy Tobin, “Cois Abhann”, Riverside, Lower Gracedieu, Waterford.
Telephone: 051-857955 E-mail: pmtobin@eircom.net

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Front Cover: Lilium Henryi Photo: Paddy Tobin

Notes from Committee

The Committee would like to apologise to those paid up members who inadvertently received subscription reminders in the last Newsletter.

Homer nods!

Paddy, Editor, has made several requests that the committee should place a regular note in the newsletter to inform members of what is in hand, what is being planned and generally, what the committee is doing at the time. I take Paddy's point about keeping the members informed, but most committee time is spent dealing with quite mundane and routine matters, for example, making arrangements for the Garden Heaven Show and the likes. However, this time there are some interesting pieces of good news for you.

1. Work is well underway on a new 'Moorea' and sufficient material is to hand to make a good issue. We expect to have it out to the members in the early New Year.
2. The committee have agreed a way forward to promote the production and distribution of Irish cultivars in cooperation with commercial nurseries. Brendan Sayers has undertaken to progress this and we will certainly keep the members informed as the project progresses.
3. As the financial reserves of the society have become somewhat depleted we intend holding a major raffle to raise funds. Full details are given elsewhere in the newsletter.

Editor's comment: I have been a member for many years but as I lived in Waterford, an IGPS-free area almost, I very seldom had the opportunity to partake in any IGPS activities. The newsletter and the seed exchange were my only interaction with the society for many years. It is because of this experience, and because I imagine there are many members in other parts of the country who are in the same situation as I was, that I wanted to maximise the flow of information from the committee to members so that, at least, all members would be aware of what the committee and the society is about. I believe this will help keep members involved and enthusiastic. As members, you have all very generously given your membership fee to promote the aims of the society and this is appreciated. The committee must realise, I believe, that this initial enthusiasm which leads people to join the society must be nourished and encouraged so that people move on to become more active and more committed members. Keeping members informed is part, at least, of this and I thank you for this first, of many, I sincerely hope, Notes from Committee. Thank you. Ed.

Autumn Colour in the Rock Garden by Keith Lamb

Spring is generally regarded as the high season in the rock garden. As I write this, late in August, there are quite a number of plants that give colour at the end of summer and into autumn. Bulbous plants, especially, are more associated with spring, but several flower later in the year. It is surprising to find a scilla in flower so long after those of early spring. This one is *Scilla scilloides*. It has a slender stem, up to eighteen inches tall, ending in a raceme of pink flowers. The plant is well behaved, not seeding itself about. We think it well worth saving and sowing the seed.

Some ornamental onions are dangerous self seeders, but we treasure two small species, neither more than six inches high. One is *Allium mairei*, with miniature grassy leaves and pink flowers; the other is *Allium flavum* var. *minor* with attractive umbels of yellow flowers. These two onions are attractive enough to associate with the dainty little autumn snowflake, *Leucojum autumnale*, so tiny in comparison with the spring and summer species.



Keith's Raised Bed Garden, July 2003. Photo: Paddy Tobin

Before we leave the bulbs and tubers, a less familiar cyclamen calls for comment. This is *Cyclamen purpurascens*, which bridges the flowering period of the spring and autumn kinds. Though it grows over a large area of the continent, it does not take so kindly to garden culture. We trust it has now settled down in the rock garden after a slow start. It receives an annual mulch of leafmould. A special treasure is a form of this cyclamen with silvery leaves.

A genus with a bad reputation is *Convolvulus*, but *Convolvulus mauritanicus* is well behaved, and indeed is not too hardy. Our plant trails over one side of a trough and on the other rambles into a grey leaved shrublet, *Artemisia villarsii*, where the inch-wide bluish mauve coloured flowers make a pleasing contrast.

We are inhibited in growing the lime-hating *Gentiana sino-ornata* and its allies; *G. septemfida* and *G. lagodechiana* do well, as does the lesser known *G. loderi* 'Glasnevin Form'. The latter makes a splendid show with its circle of prostrate stems, each ending in a cluster of intensely blue flowers. *G. saxosa* is very different, having white starry flowers over a tuft of dark coloured leaves. The plant is neat and compact enough to plant in a trough where it flourishes.

The will herbs are another genus notable for some bad weeds, but a garden-worthy species is *Epilobium dodonaei*. This one bears mauve flowers on two foot stems in late summer. It seeds itself gently but does not become a nuisance. It is a good companion for the various dwarf astilbes, such as *A. chinensis pumila*.

Cyananthus species are beautiful early autumn flowering plants for the choicest spot in the rock garden or raised bed. We grow two, *C. lobatus* and the slightly smaller flowering *C. microphyllus*. In habit of growth they resemble gentians of the sino-ornata group, sending out a circle of prostrate stems which die right back in winter. The flowers have some resemblance to those of periwinkles but are a lovely blue colour.

Codonopsis clematidea is a rather untidy floppy plant with a dreadful smell if the leaves are crushed. We tolerate it for the extraordinary mottled colour of the inside of the bell-shaped bluish flowers. It is excelled in beauty by *C. convolvulacea*, an odourless climbing plant that rambles in summer into a bush of *Daphne alpine*, bedecking it with large star-shaped blue or white flowers.



This is by no means an exhaustive list of late-flowering plants for the rock garden. We have not touched on campanulas, for example. To finish with a different type of plant from those we have mentioned, we will include two dwarf shrubs. One, *Sorbus reducta*, in the non-suckering form, is laden with red berries. We look forward to the ripening of the fruits on a tiny spindle bush. This is *Euonymus nanus*, a rather delicate growing plant, a foot high, a surprising contrast to our native spindle bush.

Keith in a familiar pose – with fork and plastic bag in hand to give the visitor something to bring home from the garden.

William Robinson by Kevin Halpenny

In the last newsletter, Kevin introduced this article on William Robinson and now continues with an account of his writings and his work in Grevetye Manon. Ed.

“Gleanings from French Gardens 1868”

Robinson’s first published Book ‘*Gleanings from French Gardens 1868*’ was particularly well named. In it, Robinson trawls through the gardens, parks and nurseries visited in France the previous year and gives an ‘*Account of such features of French Horticulture as are most worthy of adoption in British Gardens*’. In this book Robinson used the style and layout which was to characterise most of his major horticultural writings. The book includes the usual section on Gardening and Horticultural Theory, presented in a robust and uncompromising style; examples of the employment of the theory are provided and the all-important catalogue of plants and equipment is included with some detailed and useful technical instruction.

In this book he introduced his view on the subject of Sub-tropical Gardening. He believed it should be defined as ‘*The Cultivation of plants distinguished by their fine foliage or nobility of aspect, or in other words the introduction of beauty of form to the flower garden*’. For him the form and texture of the foliage were key elements of the Subtropical Garden. The success of this style in France led Robinson to believe it could be used in British Gardens. He writes that ‘*Previous to the inauguration of this movement in Britain, our love for rude colour had led us to ignore the exquisite and inexhaustible way in which plants are naturally arranged - fern, flower, grass, shrub, and tree sheltering, supporting and relieving each other.*’

Robinson recommends Ricinus, Cannas, Palms, Yuccas and Agaves, fine leaved plants of leathery texture as best for this type of garden. Many of these plants he concedes require winter protection. The lack of conservatory or hothouse need not however be a bar to the cultivation of a Subtropical Garden. Pampas Grass, Hardy Yuccas, Arundo species, Crambe, Rheum and Acanthuses are all ideal hardy candidates, he recommends. Robinson urges experimentation in planting outdoors plants considered by many as too tender for this purpose.

In addition to the section on Subtropical Gardening, *Gleanings from French Gardens* provided a range of horticultural information, even on the new and cheap method of constructing garden walls, from something called mass concrete, at a rate of 4 shillings a yard. Robinson also strenuously promotes the use of the secateurs; ironic perhaps as Robinson detested all forms of topiary which he referred to as ‘*leprous disfigurement.*’

Robinson was very interested in the French styles of fruit growing and provided endless detail on the elaborate and very formal training regimes used; the elaborately trained pears being his favourites.

We have been introduced to the typical Robinson writing style: theory is outlined in a robust style; practical examples are given; lists and descriptions of useful plants are included. Later books expanded on many of the elements outlined in this his first.

“Alpine Flowers for English Gardens 1870”

This was actually the first book written by Robinson and the third to be published. It was introduced as one of a series “*of manuals, having for their object the improvement of out-door gardening*”. Rockery construction and the placement of the rock were dealt with in detail, all based on Robinson’s own experience of travelling in the Alps. The distribution of roots within the natural stone strata was his guide on how best rockeries should be constructed. He was, however, frustrated by not being able to represent the colour of the alpine plants, and although the plant lists were extensive, the book lacked the excellent engravings and illustrations Robinson wanted; two weaknesses he strived to address in later publications.

Already a confident man, the flyleaf of the book made reference to his planned work: “*The Garden Cyclopaedia*”. *‘This will (He modestly asserts) be the most comprehensive and practical work ever attempted on the subject. It will be on a new plan as regards general arrangement and details, and will contain thousands of illustrations, showing every practical point as well as the highest result of each branch of the art’ - W.R.*

The Garden Cyclopaedia was never to materialise. Perhaps Robinson or his publisher thought it wiser to spread his garden wisdom over a number of books and periodicals. Later, in 1870, instead of the cyclopaedia, and with an intervening publication of his book on Mushroom Culture, Robinson launched one of the two books which have made him famous - *The Wild Garden*

“The Wild Garden”

In writing “*The Wild Garden*” in 1870 Robinson was not perhaps as avant-garde as we at first might think. In fact, he was tapping into a quite widespread and popular reaction against the worst aspects of Industrialisation, a desire to include the rural and natural in one’s life. From the outset, Robinson was keenly and rightly aware of the misunderstanding which the title of this book might cause. He was at pains to point out what *The Wild Garden* was not:

‘Some have mistaken the idea of the wild garden as a plan to get rid of all formality near the house; Some have thought of it as a garden run wild, or sowing annuals in a muddle; whereas it does not interfere with the regulation garden at all. It does not mean the picturesque garden, for a garden may be highly picturesque, and yet in every part the result of ceaseless care. I wish it to be kept distinct in the mind from the various sorts of hardy plant cultivation in groups, beds and borders reserved for choice hardy flowers of all kinds; from the hardy sub-tropical garden or that of the

hardy plants of fine form; from the ordinary type of 'Spring Garden;' and from our own beautiful flowers, delightful in our woods fields and hedgerows.'

So Robinson's 'Wild Garden' referred to something quite specific; the key concept to understand is naturalisation. The term 'Wild Garden' is to be applied essentially to the placing of perfectly hardy exotic plants under conditions where they will thrive without further care.

The 'Wild Garden' was to be complimentary to but not an alternative to the regulated tidy garden around the house and to be limited to areas which would otherwise have remained in a wild or semi-natural state. Exotics naturalised in these areas would be more or less self sustaining and in need of very little care. Plants not suited to the confines of the trim garden could be grown in these Wild Areas, for example, The Golden Rods and the Great Japanese Knotwort. Robinson's idea of the Wild garden is optimistic and its complete application is limited to large sites with existing areas of at least semi-natural landscape. The aspect of The Wild Garden idea which is perhaps most useful and enduring is Robinson's eye for plant association.

The Clematis climbing through the Crab Apple. Everlasting Sweet pea emerging from a shrubbery. Holly and Hawthorn mixed in a hedgerow

These associations have to some extent become classic plant combinations in their own right. The engravings by Alfred Parsons illustrating later editions of the Wild garden are integrated into the text as if to emphasise Robinson's concept of naturalisation. A year after the publication of the very successful Wild Garden came Robinson's book on herbaceous borders:

"Hardy Flowers"

In this publication Robinson seeks not to reinvent the herbaceous border or 'mixed border' but to re-define it and to describe the best plant combinations for inclusion in it.

'We live in a country (he writes) which is, on the whole, better calculated for the successful culture of the most beautiful vegetation of northern and temperate climes than any on the face of the earth, and at present we take as much advantage of it as if we lived in one where, for extremes of some sort, such vegetation could not exist, and where extraordinary and expensive artificial means were requisite for the enjoyment of a little vegetable beauty'.

The real target of the book is the hated bedding schemes which were promoted on the basis of better flowering duration as compared to the herbaceous arrangements.

"The true herbaceous border should be located in a quiet strip in the pleasure ground or flower-garden, separated by a thin shrubbery from the general scene of the flower garden."

The mixed shrub and herbaceous border would have advantages, as it would not suffer from the seasonal deficiencies of the true herbaceous border. Robinson is at pains to recommend a low maintenance strategy from the outset.

'The best and highest pleasure to be derived from our gardens will soon be found to lie in those things, which when well done, we may leave alone for years, and in some cases for the course of our natural lives and the lives of those who come after us.'

Robinson does not hold with the then widespread practice of 'digging over' shrub and herbaceous borders. Annual manuring was also seen as unnecessary and maintenance of these borders should generally be limited to occasional weeding, thinning out and, perhaps, in the case of the more select spots, a little top-dressing with fine soil.

"The Garden"

Robinson's founding of '*The Garden*' Magazine in 1871 was a very natural progression. The practical advice and extensive technical details crammed into his books could perhaps reach a wider audience in a weekly, illustrated journal.

The Garden was a very successful publication and along with *Gardening Illustrated*, his later established periodical, meant he was able to dominate the horticultural press in Britain with circulation figures higher than the combined circulation of all the other horticultural publications.

The Garden, published weekly at a cost of 4 pence, provided an ideal popular platform from which Robinson could project his very particular ideas on Garden Theory. The very first issue of the Garden in November 1871 illustrates the range of subjects which Robinson was prepared to tackle. The twenty-six pages of tightly packed text, with no advertisements, range from his views on the Ideal Public Park to his specifications for the ideal digging-fork, six recipes for cooking tomatoes and a full page illustration of the wonders of Yosemite Valley with its yellow pines. Robinson made sure that there was something for everyone.

His very first article in the Garden combined a highly critical description of Public Gardens and aimed a broadside at the old enemy, the hated bedding scheme.

'Everywhere in them (that is public parks) we see vast surfaces almost totally neglected or only garnished with a few common-place trees; everywhere the fullest evidence that no thought is given to the production of noble, permanent and distinctive features. Sometimes, indeed a favourite spot in one is embellished at great expense during the summer months with tender plants, while the remainder of its surface is usually wholly uncared for. This is something like embellishing a man fluttering in rags with a costly button-hole bouquet.'

He also has a crack at the Botanic Gardens which he writes '*give no more idea of the variety, beauty, and majesty of vegetation, than the fountain basin does of the wild tossing of the wind-tortured sea*' The Garden magazine was an unparalleled success

and by 1875 Robinson was confident enough to add coloured plates to the weekly magazine.

“The English Flower Garden”

First published in 1883 ‘The English Flower Garden’ is Robinson’s great compendium of garden wisdom. In the preface Robinson admits that his previous writings and periodicals have done a good deal to disturb peoples’ opinions as to the flower garden.

His view of the existing flower garden was typically caustic:

‘At present, the rule is no thought, no arrangement, no bold good grouping, no little pictures made with living colours, no variety, no contrast - repetition of the poor and ugly patterns we see so often. The choke-muddle shrubbery, in which the poor flowering shrubs dwindle and kill each other generally supports a few ill-grown and ill-chosen plants but it is mainly distinguished for wide patches of bare earth in summer over which in better hands pretty green things might crowd’.

Robinson was expansive in his writing about how bad things really were, presumably with the intention of convincing his readers that all these ills can be put right through detailed reference to his book.

In spite of the very detailed description and discussion, on every imaginable garden style and more mundane horticultural techniques such as mulching and labelling, the chief use for which this book is famous and which no doubt sustained the book through 15 editions and nine reprints during Robinson’s lifetime is as a plant material reference source. Brilliantly illustrated with over 1200 engravings, mainly by Alfred Parsons, it had advice on propagation and placement of plants, pest and disease susceptibility and where necessary successful wintering advice for the plants. The book was priced at 15 shillings and was aimed at both the interested amateur and professional gardener alike.

New plants being introduced by people like Fortune, Douglas and Veitch were made familiar to people through the pages of The English Flower Garden. The Japanese anemone, introduced by Robert Fortune in 1846, and surely the archetypal Robinsonian plant, was given pride of place on the first edition cover.

‘The English Flower Garden’ provided an excellent vehicle for his changing views and theories. The 15th edition published just 2 years before his death ran to 720 pages, compared with the original 427.

The immediate success of ‘The English Flower Garden’ and the large number of very established garden writers contributing to it makes the argument that the book was anti-establishment or radical very difficult to support. The real success of the book was the presentation of the range of garden styles supported by many gardening experts and theorists in an accessible manner to a wide and enthusiastic public audience

Some seventy writers, apart from Robinson, are credited with contributing to the first edition, including such notables as Robert Marnock, Gertrude Jekyll and F.W. Burbidge of Trinity College.

“Flora and Sylva”

Robinson’s most expensively produced magazine, *Flora and Sylva*, was a lavishly illustrated monthly publication which ran for just 3 years from November 1903. The coloured plates, many created by Henry George Moon, were considered highly collectable. *Flora and Sylva* was probably the publication which most satisfied Robinson. This magazine did not however have the general appeal of many of Robinson’s other publications. The cost of production greatly outweighed the income from circulation, even at a price of 1 guinea per issue. Many articles of Irish interest appeared in the pages of *Flora and Sylva*.

Disputes with the Garden Architects

Robinson continued to write into his old age and regularly crossed swords with the formalist garden architects, such as Reginald Blomfield. Robinson criticised the profession of landscape gardening for their attempts to idealise things rather than trying to get close to the innate visible beauty of the landscape. His book entitled ‘*Garden Design and Architect’s Gardens*’, published in 1892, was a direct attack on the formalist landscape architects.

Robinson’s broadside aimed at the formalists in *Garden Design* was not well received, particularly by Reginald Blomfield who spends most of the 21 pages in the preface to the second edition of *The Formal Garden in England* ridiculing Robinson’s theories on landscape design.

“Mr. Robinson (Blomfield wrote) seems to conceive of a garden as a botanical museum, a place for the exhibition of specimens from every part of the world, in which no doubt the monkey puzzler would occupy the proud position due to its conspicuous ugliness”.

“Not being an artist, Mr. Robinson does not understand the artistic importance of mass on the one hand and of scale on the other. Mr. Robinson has a lofty disdain for accuracy when other people’s opinions press him closely. It is sometimes difficult to see whether his perversions are wilful or merely stupid”.

Gravetye Manor

In 1885 on the strength of his very successful publishing and writing achievements Robinson purchased Gravetye Manor, an Elizabethan mansion near West Howthley, in rural Sussex. The estate included 360 acres which Robinson quickly extended to 1100. At Gravetye, Robinson was able to indulge his theories on landscape on a grand scale – he planted 500 acres of woodland.

'In planting such trees in the many conditions of our country, of river, estuary or lake, or even in ground without these advantages, we have almost the same problems to consider as landscape painters often have as regards composition and other effects'.

Robinson carefully documented his own gardening in the book *"Gravetye Manor : or Twenty Years Work round an old Manor House"*. Fortunately it is still possible to visit Gravetye and see that under the care of Peter Herbert, who runs a hotel at Gravetye, many of Robinson's features have survived. Bamboos are still naturalised along the edge of the lake, the great Alpine meadow is still maintained with bulbs giving Spring and Summer colour. *"The best thing I have learnt (Robinson writes) from my own wild gardening is that we may grow without care many lovely early bulbs in the turf of meadows, i.e. fields mown for hay, without in the least interfering with the use of the fields"*.

Robinson's own garden contained formal elements including forty-six beds in a rectangular arrangement close to the house. When challenged on this Robinson was however quick to point out that what he objected to in the formalist style was not the shape and regularity of the beds themselves but that the plants themselves were rigidly set out in geometrical designs, as in carpet gardening and bedding out.

The Great Alpine Meadow at Gravetye is regarded as one of his most important creations at Gravetye. The manor house itself emerges from large mixed borders and drifts of Sub-tropical planting very much in the style advocated by Robinson. In the heathland garden above the house, daylilies, sweet pea and other flowers are naturalised into the grassland.

Robinson was a lifelong advocate of cremation, writing several books on the subject. No gravestone marks his place of rest

In Brief Conclusion

William Robinson helped to popularise some fundamental changes in garden styles. In collaboration with his friend Gertrude Jekyll and other garden innovators he helped to advance subtlety and sophistication in garden planting.

The juxtaposition of primary colours in the stiff bedding schemes of the classic Victorian Garden were replaced with groupings of flowers of related colours in the herbaceous border. Allowance was made for a sequence of flowering through the season.

Experimentation with the outdoor planting of newly introduced exotics prized for their form and the texture of their foliage became more commonplace, due in part to his writings.

Rhododendrons by Rae McIntyre

It seems to me that most people either love them or hate them. If in the latter category, go no farther gentle reader because the older I get, the more I am besotted with them. And yes, I do realise I have written about them before, many times, but a strong feature of infatuation is that one often wants to talk about the beloved.

My garden is not a large one, being less than an acre in size and is unequivocally northern in feel and in climate. We live four miles from Garvagh which shares, with a hilly part near the Mourne in Co. Down, the unenviable reputation of having the highest rainfall figures in Northern Ireland. While all my gardening acquaintances in the counties of Armagh and Down and in Belfast and mid-Ulster were watering every evening during late April and May, my garden hose stayed cosily in its shed. The garden is also windswept by the prevailing winds from the west; even though this can be immensely irritating, winds from the west are not the worst. I'm touching wood, strenuously, as I say this: we do not have severe or prolonged frosts because of the proximity to the north coast but neither do we have nearly as much sunshine as many other parts of the province. Dull days with feeble evaporation are common. Along with acid soil these are the conditions in which rhododendrons thrive so it makes sense to grow them. However I grow them because I like them. Always doing the most sensible thing was never top priority as far as I am concerned.

They are amazingly versatile. What other genus of plants has a range from the tiniest dwarfs to huge-leaved beauties and every other size in between? *Rhododendron radicans* is only four inches high with minute dark shiny leaves and rich purple flowers on long stalks in June. *Rhododendron radicans* will grow quite happily in a trough. *Rhododendron sinogrande* grows at least ten feet tall and wide, with leaves up to three feet long. It's only for mild sheltered gardens like Rowallane and Mount Stewart where you can visit it and see its huge trusses of creamy white flowers between March and May.



Rhododendron radicans,
Photo: P Tobin

Because of my smallish garden, many of the rhododendrons I grow are dwarf, something many people, even fully paid-up rhododendron buffs, find unappealing. Once, at a dinner party, I was stuck beside a chap, with whom I found it exceedingly

difficult to talk ... until I discovered that he had a three acre garden filled with rhododendrons. All went well until I said I grow dwarfs. His comment was, "I would not allow a dwarf rhododendron in my garden," spoken in exactly the same tone as he would have said, "No, I do not have headlice." It is, I think, the idea of dwarfness, strongly associated with dwarf conifers with their ingrown penchant for naffness, which is off-putting.

Even I cannot stand the "Yak" hybrids which are apparently the most popular because they can be a mass of flowers and have good foliage, often indumented, but there's something about their low stature and disproportionately large trusses of flowers that



Rhododendron yakushimanum
Photo: P.Tobin

sets my teeth on edge. There is a whole series of them called after the seven dwarfs – Dopey, Grumpy, Sneezy et. al. – and others with appalling names like "Barbarella", "Cupcake" (Cupcake! For heaven's sake!) and "Teddy Bear".

Rhododendron yakushimanum, the parent species, is much more graceful. It originated in the rainy, windswept island of Yakushima in Japan, so is very hardy. The leaves have silvery indumentum above and fawn below and the blooms, pale pink in bud, opening to white, are in pleasingly proportionate size to the shrub's stature.

Here are some more of my favourite rhododendrons. The blooming year starts with *R. lapponicum* Parvifolium which grows to about 18 inches tall, has thumbnail sized rose purple flowers in January and February and grey-green aromatic leaves. *R. leucaspis* has little flat-faced white blooms with black anthers in March.

R. moupinense has delicate pale pink flowers flushed with deeper pink that look as if they've been fashioned in the finest porcelain. These are produced in January and February.

R. campylogyna "Claret" has nodding thimble-shaped (and sized) flowers in deep red-purple on a 30 cm shrub.



Of the larger hybrids my favourite is "Conroy" (*concatenans* x "Roylei") which has very glaucous foliage and pendulous flowers, bell-shaped in orange suffused with apricot-red. "Cinkeys" is related to it with quite narrow tubular flowers in pinkish-red with cream-yellow lobes. Both of these hybrids grow to about ten feet tall so, through time, I may have to say goodbye to less valued plants to accommodate them.

Rhododendron haters (often rose-lovers) say that rhododendrons have no scent. Admittedly the majority of them don't but those that do have an almost addictive fragrance. Unfortunately they're inclined to be tender so need to be grown under glass. Most will be happy in a cold greenhouse that is only heated during nights of hard frost and will withstand temperatures down to -7 C without harm. In September 2003, I visited the garden of Dr. Mavis Paton in Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland. She has three acres of rhododendrons and a greenhouse packed to the gills with them. I simply asked "Maddenia's?" and she nodded her head vigorously. The Maddenia series has many species and hybrid rhododendrons with cream or white trumpet or tubular-shaped flowers that are sweetly scented. Two favourites are "Fragrantissimum" and "Lady Alice Fitzwilliam". They are easily looked after, needing only a coarse growing medium (in the wild many are epiphytic) and sharp drainage. They also like to be a little pot bound. Of course, if you live somewhere like Co Cork they will do outside.

The Vireya rhododendrons like similar conditions, but with higher temperatures, because they cannot stand any frost. The species occur in Indonesia, Malaysia and surrounding areas. The species *christi* has very unusual red flowers with a green-yellow tube. The hybrid "Moonwood" has dark leaves and creamy-white fragrant



flowers. The Vireyas can flower at any time of the year and make interestingly different large house plants for rooms or conservatories that are not over heated. And, if you don't want to go to the expense of buying a Vireya, but, would like a rhododendron in your house, that's easy. Every year I dig out a not-too-tall one in bloom, stick it in a pot of ericaceous compost and bring it into the house for its flowering period. They're good-natured plants and don't resent this treatment at all.

Rhododendron Vireya Luraluense

After flowering they're replanted in the garden. "Lady Alice Fitzwilliam" also slums it in the drawing-room fireplace for a couple of weeks.

All rhododendrons described are available by mail order from Glendoick Gardens Ltd., Perth, Scotland, PH2 7NS. www.glendoick.com

In Northern Ireland the best selection of rhododendrons is from John Gault, 84 Broad Road, Limavady, BT49 02H. Tel. (028) 77722610 www.rhododendronazaleanursery.co.uk.

The Irish are Everywhere by Dermot Kehoe

Whether in the rock garden, the herbaceous border or in the shrubbery, plants of particularly Irish interest are to be found in abundance. Dr. Charles Nelson's book, "A *Heritage of Beauty*", which was published by the society, deals in detail with over 5000 such plants. While most long-standing members already have this book, it is one I can heartily recommend to newer members, who will find it a fascinating read. Three plants with Irish connections which I particularly like and grow in my own garden are noted below. All are illustrated in "A *Heritage of Beauty*".

A long time rock garden favourite which I grow on a raised bed is the diminutive *Campanula garganica* 'W.H. Paine'. This is a very attractive variety of the variable *C. garganica*, named after Mount Gargano in Italy, although it also grows on both sides of the Adriatic. It's an easy hardy plant with characteristic starry shaped flowers and is well covered with blue flowers in June and July, thus prolonging the main flush of colour in the rock garden. The variety 'W.H. Paine' is well known and long established in cultivation in Britain as well as in Ireland. It is distinguished by its large white centre, offset by a particularly deep violet blue. While the species has been in cultivation since 1832 this variant was first noted around 1900 at the Tully Nursery, in Co. Kildare, and was named after the manager there.

Much more recently, *Deutzia purpurascens* 'Alpine Magician' created a stir when it was found at the back of a shrubbery in the Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, about eleven years ago. This plant had been raised from seed sent from Burma to the gardens by Reginald Farrer, the famous plant hunter, and had not been particularly noticed or named for over 60 years. It's a hardy deciduous shrub of somewhat ungainly habit. My plant, which is approximately 4 years old, is a spectacular sight in June when it is covered with white purple-centred flowers. Later in the season it is somewhat dull but now the climbing *Codonopsis lanceolata* wends its way up through the twigs and adds considerable interest when its motley bells decorate the shrub in August.

The hardy geraniums have, in recent years, reached an unprecedented degree of popularity. They are floriferous, easy, require little staking and are readily propagated. *Geranium himalayense* is one of the most popular species with deeply cut foliage and large blue flowers which float above the deeply cut leaves. The variety 'Irish Blue' was found in Co. Kildare in 1947 by that great plantsman, Graham Stuart Thomas. The blue is suffused with a reddish blush. It's an excellent plant for the front of the border and has the merit of a particularly long flowering time.

Going Bananas by Phemie Rose

Why don't you grow *Musa basjoo*? This was a question a garden visitor asked me some 6 or 7 years ago. My reply was that I hadn't sourced one yet. Well, he said I'm going to be dividing mine in the near future and you can have an offshoot. (As he lived in Dublin, which is a long way from West Cork I was a bit sceptical about this offer), however, about a week later I came home to find the promised *Musa basjoo* on the doorstep. It is now some 15ft high with pseudostems 8ft high and 12" in circumference and it has spread to form 6 other pseudostems. It has



Musa Basjoo

huge leaves (which unfortunately do get shredded by strong winds) and is a really spectacular plant. This banana is native to the Ryuku Island of Japan. It is amongst the farthest north-growing of all bananas and has survived in zones 5 & 6. In temperatures as low as this above-

ground parts freeze to ground level, but the rhizome survives to produce new pseudostems that can grow to 10ft or more in one season. As yet our plant has produced no fruit. (One friend suggested that I should hang a bunch of green bananas from the plant - I have not tried it out yet, but may be tempted!) The fruit when produced is small, seeded and inedible. We have found it to be totally hardy in West Cork without any winter protection.

So then we made the Mediterranean garden and of course we had to try some more bananas.

Musa sikkimensis which hails from northeast India was acquired and planted out. We have found it to be just as hardy as Basjoo, with the added bonus of having maroon mid-ribs and maroon markings on the upper surface of the younger foliage. It is now 7ft high with 7 pseudostems the largest being 10" in circumference. It overwintered very well without protection.

Ensete ventricosum grows wild at high altitudes in Eastern Africa. Has huge leaves often with a red mid-rib. Grown from seed it has only been planted out in the spring so its hardiness is as yet unknown.

Musella lasiocarpa did not survive the winter. It rotted at the base, possibly due to being planted in the wrong spot. Too much shade and not enough sun. At one time this rare banana was thought to be extinct in the wild in its Yunnan, China home. Recently rediscovered and tissue cultured, plants are now readily available.

I have now grown *Musella lasiocarpa* from seed, which means that there will be a few plants to try out in the garden next spring. It is grown for its bright yellow, long lasting, lotus-like inflorescences. The fruits are inedible. Said to be hardy in zone 7.



Ensete ventricosum growing in Queensland



Ensete glaucum

Ensete glaucum. Another wild species from higher elevations in Tibet and the Himalayas. Has grown well since germination and will be planted out in the spring.

Musa acuminata this is one of the parents of nearly all edible bananas and is distributed from South East Asia to Australia. Also grown from seed and ready to be planted out next year.

Musa yunnan Grown from seed. As presumably, by it's name, comes from Yunnan, it should prove interesting comparing it with *Musella lasiocarpa* also from Yunnan.

Musa velutina (Hot Pink Banana) has already been planted out. It is reputed to be cold hardy, but time will tell, as it has not been overwintered outside yet. It has red pseudostems and petioles and should have

pink inflorescences.

Bananas do not grow on trees; they are in fact herbaceous perennials. There are three banana genera, Ensete, Musa & Musella. The first genus Ensete contains a small number of species and is now found in Africa, Madagascar, Northern India and Western China. Musa is the largest and most important genus which contains most of the edible and most ornamental species. The third genus is Musella from southwestern China with a single species *Musella lasiocarpa*.



Ensete maurelii

We have just acquired a large specimen of *Ensete maurelii* (Red Abyssinian Banana). This is a stunning plant with deep red very large leaves. It grows wild at high altitudes in eastern Africa. Hardiness unknown – so will have to be overwintered in the greenhouse (that will involve a lot of changing around of plants to find a space).

Most bananas need full sun and to be well fed and watered in summer. They are very rewarding to grow from seed because they shoot up so quickly – making pseudostems of 12” or more in 18 months. I soak the seeds in warm water for 24hrs before putting them into sealed polythene bags filled with moist vermiculite. Then they go into the hot press until they germinate. Very important to keep checking them!!!! After germination they are potted up and kept in a warm place out of direct sunlight until their first leaves appear before moving them into the greenhouse. They have to be potted on frequently in the summer because they grow so fast.

I really enjoy ‘Going Bananas’.

The Horticultural Garden at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural Garden Copenhagen by Mary Forrest

The by-line in the publicity material for The Horticultural Garden at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Copenhagen says 'Worth a visit' and following a recent stroll around the garden, I have to agree.

The Garden dates from 1858 when the university was established in Frederiksberg, now a suburb of the city. The centre piece of the Garden is a small lake with a venerable Weeping Willow in the centre. Japanese Maples as specimen trees are common in gardens but hedge of Japanese Maples? A hedge with three specimen Maples included formed an attractive enclosure overlooking the small lake. A curved lawn area close by was filled with exotic bedding plants.

In a similar manner to the Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin, informal paths led you beneath collections of Maples, Birch, Magnolias, Crab Apples, *Robinia* and conifers. There are always surprises in a garden and I had not realised how large the Dove Tree (*Davidia involucrata*), Maidenhair Tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) and Cucumber Tree (*Magnolia acuminata*) would grow in Northern Europe. Another surprise was a large weeping tree, *Elaeagnus angustifolia*, a narrow leaved relative of the common *Elaeagnus pungens* 'Variegata'. I thought 'Willow' as I walked beneath, only to think again and look at the label !

The Rose garden, a long narrow garden has checkerboard-like beds of roses, with lawn in the centre and long borders on either side, was originally laid out in 1929. Today the central beds are planted with 25 variously coloured roses, many Danish, and the side beds with 75 old-fashioned bush roses. One useful idea that could be translated into the design of rose gardens or bedding plant schemes was the inclusion of either squares or triangles of box into the central beds. Rose gardens can look very bare in winter and the box must give a pattern to this garden in winter.

While used primarily for educational purposes the Horticultural Garden is also a public park open throughout the year.

And Some Seed Fell...by a Roundabout by Ann Cronin

The IGPS seed offer of 1999 listed a good selection of *Papaver somniferum* (nos. 304–310) in various colours, some single, some double. I ordered them all, for these plants are the stuff of legend and never to be passed over as ordinary or common..

When Persephone, the young goddess of the growing corn, was taken off to the underworld by Hades, her mother Demeter, goddess of the Earth's fertility, soothed her grief with the narcotic juice of *Papaver somniferum*. Agriculture, all the flowers, fruits and living things of the Earth were the gifts of Demeter.

In sculpture, some three and a half thousand years ago, poppy seed-heads featured on the head-dress of clay figurines in Minoan Crete: symbols of the Earth's gift and fertility.

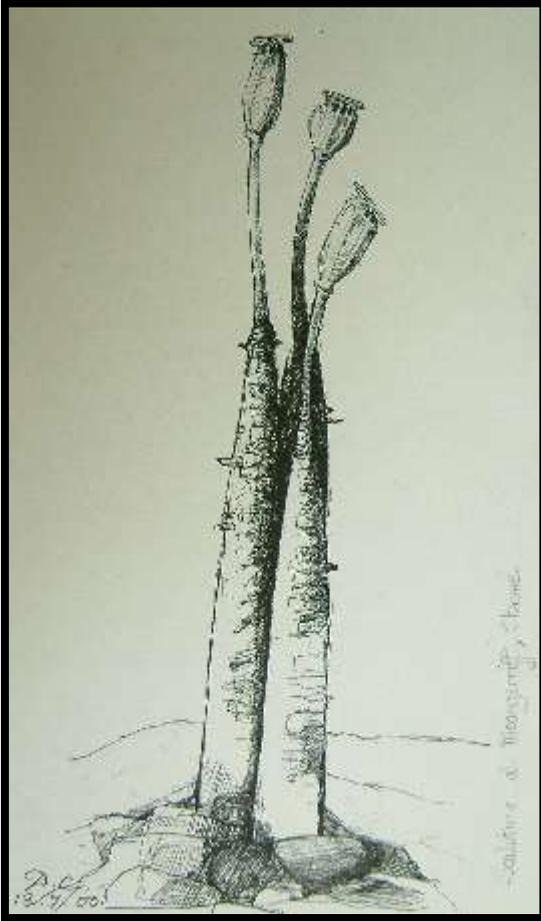
In the course of 1999 my seeds germinated, grew tall, flowered and some of the seed-heads were harvested.

As they lay drying on the sunny window-sill in all their glorious, round fecundity, the light played upon the soft verdigris of their skin and picked out the delicate filigree of their coronets. My son called one day and seemed to show a keen interest in them. He asked if he could take one away and I remember warning him not to shake it or it would scatter all its seeds in pepper-pot fashion and they would be wasted. My heart sang. At last, after twenty years, the apprenticeship of the then small boy between the shafts of the wheelbarrow, as we developed our precipitous site, was completed. I would have a gardener in the family. (Never mind that he was already an established sculptor). He could have a bushel of seed if he wanted.



A year later I enquired about the progress of the poppy-growing enterprise. Yes, they grew alright and produced some very, very unexpected results. Those of you, who have passed along the new Clonmel bypass since 2002, may have seen them “growing” on Moangarriff roundabout near the racecourse. These members of the *Papaveraceae* are carrying gigantic, dramatic seed-heads of stainless steel, some eight metres above the ground, on slender stems of the same material. All are embedded in stout, tapering columns of local stone.

Since Cluain Meala (anglicised Clonmel) means the meadow of honey, the poppies seem to connect directly with the image of meadow. They are also suggestive of a plant



from which the goodness and sweetness have been drawn. There was actually a field in the area known as the “poppy field.” Whether they are *P. somniferum* or *P. rhoeas*, the common field poppy, is irrelevant. In their stylised form they are simply the essence of POPPY.

Maybe there should be a plaque on the sculpture bearing the legend:

“IGPS SEED OFFER 1999”

Addendum:-

A big (8metre), belated (by 5years) “thank you” to Elizabeth Morgan who administered the seed list in 1999. In the Jan. Newsletter she urged us to be “adventurous in your choice and let us know how you get on, through the Newsletter”.

Heritage Bulbs will be publishing its “Bulb Life” newsletter/magazine around this time giving an update on their bulb offers and information on special bulbs – worth having a look out for it or contact Alex Chisholm at Heritage Bulbs, Tullyally Castle, Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath.

The Kerry Air! by Annette Dalton

The Professional Gardeners' Guild AGM and Mini Study Tour found its way to Kenmare, Co. Kerry this year and no-one was more delighted than I, to be hopping on a plane at Heathrow and heading for the Kingdom.

On the evening of our arrival there was an engaging post dinner lecture by Finola Reid on 'Gardens in Ireland'. Finola discussed the geology and climate of Ireland, as well as the impact of social history on the gardens we find there today. She went on to look more closely at Kerry Gardens, which are peculiar in their lushness, interesting specimens, and the growth rates which make some hundred year old specimens look twice that age. Many Kerry gardens, particularly those established in late Victorian times, Finola noted, are known for their teetering on the brink between Robinsonian wildness and dereliction.

We began our tour of Kerry gardens with one which technically is in Cork, but could not be overlooked on this trip, Ilnacullin. As we left the quay at Glengariff it was somewhat overcast, but thankfully the rain stayed away for about an hour, so that we could enjoy a tour of most of the garden before the heavens opened and soaked us all to our skins. It is this high rainfall, coupled with the fairly consistent year-round temperatures, which gives Ilnacullin its lushness and high growth rates. Our first stop at the Italian Tea House revealed a photograph of the island before it was bought by Annan Bryce, a Belfast MP, from the Ministry of Defence in 1910. It was a barren rock, and one could imagine the scale of the job that faced the first gardeners there. The amazing growth rate on the island was visible all round; a *Pseudowintera colorata* at 5m, and I couldn't resist having my photograph taken beside a towering *Salvia concolor*, which was at least 2 feet taller than I was. There are some wonderful Australian & New Zealand specimens including *Agathis australis*, the New Zealand Kauri Pine, tender in most other areas of Ireland & Britain, and *Lagarostrobos franklinii* (formerly *Dacrydium*), the Huon Pine of Tasmania.

Having returned to the mainland we began our journey towards Dereen, which took us through the Cahal Mountains along the Healy Pass. I am ashamed to admit that this was my first time through the Healy Pass, but it most certainly will not be my last. It was spectacular, and was made even more so by the torrents of water rushing off the mountains all around us. Having stopped for a wonderful lunch in Josie's Tearooms, we descended on Dereen, where Head Gardener Jackie Ward gave us a very interesting tour of a garden which was blessed with a similar climate and rainfall to Ilnacullin. Enormous & varied *Rhododendron* species, big thick-trunked *Griselinia littoralis*, ancient tree ferns and a proliferation of mosses and lichens, gave an exotic feel to this hidden Kerry paradise.

On returning to Kenmare, we dried off, ate our dinner and seated ourselves for a lecture by Paul Maher, Curator of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. Paul spoke about zone 9 & 10 plants, and the manner in which they have been pushing the boundaries at Glasnevin in their recent plantings. Their success with these plantings was well

illustrated by slides, and Paul's lecture was accompanied by a comprehensive plant list. I found myself rushing back to Kew to find out if we had *Zanthoxylum ailanthoides* (we do – outside) or *Neolitsea sericea* (Temperate House)!

Friday morning brought us to Muckross House in Killarney, and we began the day, after a few technical difficulties, with a brief, but proud introduction by me to the native flora. From here we went on to explore the gardens and arboretum with Cormac Foley, whose extensive knowledge of, and familiarity with, the collection coupled with his obvious love for the place, made this a memorable visit indeed. Muckross House and Gardens were given as a gift to the Irish Nation in 1932 by the Bourne-Vincents on the condition that it would form the nucleus of a National Park. Today, when one stands in front of the house looking out towards the lake, all the land that the eye can see is part of Killarney National Park, and covers in all a total 26,000 acres.

Cormac Foley kindly stayed with us for the afternoon to share his knowledge of the interesting and unusual plant collection in the gardens of Hotel Dunloe Castle. Originally a Norman Castle, Dunloe was bought in 1920 by the American Howard Harrington, who was a keen plant collector and brought plants from all over the world in the 1920's and 1930's. The site was bought by the company Liebherr in the 1960's, who built the hotel and commissioned Sir Harold Hillier for advice in the gardens. Roy Lancaster remains the advisor today, so interesting specimens are still being added to the collection all the time. The many great specimens we saw included *Athrotaxis laxifolia*, *Cupressus cashmeriana*, *Clethra barbinervis*, an impressive *Magnolia officinalis* var. *biloba* and *Laurelia serrata*.

Despite having had a feast of beauty and plant interest, little did we know that the best was yet to come in the guise of our visit the following day to Garinish, a privately owned island off the Kerry coast near the village of Sneem. When the important business of the day – the AGM – was out of the way, we headed for Sneem to eat lunch and then hopped on the boat out to the island. Our host Seamus Galvin gave us the tour with his usual enthusiasm, pointing out unusual specimens along the way (a certain *Kniphofia northiae* was far better than one seen at Dunloe the previous day!), and taking us through a tree-fern filled valley and into the show-stopper – the kitchen garden. Nestled between two almost parallel rock outcrops and a hedge on one end, the kitchen garden was laden with fruit and veg. We were encouraged to try the fruit, some of which we plucked from the apple and pear trees which were trained at a 45 degree angle across the rock outcrop running along one side. Again there is a lush feel to the garden, but part of our walk also brought us out on to an open path by the sea, a stark and breezy contrast, and another taste of Kerry's scenic beauty. Our day was topped off with teas and coffees, and home-made (by Livinia, Seamus' better half) apple tart and brownies on the lawn.

Kerry is a paradise for the garden-lover, the plantsman, or the nature lover. As I headed for the plane again, I had one eye trained on the Kerry shore, I said to myself the words of a certain dubious Californian politician – "I'll be back".

Looking Ahead

Northern Fixtures

OCTOBER 9 PLANT SALE

Stranmillis University College, Belfast, 12.00-3.00pm, good-quality plants only please; deliveries from 9.00a.m. Plants & volunteers wanted.

OCTOBER 19 THE CLOTWORTHY LECTURE. 'The Evolution of the Great Garden and Plant Collection at Crathes Castle' - Callum Pirnie

Clotworthy Arts Centre, Antrim, 7.30pm. Callum Pirnie, Head Gardener at Crathes. The former home of Sir James & Lady Sybil Burnet, Crathes Castle near Aberdeen has one of the best plant collections in Britain, and eight different themed gardens within the walled garden. Members free, others £1.00. Refreshments free. Plant sales. Joint with Antrim Borough Council.

NOVEMBER 16 LECTURE "Playing the Elements" – Oliver Schurmann

Lagan Valley Island Arts Centre, Lisburn, 7.30pm. Oliver Schurmann, Mount Venus Nursery, Dublin, on 'Playing with the Elements'. Mount Venus Nursery is known for its extensive ranges of grasses and other monocots (as well as unusual perennials); Oliver will talk about how effective these hardy and highly decorative plants can be in the garden, responding to changes in light, wind or rain. Members free, others £1.00. Plant sales.

DECEMBER 1 THE MALONE HOUSE LECTURE The Glasnevin Central China Expedition – Seamus O' Brien

Malone House, Barnett's Park, Belfast; 7.30pm. 'The Glasnevin Central China Expedition in 2002' - Seamus O'Brien's reports on his botanising in China have made fascinating reading in the IGPS Newsletter. This is a chance to hear in greater detail the story of this Irish-Chinese co-operative exercise. Free. Refreshments free. Joint with Belfast Parks.

Leinster Fixtures

OCTOBER 17 ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Time: 12.00 noon. Our Lady of Dolours Church, Glasnevin (opposite National Botanic Gardens). Open to the public.

NOVEMBER 6 FLOWER PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

Time: 2.00 pm. With Grace Pasley, NBG. National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. Members only.

Grace has been taking photographs for 10 years as part of her work and we are very honoured to have her do this workshop for us. As well as this being part of her work it is her hobby and we look forward to a very interesting afternoon.

NOVEMBER 25 THE CLOUD GARDEN by Tom Hart Dyke.

Time: 8.00 pm. Joint with the Orchid Society. At National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin. Tom Hart Dyke is a plant hunter, plantsman and lecturer. His illustrated slide talk usually lasts about an hour (with questions afterwards) revealing how he had all things botanical instilled in him by his grandmother from a very early age. This led to trips to South East Asia (searching for orchids care of the Merlin Trust in Sumatra, Indonesia) & Australia, in order to establish NCCPG collections at his home at Lullingstone Castle. His lecture is rounded off by extracts from his book *The Cloud Garden* which tells the story of his capture in Colombia at the hands of armed rebels while orchid hunting. He will bring some books for sale so come early.

Munster Fixtures

NOVEMBER 5 A SEASIDE GARDEN by Mary Walsh

Mary's garden is literally lapped by the ocean. This gives her a situation with both great gardening challenges and great gardening benefits and Mary deals with and makes the most of her garden growing a wide selection of plants not common in other gardens around the country.

DECEMBER 3 THE CLOUD GARDEN By Tom Hart Dyke

Time: 7.45 pm. See note above – Leinster Fixtures, November 25

Regional Reports

Reports from the North

Greenmount College Walled Garden by Mary Bradshaw

Saturday August 21st found us in Northern Ireland and it was great personal joy to avail of the opportunity to join the northern members on a guided tour of the newly redesigned walled garden at Greenmount College, in Antrim. Greenmount College teaches horticulture, so I was expecting to see something special. The Manager Alan Mc Ilveen, who gave an excellent presentation to the members, with many useful gardening tips thrown in, led this well-attended tour. The present restored walled garden opened on 26th September 2001. Richardsons Fertilizers contributed substantial finance and Greenmount College provided the technical expertise, and the labour, for this restoration project to preserve and enhance the walled garden, which was a kitchen garden since 1801. The essentially new garden has a formal framework, with many interesting features, including a modern conservatory in the curvilinear style, fashioned from white-painted mahogany. It is not very large but is carefully positioned to look bigger than it is. Underfloor heating maintains the temperature there at 5 degrees in winter. Lantana, Bougainvillea, Plumbago, Musa, Cannas were all flourishing.



In the centre of the garden is a sculpture in a small basin, provided by the family of Brian Whyte, a former student who died tragically. There are also intricate knot gardens, a small maze and two rills of unusual design.

A "Hot" border contains *Heuchera* "Plum Puddin", various *Salvias*, *Galliarda* "Dazzler", *Clematis heracleifolia*, *Lobelia* "QueenVictoria", *Helenium* "Red and Gold" and *H. "Pipsqaek"*, and *Helianthus* "Limelight". Also here you will find *Rosa* "Korresia", *R. "Fellowship"*, *R. "Lili Marlene"* and the Dickson *R. "Boy O Boy"*. Another mixed border has mass plantings of *Sedum*, *Miscanthus*, *Kniphofia* "Percy's Pride", *Rodgersia* and Pampas grass.

The working fruit and vegetable section, which is kept for teaching purposes, was very impressive. I was most taken with the "Step Over" apple "Fiesta" which had a huge crop. *Malus* "Worcester Pearmain" was also doing well. These were interspersed with

pumpkins, already huge. *Rosa rugosa* "Roseraie de l'Hay", *R.* "Charles de Mills" and *R.* "Rhapsody in Blue" seemed to like the conditions. On a north-facing border were Hellebores, Hostas, Bergénias, Pulmonarias, Alliums and an Irish Yew horseshoe.



The central area in Greenmount

These are just some of the many features we were treated to on this excellent tour. The weather obliged and we were very aware of the ongoing management required in this garden by students and tutors and the excellent learning facilities provided.

The photographs of Greenmount were taken and kindly provided by Bob Bradshaw.

IGPS Visit to Hilton Park, Clones, 11 Sept 2004 Barbara Pilcher

From the moment we entered the gateway guarded by eagles we knew this was going to be a very special garden visit. Navigating the mile-long winding driveway heightened the sense of anticipation and our first view of the splendid Georgian house was breathtaking. We were guests of Johnny and Lucy Madden and met with our hosts in their welcoming stone-flagged kitchen for a cup of coffee as our group assembled.

Opposite the main entrance with portico for carriages was the croquet lawn backed by clipped and castellated yew with a view of the extensive estate farmland beyond. Around the corner was the principal vista, the box parterre, designed by Ninian Niven, carefully re-created with the help of an EU grant. This had an unusual, possibly unique design, restrained and in keeping with the quiet elegance of the house. A large herbaceous bed was still full of colour with sweet joe-pye *Eupatorium purpureum*, white phlox, *Strobilanthes*, *Helianthus*, *Helenium* and many others attracting late butterflies.

Progressing down the garden we arrived at an extensive herb garden, planted by Lucy on a level terrace with well-placed sculpture setting off an extensive collection. A lovely grouping of stone urn, a wickedly warty toad and a stone pumpkin (the latter anticipating the vegetable garden), made an ideal photo-opportunity. An interesting relic of former horticultural activity was a section of the old fernery, with one of the original maidenhair ferns growing in a chink of the bricks. Here the reduced walls had a capping of specially shaped quarry tiles, the



saucer-like depression indicating their former use as pot stands.

Next we arrived at the recently renovated peach house, with attractive quarry-tiled path and original supports for training wires. (Recyclers among us beamed at the use of pallets as a bench top) Outside, the vegetable garden stretched down the slope, with useful and productive plots of raspberries, brassicas (some wonderful red cabbage and Cavolo Nero, the black Tuscan kale - even a patch of the recherché Chinese artichoke, *Stachys affinis*). The most spectacular crop was the squash, of many varieties including a huge run of the vegetable spaghetti. Quick stop for a recipe here from Lucy - Cut in half, steam briskly and use a fork to release the cooked flesh into its pasta-like strands!

A beautiful plum foliaged rose with darkest red flowers was spied here (anyone know what it could be?) A clump of self-seeded *Nicotiana sylvestris* bloomed away in a small glasshouse. Our hostess was needlessly apologetic about the charming naturalness; we were impressed at the productivity, knowing how much hard work lies behind a garden on this scale. It should be exciting to see how it progresses with such love and dedication there, and hopefully more funding will be forthcoming to restore the beautiful brick walls of this area and reinstate wall fruit etc.

Superb oakwoods were planted in 1752 on the marriage of John Madden to Anne Cope of Loughgall (thought to be the source of the seed). A later John Madden introduced trees from North America, sequoias, thujas and Douglas firs. Among the latter was an unusual weeping form and there was interested discussion as we followed the track. So much to admire! A huge ancient silver fir, more recent plantings of lace-cap hydrangeas, and Camellia and a young deodar caught the eye. We looked back towards the house across the meadow which is full of bulbs in the spring, on our way to the lakes. Here there is a small jetty and summer house constructed of estate-grown larch. This is such a peaceful spot to gaze at the large expanse of water with its fringe of rush and reed, or fish for pike or trout, watch herons drying their wings. The vanguard of the party was lucky enough to see a kingfisher! The canal linking the two lakes has been opened up and paths reinstated so that walking through this area is a pleasure.

We followed the route back to the house, with only a slight spot of rain, all agreeing that this is a wonderful place to be (and you can stay, as the Maddens do B&B!). The property has so many unique features; it deserves to be much better known. We were a small group, and would highly recommend it to all those who missed this occasion. We were made to feel so welcome, with no sense of hurry, although we had taken up a lot of our busy hosts' time. The garden is open to groups by appointment, and would repay a visit at any time of year. Details and some photographs of the gardens are on the website at www.Hiltonpark.ie.

Reports from Leinster

Garden visit to Rosemary and John Brown, Graigueconna on June 12th Mary Rowe

With mid summer's day approaching members of the IGPS and RHSI visited Graigueconna in Bray Co. Wicklow. The air was filled with the scent of shrubs and roses, while every inch held something of interest with colours and shapes cleverly blended.

Near the conservatory, *Gladiolus* 'The Bride' was looking magnificent with *Melianthus major* growing nearby, while in the bed opposite *Ozothamnus rosmarinifolius* 'Silver Jubilee' was almost four meters tall. In the two long deep borders that flank the central grass path blue and yellow dominated on the right, with pink and red on the left. Midway down each border a large Cordyline added height and drama, each playing host to a floriferous rose - the vigorous *Rosa* 'Phyllis Bide' and the creamy white flowers of *R.* 'Wedding Day'. Spires of *Echium* carried skyward the blue of the glaucous leaves of *Kniphofia caulescens* with wonderful red flowers fading to yellow. These colours were echoed by the yellow of *Cestrum parqui* and the red *Cestrum roseum* 'Ilnacullin'.

Other roses that thrive at Graigueconna include *R.* 'Charles de Mills', *R.* 'William Lobb', *R.* 'Belvedere', the old China rose *R.* 'Bengal Crimson' and the David Austin rose *R.* 'Graham Thomas'. This rose is planted in the woodland garden as is *Lonicera periclymenum* 'Graham Thomas' and the tender Angels' trumpets *Brugmansia arborea*.

The 1.5 acre rockery laid out by the Alpine enthusiast Lewis Meridith in 1908 is now planted with ferns including *Blechnum tabulare* and *Adiantum pedatum*, aroids and hellebores. The variegated hellebore *H. orientalis* 'Graigueconna' was found by Rosemary in a batch of *H. orientalis* seedlings and named by Charles Nelson.

There are many mature specimens in the garden, some planted at the beginning of the twentieth century: *Drimys winteri*, *Crinodendron hookerianum*, *Abelia triflora*, and *Magnolia sieboldii*. There is also a wonderful dawn redwood, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, planted about thirty years ago. The planting of trees continues and six younger trees, commemorating the birth of John and Rosemary's grandchildren, add to the garden's fine collection.

In a year when we were reminded yet again of the ephemeral nature of gardens, it was a pleasure to visit this mature garden that has been tended by the same family since 1834 when Rosemary's great grandfather Phineas Riall arrived at Graigueconna.

Many thanks to Rosemary for inviting us to her wonderful garden and for her time and patience in answering all questions asked during the afternoon.

Suburban Success: Carmel Duignan's Garden by Mary Bradshaw

On Sunday 24th July the I.G.P.S. visited the Shankill garden of a loyal and longstanding member - Carmel Duignan. Her November 2003 lecture to the Leinster Group had prepared us for this treat and it was good to see such a large attendance.

Carmel has been gardening on this quarter acre for 18 years and has brought it to the peak of perfection. The soil is heavily alkaline, very wet in winter, very dry in summer. Carmel confesses to being obsessed with plants and constantly wanting to experiment. Self-taught, she has learned that books can be wrong and that persistence pays. One of her original experiments was with *Polygala myrtifolia* which she had been growing as a houseplant. She decided to try it outside and its many purple-veined flowers on a large bush are a testament to her success. Nearby are the beautiful deep blue flowers of *Salvia corrugata*, supposedly tender but surviving the winters on her quite elevated site.

She is also keen on species fuchsia and has *Fuchsia fulgens* in flower all year. *F. boliviana* was also in flower when we visited. Near these on a newly developed spot was *Tetrapanax papyrifer* "Rex", the rice-paper plant with its huge leaves and a most unusual *Prostanthera walteri* - evergreen with what Carmel describes as "mother of pearl" coloured flowers. Along the borders one could not miss *Digitalis ferruginea*, *Molinia caerulea* "Transparent", a really tactile plant and one of Carmel's favourites, *Scabiosa atropurpurea* "Ace of Spades". She describes this as great value, sown from seed in January and in flower by July. Also prominent on the border is *Kniphofia northiae* with its huge leaves to 1.5m. long and its pale yellow flowers.

Do not imagine for a moment that Carmel has neglected Irish cultivars! *Agapanthus* "Slieve Donard", *Rosa* "Souvenir de Saint Anne's", *Romneya coulteri*, *Deutzia* "Alpine Magician", *Iris* "Kilbroney Marble", *Hebe* "Headforthii", and *Grisellinia* "Bantry Bay" all feature.

Carmel wants a garden with year round interest as we all do, but she has really cracked it, in my opinion. Daphnes and Hellebores in winter, evergreen shrubs - *Azara microphylla*, *Pseudopanax*, *Euchryphia*, *Hoheria*, *Cordylines*, *Correa* species, *Arundo donax* "Variegata" all keep the seasons flowing. *Acacia baileyana* "Purpurea" is a constant presence and Carmel also has high praise for *Aristolochia baetica* which she says is in flower or fruit all year.

Needless to say her lawn is a perfect foil for her borders. She feeds it twice per year, in April and October. She claims that it is scarified "to within an inch of its life" in Autumn and that is the secret. With *Verbena bonariensis*, Acers, Blue Scabious, Dieramas in variation, all in abundance, her garden gives the impression of fertility and energy in summer, just what members need to spur us on to emulate her success.

Visit to Abbey Leix House by Diane Tomlinson.

Abbey Leix House was built in the late 18th Century for Thomas Vesey, later Viscount de Vesci, to the designs of James Wyatt. It remained in the de Vesci family until its sale in 1995 when it was purchased by Sir David Davis. On a sunny afternoon in July, a group of I.G.P.S. members were taken on a guided tour of the estate by John Anderson, (the estate comprises fifteen hundred acres that includes a stud farm and land for grazing). The house is approached by a mile long drive through mature woodland, carpeted in springtime with bluebells. Major restoration of the gardens has already taken place but of course is an ongoing operation.

To the east side of the house a small gravelled area has replaced grass, but the four 100 year old 'mushrooms' of Wisteria remain, and are underplanted with spring bulbs. Steps leads into the Lady's Garden, where the lawn is surrounded by two semi circular herbaceous borders backed by yew hedges. These have been cut back and John told us that the old debris was cleared out by power hosing! He also said one should cut back into old wood for better regeneration and recommended a once off feed of manure. The original design of the terraced gardens on the south side was based on those of Count Woronzow's villa on the shores of the Black Sea. His granddaughter married into the de Vesci family. These gardens have been simplified; and from the top terrace one gets a wonderful view over the parterre, across the meadow, to distant oak woods. This is the largest area of primeval oak wood left in Ireland.

The top terrace is gravelled, with planting in soft colours against the house wall; a hornbeam arch surrounds a seat at one end. Attractive ironwork intersected by twelve stone pillars and box divides it from the parterre below.

The original yew trees remain but are now flat topped and reduced in height as are the surrounding yew hedges. The lower terrace - a lawn which has been lifted, levelled and reseeded - is surrounded by a yew hedge which has also been reduced in height. All hedges are cut once a year in August.



Photo. Bob Bradshaw

The Pleasure Grounds, to the west of the house, contain magnificent specimen trees including *Liriodendron tulipifera*, *Larix decidua*, various oaks including *Quercus x hispanica* and *Quercus x turneri*, a *Sequoia sempervirens*, planted in 1890, and a beautiful copper beech. Passing the top of the Lime Walk planted in 1830 our next stop was a small grassy enclosure known as the King's garden. The walls are covered with clematis and roses and in one corner there is an effigy from the tomb of Malachy O'More, the last King of Laois. Another enclosure encompasses a small wild flower meadow, poppy seed having been sown by a borrowed 'fiddle sower'!

A new pinetium has been started outside the walled garden, two *Catalpa bignonioides* 'Aurea' are looking good as is a *Tilia henryana* which is a rare small lime tree with coppery leaf tones. In the walled garden, an attractive layout for 'cut flowers' has been completed.

Peaches and grapes adorn the large greenhouse which is a project for future restoration. In the nursery area another rare tree *Franklinia alatamaha* still in its pot awaits a permanent home.



John Anderson talking to the group. Photo: Bob Bradshaw

We then returned to the Lime Walk, passing a planting of *Ligularia* and *Hemerocallis* and continued down to the River Nore. At one point large rocks have been placed to divert the water and create 'eddys' and hiding places for fish. Further on, we reached the man-made lake with new bridges and plantings of *Gunnera*, skunk cabbage and grasses. A major problem in this area has been Japanese Knotweed but spraying has nearly won the battle. After winding our way back through a path in the garden meadow, a welcome cup of tea and scones awaited us in the conservatory.

Our thanks must go to Sir David for making our visit possible and to John for being such an excellent guide.

Reports from Munster

IGPS AGM 2004 Report – Part 2 Mrs. Anne Roper's Garden, Iniscarra by Sally O Halloran

As a child growing up in Cork City, one of my strongest memories is not of hanging around Patrick Street, but is instead of the ancient graveyard in Iniscarra, County Cork. It's not as sinister as it sounds! My late father was a keen fisherman and during the fishing season my mother used the opportunity to lose my sisters and I for a few hours every week by sending us happily off with him.

The journey to Iniscarra in our young minds seemed endless so we knew every turn in the road by the time we were teenagers. As I got older and became more interested in nature and the landscape, I saw even more things that I would have missed as a child. There was one house in particular that always fascinated me, as from the road it was protected in the front by huge stately trees. My father, a native of Clare, did not know the history of the house but knew it was very old! Years passed, I left home for college, and it was all forgotten about...

What a surprise it was for me therefore when the IGPS bus pulled up outside this house for the AGM in May 2004. Not only that but when we were greeted at the gate by the owner Mrs. Anne Roper, I realised I had previously met her and her late husband Reg at an IGPS table quiz. That is another story!

Anne welcomed us all and talked us through the history of the house before walking us around the garden. My father was right; the house is old, dating back to 1812. It changed ownership over the years until the Roper family purchased it in 1947. The garden reflects this history with wonderful specimens of old trees, as you approach the house, and newer plantings of perennials around the back.

Some of my favourite trees in the garden were *Pinus patula*, the Mexican Pine, a three needled pine, with wonderful light green leaves with a weeping habit. *Pinus leucodermis*, the Bosnian Pine, with its' striking glaucous blue - grey shoots which then turn pale brown. My favourite were a grove of what looked like Scots Pine at the back of the house, but unfortunately, none of the group could verify their identity.

The deciduous trees were as impressive. For its leaves, *Magnolia macrophylla*, the great-leaved magnolia was not to be missed with leaves up to 3ft long. For colour, a 'Tricolor' beech, *Fagus* 'Purpurea Tricolor', with purple leaves edged and striped pink and pinkish white. Finally for age, a 200-year-old specimen of lime, to name but a few. We were all excited to see the Irish cultivar, *Eucryphia x intermedia* 'Rostrevor', and rushed home to look it up in 'A Heritage of Beauty'. It is described as 'an evergreen tree, leaves dark green above, grey below, margins not toothed, simple or with three leaflets; flowers cup-shaped, pure white, c. 4cm diameter'. It is noted to have originated from a hybrid that arose in Sir John Ross-of-Bladensburg's garden in Rostrevor, Co. Down, before 1936. However, no date for raising it is recorded, nor is it clear if the plant was recognised before Sir John died in 1926. Nearer to home, another Irish cultivar, *Griselinia* 'Bantry Bay', with its' distinct cream patches in the centre of the leaves. It originated in Ilnacullin, Glengariff, Co. Cork in 1950.

Closer to the ground, and at the back of the house, but not too be missed was one of the largest displays of bluebells in flower that I think we had all seen in a long time. To say “picture perfect” is an understatement, and many a photo was taken! This informal display brought us all happily down to the riverside where Anne told us a 13lb salmon had been caught recently. Along the water edge were wonderful bog beds, with two of my favourite marginal plants, *Lysichiton americanus*, the aptly named Yellow skunk cabbage, with its bright yellow scented spathes, and *Zantedeschia aethiopica*, the arum lily. The dam in Iniscarra controls the water in the river, so at times these plants could be fully immersed in water.

A garden to suit all tastes, from formal lawns with mature trees, to carpets of bluebells in open woodland, to riverside views with bog plantings, and a walled garden under development. As if this was not enough, Anne then invited us all into her home for a delicious array of canapés to refresh us all. The end to a perfect visit and a childhood dream come true.

Snippets

A new exhibition of botanical paintings by IGPS member Patricia Jorgensen will take place from October 8th to October 30th at 24 Kingram Place, off Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2. The exhibition will be open from 11am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday, and Saturday's 11am to 2pm.

This exhibition continues Patricia Jorgensen's exploration of the structure, texture and colours of plants in terms of painterly expression and decorative possibilities.

Subject matter has come from places ranging in size from the great parkland and walled gardens of Birr Castle and Ballinlough to small urban and suburban gardens. The unifying factor is the quality of their plants.

Patricia Jorgensen will talk about her work, and the plants featured in it, on Saturday, October 23rd, 11.30am – 12.30pm

PLANT SALES

OCTOBER 9th

STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, BELFAST

12 Noon – 3p.m

OCTOBER 17th

OUR LADY OF DOLOURS CHURCH, GLASNEVIN, DUBLIN

12 Noon

Worth a Read by Paddy Tobin

The Pursuit of Plants, Experiences of Nineteenth and Early Twentieth

Century Plant Collectors: As a taxonomist, Philip Short says he always felt the need to “know a great deal about when, where and by whom plants were first collected.” Initially he was interested in those who collected in Australia, but he had the good fortune to spend 1991 – 1992 working in the herbarium at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where he had the opportunity of “sifting through original letters for material of interest”. In this way he was able to source first hand accounts from the journals and letters of the plant hunters themselves. It is these original accounts, selected and edited, which the author presents in the book, simply adding brief notes on the collectors and on the plants themselves. Some of the collectors are well known; others, though less well known, provide most interesting insights into the lives and world of the plant collectors. F.W. Hostmann allowed vampire bats to feast on his toes; Thomas Drummond was attacked by a bear; George Forrest narrowly escaped attacking lamas while Berthold Seemann, for which I am so grateful, advises on which plants best prevent indigestion following a feast of human flesh. “For the most part the activity of collecting plants was a difficult, uncomfortable and dangerous one”, but, for us, the activity of reading about it is a pleasant, informative and fascinating one. (*Timber Press, Oregon, 2004, 350pp, £22.50*)

The Daily Telegraph Best of Flowers to Grow and Cut: David Joyce groups his selections of plants by their ornamental characteristics: simple or elaborate shapes, attractive details, texture, colour, markings, scent and natural arrangements. While the text is well written, informative and succinct, the photographs are outstanding – 250 of the highest quality. I see this book as an excellent resource for those whose interest in gardening is beginning to broaden and expand. It presents good tried-and-tested garden plants, certain to succeed, and enough of them to lead the gardener to a wide palette of plants in an interesting manner. (*Frances Lincoln, London, 2004, 170 pp, £25*)

The Minimalist Garden: Christopher Bradley-Hole states that when a garden design is reduced to its minimum, what is left must be of the highest quality and standard of work. It is a reduction of clutter towards simple perfection. He draws on the work of various designers for illustration – and the illustrations are truly excellent. The gardens are thematically grouped: the extended home, courtyards, roofs and terraces, pools and water, country and landscape gardens. The reader will come on much that will inspire and be applicable while perusing the superb photographs and the informative text. Christopher Bradley-Hole has designed many extraordinarily beautiful gardens, including a Gold Medal and Best in Show garden at this year’s Chelsea Flower Show. He has applied the same care and attention to this book. (*Mitchell Beazley, London, 1999, Reprints: 2000 -twice, 2001 – twice, 2003, 200pp, £25*)

Designing Gardens: Arabelle Lennox-Boyd has designed five gardens for the Chelsea Flower Show and has won 5 Gold Medals; in 1998 she won the Best in Show award. Her gardens are simply wonderful, with many reflecting her Italian background. The photographs in the book, about 300 of them, are a feast for the eye and on their own make this an enjoyable book. The text is divided into two main sections; the first presents Arabelle Lennox-Boyd's general approach to garden design: relating the garden to the house, its surroundings and to the owner, laying out the bones of the garden, garden rooms and vistas and also her comments on the practicalities of paving, pergolas and the use of water in the garden. Boring!

The second part looks at over twenty beautiful and varied gardens designed by Arabelle Lennox-Boyd. The reader will find much to admire and innumerable ideas which one would love to have in one's own garden. Many of the pictures in the book are, indeed, worth a thousand words. Unfortunately, the writing style is plodding; left me completely cold; added little to the photographs, and, generally, made reading the book a chore. (*Frances Lincoln, London, 2002, 210pp, £35*)

The American Woodland Garden, Capturing the Spirit of the Deciduous Forest: It is obvious that Rick Darke is enthusiastic about preserving and sensitively developing the remnants of the great deciduous forest that once covered much of the eastern United States by showing the reader how best to "edit" what s/he has been fortunate to inherit. He aims to enthuse gardeners to "edit" those remnants of the forest which still exist so that they will preserve the spirit of the woodland while providing aesthetically pleasing garden spaces.

The book begins with "an exploration of the forest aesthetic, relying on images of native woodland landscapes to depict and define the forest's unique dynamics and architecture in ways that may be directly inspirational to woodland gardeners." The author continues with a study of a woodland stream he passes on his journey to work each day. He has photographed the view from a bridge en route over a nineteen-year period. This is a wonderful photographic study, showing both the seasonal and long-term changes which occur in an area of natural woodland. He continues to outline an approach to woodland garden design which he describes as a process of editing the existing woodland. He continues with a chapter on planting and maintenance and finishes with a substantial section (150 pages) on plants suited to woodland cultivation. This is, perhaps, the most informative section of the book as it illustrates and describes a selection of North American plants which are very garden-worthy but seldom seen here.

The photographs in the book are excellent (perhaps the reason for the book?) but, in sections, the text does little more than fill the gaps between pictures. A picture book with a good list of American woodland plants. (*Timber Press, Oregon, 2002, 370pp, \$49.99*)

Magical Paths, Labyrinths & Mazes in the 21st Century has inspired me – I am planning a labyrinth in the grounds of the school where I work. Of course, that could indicate that I wouldn't want a maze or labyrinth in my own garden. No, not really, but I imagine it is something children would enjoy greatly. Actually, I am now able to draw or mark out the classic labyrinth design and my classroom of children had mastered it in five minutes and loved it.

Early on the author, Jeff Saward, explains the difference between a labyrinth and a maze – one single path as opposed there being a choice of routes. The labyrinth is a journey in search of inner peace; while the maze is built to challenge, confuse and deceive the walker.

These paths have been created for thousands of years and, recently, there has been a revival of interest in them. *Magical Paths* looks at the mythology, history and evolution of mazes and labyrinths as well as how today's garden designers are using these ancient designs ideas in both public and private gardens. Developments in these path-designs have seen not only the rebuilding of the traditional hedge maze but also the use of other non-traditional materials. The Japanese used wooden garden fence panels to make almost instant mazes, quick construction leading to quick profit, as these were a huge visitor attraction in Japan. Other forms of the maze now seen are those constructed in maize fields, mirror mazes and water mazes to simple turf mazes.

Disappointingly, I didn't find the magical formula for the successful navigation of any and every maze – a useful skill for escaping children, while leaving them suitably and safely occupied, on those horrible school outings! (*Mitchell Beazley, London, 2002, 175 pp, £25*)

Agapanthus for Gardeners: A slim volume on a popular garden plant. Hanneke van Dijk is an agapanthus enthusiast and presents for us, in this book, 80 cultivars that have proved to be good garden plants both for the open garden and for containers. The book is based on the manuscript of Wim Snoeijer's "Agapanthus: A Revision of the Genus" which deals with a far wider range of cultivars. Advice is given on the purchase and care of the plants and there are tips on what to do and what not to do. There is a brief history of the genus, botanical information, cultural advice as well as descriptions and photographs of the eighty cultivars the author has chosen. One interesting entry at the end of the accounts of the cultivars is one titled "Rubbish". Apparently in the mid nineteenth century those who sold bulbs, tubers, corms and dry plants would gather up the unsold plants at the end of the season and make them up into small parcels, labelled "Rubbish". The author now applies the term to those plants sold under a cultivar name when they should not be, for example a plant propagated by seed from a cultivar and then given the cultivar's name. Not proper, he correctly insists. Obviously he has been duped on a few occasions. (*Timber Press, Cambridge, 2004, 96pp, £17.99*)

RAFFLE

In recent years the financial reserves of the Society have been somewhat depleted and to correct this situation the committee has decided to run a raffle. Ticket sales are confined to members and the number of tickets sold will be limited to one thousand. Each ticket is priced at €10.00 or GB£7.00.

The draw will take place at the A.G.M. in Dublin next June or when the 1000 tickets are sold, whichever comes first. Please return tickets and cheques as soon as possible to Mary Bradshaw, Avondale, Bird Avenue, Clonskeagh, Dublin 14.

The first prize is a stunning original watercolour by Deborah Lambkin of *Cyclamen pseudibericum* and *Hepatica nobilis*, (23"x23"incl frame)

Deborah Lambkin is one of Ireland's most distinguished artists, specialising in botanical art. She exhibits regularly with the Irish Watercolour Society and has won numerous medals in Ireland and Britain. She is currently working on illustrating plants for Curtis' Botanical Magazine.

The second prize is a beautiful signed print and accompanying text of *Epipactis palustris*, the Marsh helleborine, by Susan Sex (19" by 13")

This is from the recently published and highly acclaimed book "*Ireland's Wild Orchids*" by Susan Sex and Brendan Sayers. This has been generously donated by Brendan Sayers.

Susan Sex has established a highly regarded reputation as a botanical artist, working on both Brendan's earlier book, "*Orchids of Glasnevin*" as well as "*Ireland's Wild Orchids*". An Post will shortly issue a new series of stamps featuring her drawings of the native Irish flora.

Brendan Sayers is well known to many of our members as a long standing member of the Irish Garden Plant Society and holds a senior position at the National Botanic Gardens. He is an authority on orchids and has travelled extensively to study the family in the wild.

Irish Garden Plant Society
Committee Members

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Vice Chair: Mary Bradshaw

Secretary: Patrick Quigley

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Munster Representative: Kitty Hennessy.

Northern Representative: Patrick Quigley

Editor “Moorea“: Mary Forrest

Editor Newsletter: Paddy Tobin

Correspondence should be sent to “Irish Garden Plant Society, c/o National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9.”

Please note that staff at the Botanic Gardens cannot deal with telephone queries regarding the IGPS

New Members

A very special welcome to the following new members of the society; our best wishes to them; we hope they enjoy their membership of the society and become actively involved in its work.

Sharon O’ Malley

Beth McNeice

Heather Clarke

Jennifer Patton

Margaret O’Hare

Mary McVeigh