

Greetings all,

Things are definitely moving in the gardening world at the moment – already I have an update to the bulletin sent out just a couple of weeks ago.

For our own IGPS events, there are a couple of additions in the Leinster Region which were unfortunately omitted from the last bulletin.

For Munster, there is also confirmation of an additional garden visit in May – to the gardens of long standing members Martin & Deborah Begley and also to Kevin Begley's garden which is nearby.

We also have news of some other events which will appeal to our members with Plant Sales in Dublin (organised by our friends in the RHSI) and Cork (at Fota Gardens). Don't forget, if you have details of any event which may be of interest to our members, please feel free to send details and where possible, I will try to include it in future bulletins.

For those of you planning to attend our AGM weekend, bookings are coming in steadily. The online booking service is proving popular with several people availing of this service already. With quite a lot of information listed for the weekend, I will move it to the foot of this bulletin so that is available for those who haven't read it, but yet does not take up screen space for those who have.

For further information on the society have a look at the website, or follow us on Facebook where there is a constant flow of information and photo's of Irish gardens and beyond. If you like Italian gardens, Paddy Tobin, our Chairman has just posted some albums of photo's following his recent trip there – truly stunning photography which will make you pine for a trip to sunny climes. <https://www.facebook.com/IrishGardenPlantSociety>

Best wishes,

Patrick

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

LEINSTER

APRIL

Thursday 10th April 2014 at 8.00pm, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin

Lecture – a Joint event with The Alpine Garden Society

'Creative Gardening with Containers' by Hester Forde.

The principles behind planting up containers to give a pleasing effect and their placement in garden to best effect. The use of more unusual plants to give a bold effect such as cannas, grasses, annuals, etc.

Saturday 26th April at 2.30 pm.

Visit to Helen Dillon's Garden, 45 Sandford Terrace, Ranelagh, Dublin

There can be few Irish gardeners who are not aware of the Dillon Garden and we are delighted to be able to pay another visit this month. It is one of those gardens that never fails to satisfy no matter how many times you visit. In case you have fallen from another

planet and have somehow missed out on the Dillon Experience, this little summary from House & Garden magazine will give a flavour of what to expect:

'Helen Dillon is the undisputed queen of Irish gardening. Her acre of town garden in the elegant Ranelagh district of Dublin has become the most photographed garden in Ireland - seen both in magazines and in the many books she has written - and she is known for her relaxed, sometimes unorthodox style of gardening and her spirited views. Helen is the kind of person who absolutely hates being categorised - she won't be pinned down to a particular style or approach, and confesses that her tastes are constantly changing. In her view, gardening should be an entirely intuitive process. 'Creative things happen when you're not thinking about something; you're just playing,' she says. 'The best gardening happens when you've done all the things you intended to do, and you're just walking about letting your mind run free' HOUSE & GARDEN, by Clare Foster, June 201

PLEASE NOTE - The Dillon Garden is at 45 SANDFORD Terrace, just off Sandford Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6, and NOT in SANDYFORD, which is an area much further to the South of Dublin. Directions and map can be found on the website:

<http://www.dillongarden.com/>

Admission: €6.00 **Booking essential** Please telephone: 00353 (1) 8480625

MAY

Saturday 17th – Sunday 18th May

AGM weekend. Booking form was enclosed with your January Newsletter, or alternatively book online via our website: <http://irishgardenplantsociety.com/events/>

AGM only, No Charge (Members only)

AGM and Garden Visits, Saturday and Sunday: €30

AGM, all garden visits and dinner on Saturday: €65

Following our Annual General Meeting at 11:00am in the Marine Hotel, Sutton, Dublin, the Leinster group have organised a great weekend of garden visits for us. Full detail at foot of email

MUNSTER

MAY

Spring Garden Visit confirmed

10th May to Deborah Begley's Garden, Terra Nova, Kilmallock, Limerick and also to Kevin Begley's Garden in the same area.

A wonderful day out has been arranged in May by the IGPS Munster branch. A visit to two very different, but equally inspirational Limerick gardens, with a stop off for lunch in between.

11:00am: Deborah and Martin Begley's Terra Nova Garden.

"Terra Nova is a beautifully designed and richly planted half-acre garden in the Golden Vale of Co. Limerick. It has been featured many times in books, magazines, newspapers and radio and has won many awards including the prestigious title of "Best Garden in Ireland" Considered a gardener's paradise, Terra Nova is full of imaginative features, unusual plants and little surprises around every corner. "

Location: Terra Nova, Dromin, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick.

From Cork, Travel through Charleville on the (N20) Limerick bound. After 9km turn right at crossroads following signposts for Martin Begley Glass and Terra Nova Gardens. Continue to follow signposts for the next 6 km.

Entry: €5

1:00pm Adjourn for lunch. The Old Bakehouse Restaurant in Bruff village has been recommended.

2:30pm Kevin Begley's Coolwater Garden.

"Less than 6 years ago Kevin began transforming his half-acre of lawn beyond recognition. All grass was banished and replaced with a large breathtaking pond sympathetically planted to marry it into the surrounding landscape, a giant scree bed paved and dotted with archways, and troughs and planters containing dozens of miniature gardens. Constantly evolving, this energetic garden is testament to one man's unique vision and amazing amount of hard work!"

Location: Co. Limerick: 9 miles directly south of Limerick City, north west of Skule Hill.

Entry: €3

NORTHERN

APRIL

Wednesday 23rd at 6.30pm

GARDEN VISIT – Ringdufferin House, Co. Down.

A visit to Tracy Hamilton's historic walled garden at Ringdufferin House on the banks of Strangford Lough to see the impressive Rhododendron collection.

An additional feature of the garden is the Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) which is the tree with the greatest girth of any tree in Ireland at 12.65 metres, and was planted in the late 19th century (it is described in Aubrey Fennell's '*Heritage Trees of Ireland*'). This, together with a fine collection of other specimen trees, makes this a visit not to be missed.

LOCATION. Take the A22 South towards Killyleagh from the roundabout on the Comber Bypass. Proceed through Lisbane and Balloo and at 8.9 miles turn left into Ringdufferin Road. Keep straight on for 0.8 miles and the gates to the estate are on your right (facing a large brightly painted building – a Nursing Home I believe)

ADMISSION: IGPS Members Free; Non-members £5.00

MAY

Saturday 10th from 11:00 am – 4:00pm

NORTHERN REGION SPRING PLANT SALE AND SPECIAL EVENT at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra, Co. Down.

Celebrate the spring season at the *Glorious Gardens* afternoon at the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum hosted by the Museum's Garden Volunteers and the Irish Garden Plant Society.

Throughout the afternoon there will be a range of free activities including:

- Irish Garden Plant Society's Plant Sale
- Demonstrations including traditional baking, willow weaving and forge work
- The Northern Ireland Bee Society information and beeswax candle making
- Make your own lavender bag, paper pots and floral posies
- **Old Rectory Garden Walk & Talk with the Irish Garden Plant Society** – at scheduled times
- Garden & Nature Photography workshop – places limited, advance booking is required

- Drop-in Garden Sketching – all materials supplied, at scheduled times throughout the afternoon

- **Irish Garden Plant Society Raffle**

Normal entrance fees apply. If you would like further information or would like to reserve a place on the Garden & Nature Photography workshop, please contact the Live and Learn team at the Museum on 0044 (0)28 9039 5081.

<http://www.nmni.com/uftm/What-s-on/Events/Glorious-Gardens>

OTHER EVENTS

Saturday 12th April 2014 - 1.30 to 4pm

RHSI SPRING PLANT SALE

St Brigid's Parish Centre, St Brigid's Road, Stillorgan, Co Dublin

Plants for sale will include shrubs, alpines, herbaceous, house and conservatory plants and some special items.

Homemade Teas. Raffle

Parking in school car park on Merville Road

Admission: RHSI Members Free. Non-Members: €3

Enquiries: Tel 01 235 3912 or info@rhsi.ie – www.rhsi.ie

Sunday 13th April 2014

'Fota House Annual Plant and Garden Fair' at Fota House and Gardens, Cork

This is now recognised as the biggest Plant and Garden Fair outside the Dublin area and will again be held in the new Car Park of Fota House.

It is expected that seventy or eighty specialist nurseries will attend and provide an opportunity for visitors to purchase unusual and special plants, including rare Trees, Shrubs, Alpine, Herbaceous and Water Plants etc. at reasonable prices. Retailers providing Garden Furniture, Pots, Sculptures, Ornaments and Tools will also attend, thus enabling the people to buy everything they need for their Gardens. A competition for most attractive stand will also be held which has been won in previous years by Hillside Nurseries, Deelish Garden Centre and Rare Plants Ireland

The Fair will run from 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and catering facilities will be available in Fota House and on site throughout the day.

There will also be an opportunity for those attending to walk around the beautiful Gardens and Arboretum at Fota and to visit the newly renovated Fota House and see the collection of pictures which represents the third most significant public collection of Irish art in the State.

For all those with an interest in Gardening, this is an event not to be missed. Volunteers from Fota House and from the Friends of Marymount Hospice will assist with the running of the Fair and a substantial donation will be given to this very worthy charity.

Admission: €8.00

For further information contact Anne Cahill
021 490 8842 email: anne@irishheritagetrust.ie

AGM WEEKEND GARDEN VISITS

The owners of two of the gardens are very private people and we are delighted to get a rare opportunity to visit their gardens in Howth. One has been described by a committee member as being perhaps 'one of the most beautiful gardens in the world'. It is a garden designers dream, incorporating house and garden in a unified whole. Nestling in a bowl on the summit of Howth Head, this relatively young garden is divided into rooms including an area of exotics, a vegetable garden, themed borders in warm and cool colours, a water feature leading to a copse of birch under-planted with a collection of spring bulbs, and a rocky outcrop with a selection of choice alpine specimens.

The other, on the southern side of the Howth peninsula, boasts extensive views of Dublin Bay. It is a gardener's paradise with lots of mature trees, beautifully designed borders with a combination of hardy and tender perennials. Walkways wind their way through both formal and informal planting patterns. Due to its location, there are some steep steps in parts of this garden.

The gardens at Malahide Castle are well known to many of us, but it's always good to get a guided tour of such a special place. Our guide on this occasion is Kevin Halpenny, Senior Parks Superintendent of Fingal County Council. The gardens were largely created by Lord Milo Talbot from 1948 to 1973. Renowned for their plant collection of almost 5000 taxa with a particular emphasis on Southern Hemisphere plants, the gardens cover an area known as the West Lawn – 6.6ha (18 acres) of shrubbery and a walled garden of 1.6 ha (4 acres). The West Lawn collection includes *Nothofagus*, *Pittosporum*, *Berberis*, *Hoheria*, *Syringa*, *Escallonia*, *Deutzia* and the NCCPG collection of *Olearia* which now includes 55 species and varieties. The walled garden includes many tender and rare species. Here, seven glasshouses ranging from a small Victorian display house to an elegant Victorian conservatory added in the 1990s. Plants of note in the walled garden include *Eucryphia milliganii*, *Acradenia frankliniae*, species of *Bomarea* surviving outdoors and a range of *Passiflora* species of which *P. antioquiensis* is most stunning.

Apart from visits to gardens, Dr Mary Forrest of UCD School of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, and author of '*Trees and Shrubs Cultivated in Ireland*' will lead us on the Rhododendron Walk immortalised in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. The walk takes us around the western side of Howth Summit, adjacent to the golf course with views to the city and airport, and northwards to the Mournes. Starting at the Deer Park Hotel, we will view the 20th century planting by the Gainsford St Lawrence family who still own this area. Sturdy footwear is recommended for this walk due to uneven terrain. Heavy rain may also curtail this walk.

As an alternative to the Rhododendron walk, for those who may have difficulties with the uneven terrain, we have the opportunity to visit the allotment gardens of Lorna and David Hopkins. These proved very popular when we last visited a couple of years ago and for those living some distance from the area who may not have been able to attend the last time, we are pleased to get the chance of a follow up visit. Located on the eastern side of Howth Head, these are allotments with a difference. First there is the view; from close to the cliff face overlooking Ireland's Eye and Lambay island there are views over the harbour. One of the allotments is owned by *Aqua*, a restaurant on the pier, proving that their vegetables and herbs are super fresh. Then there are the animals ... pigs, hens and now an apiary. The allotments have plenty of interest and hopefully some of the other owners will also be on hand to have a chat during our visit.