

Irish Garden Plant Society



Newsletter
Spring 2018



Iris unguicularis 'Kilbroney Marble'

***Iris unguicularis* 'Kilbroney Marble'**

This beautiful winter-flowering iris with striped and mottled blooms is thought to have been found locally and introduced by the former Slieve Donard Nursery in Newcastle – see *A Heritage of Beauty* by E C Nelson. The Northern Committee had hoped to have some plants available for the AGM weekend but found that it has become as rare as hen's teeth with less than a handful of members growing it according to the records being kept by Stephen Butler.

If you grow it but have not yet notified Stephen, could you let him know by emailing him at igps.heritageplants@gmail.com. And please, please try and propagate a piece to spread around; the RHS recommends division between midsummer and early autumn.

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Editorial

Mary Montaut, Leinster Region, IGPS

Recently I was fortunate to attend a most interesting conference on Pollinators, called 'Making Room for Biodiversity', supporting the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-20* from Biodiversity Ireland. One of the main topics of the day was managing areas of public and urban grass (including roadside verges) and creating wildflower meadows. If you have not yet seen the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, I very strongly recommend you to view it on www.biodiversityireland.ie/pollinators. There is a most useful guide for gardeners which you can download freely, as well as other guides for different land-use areas (councils, schools, farms). However, the reason I mention this Pollinator conference is that it made me reflect on how very changeable, not to say fashionable, the art of gardening really is. There was a marvellous presentation from Rory Finnegan about his work at Castletown House (Celbridge) who told us of the discovery of an ancient burial ground under one of the lawns. To the gardeners, this was a challenge: clearly it would have to be excavated, preserved, examined by archaeologists, and so on, and their plans postponed. But Rory was delighted with the discovery, proving human habitation on that land for two thousand years. He underlined his role of stewardship, and respect for the estate's history. This was complementary with the 'rewilding' or reduced management of various stretches of grass along the verges of roads, inspiringly described by Rachel Bain of the 'Don't Mow Let It Grow' movement in Northern Ireland. (www.don'tmowletitgrow.com) and Giles Knight of 'Save Our Magnificent Meadows' in Co. Fermanagh (<http://www.ulsterwildlife.org/magnificent-meadows>).

It is very clear that the idea of a lawn is also under review, not just the extensive mowing of publicly owned lands, and I thought that I really need to understand more about how these ideas change. It is not very long since gardeners (I am thinking of my uncle) took pride in a weed-free sward, and devotedly raked out any moss or 'thatch' in order to keep the green baize of their grass. In contrast, we often see appeals to let the dandelions and daisies flower, to cut the grass less often, and so on, in order to maintain and cherish various kinds of wild life in the garden. The plant and seed catalogues have taken to recommending 'wild flower mixtures' for gardeners - often, I feel,

without sufficiently warning the enthusiastic buyer of the difficulties of growing our native wildflowers just where we might want them. This topic is so large, that I decided to begin at the basic level, remembering how my uncle would grumble about the worm casts on his urban grass patch, which he felt spoiled its beauty. His attitude was characteristic of many in his generation. A favourite book of mine is *The Living Garden* by E. J. Salisbury (1935), who was notable for a more ecological approach to gardening than was common then. He noted: 'this remedial influence of earthworms is, however, generally regarded by the gardener as worse than the evil which it tends to cure.' (ie leaching). How times have changed, I thought, but then I decided to find out more about earthworms and I realized that the jury may still be out about whether they are a 'good thing' for lawns or not!

I found both practical lawn care writers (especially with golfing greens) and scientific writers are now very clear about the benefits of earthworms, in aerating the soil and bringing organic matter into it, as well as providing their castings which some writers regard as good fertilizers. Salisbury himself pointed out that a very large amount of nutrient is removed by mowing grass, and he was clearly of the opinion that this would have to be replaced for the grass to flourish. 'The result of our continual cutting as the years go on is, then, to impoverish the soil more and more of essential food-supplies... The effects are not as undesirable as we might anticipate since, in general, the finer-leaved grasses, which we prefer to the coarse sorts, in our lawns, are far more tolerant of such impoverished conditions and so tend to increase.' I am sure that this old opinion that a kind of truce can be reached between the pros and cons will amuse our readers. However, there is a whole new worm-critical, scientifically researched set of papers which I found on-line, pointing out that earthworms are contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. Since there seems to be no clear consensus about the number of worms likely to be found in an acre of grass (the figures vary between a million and two million that I have found so far), it is a little hard to reckon on this new aspect of the work of the humble earthworm.

What is clear, however, is that there is still a great deal which we don't understand about earthworms. I have sought in vain to find a clear, consensual explanation of why they come to the surface after rain. There are literally hundreds of answers to this question on-line; ranging from the idea that worms can drown in their tunnels underground (but

apparently this is incorrect) to the idea that the patter of the rain on the ground makes them come out because it sounds like a hungry mole coming to gobble them up. This explanation is supported by the 'fiddling' or tapping the ground which fishermen use to make the worms rise to the surface, for bait. There is a newish organization, The Earthworm Society of Britain, which says this behaviour is not yet understood, although we are all so familiar with it.

However, there is no dispute at all over the composting and beneficial remedial work which earthworms perform. When we talk about pollinators, this kind of work is called 'pollination services' and it seems to me that worms could also be appreciated for their services to our gardens. Although they seem pretty tough in their ability to withstand herbicides applied to the leaves they ingest, they are quite susceptible to insecticides, fungicides and other aspects of the chemicals we apply in the blithe expectation that they will perform in a limited way 'as it says on the label'. I for one am embracing the pollinator friendly idea of grass in the garden - though I agree it cannot now be properly described as a lawn. I hope very much that this 'wilding' of the patch will also promote the welfare of a multitude of other active live creatures under the visible and untidy but flowery vegetation.

[Correction to Winter issue, p12, caption should read 'Patrick Kiernan']

Open Gardens Scheme

The Open Gardens Scheme in the north of Ireland was set up to raise money for the local gardens cared for by the National Trust. Each year a number of gardens open for a day, a weekend or by appointment; IGPS members are major supporters and contribute about one third of all the gardens to the Scheme. Taking part this year are Will Hamilton, Victor and Roz Henry, David and Janet Ledsham, Dawn and Ken McEntee, Penny McNeill, Agnes and John Peacocke, Susan Tindall, Cherry Townsend, and Andrew and Heather White. We wish them luck. Check the website for details of dates and times during 2018: www.ulstergardensscheme.org.uk

A Note from the Chairman



Billy McCone, Chairman IGPS

A while back I mentioned in my notes about some suggestions I had been receiving from members about new projects that we could possibly take on and as I said then, some good ideas were being presented. One such idea for a student exchange scheme had me particularly interested, and I had it included on the Executive Committee agenda for discussion. In a lesson in how not to fall in love with your own idea, I was quickly brought back down to earth by fellow committee members; as one succinctly and astutely put it: 'high resources, high cost and high risk'. Realistically, I knew that, but sometimes our aspirations outstrip our capabilities. Unfortunately where our resources are restricted consequently so are our capabilities.

If you are to read the AGM notice with our list of vacancies, you may wonder why we would think to take on anything more. To some extent this is true, but if we stop looking at new ideas, the Society is in danger of standing still. So if we have difficulty filling current vacancies, what's the answer?

Last issue I wrote about our partners, botanic gardens, councils, other associations, etc. and I believe that there is much more to be explored in this area. I can't think of any of any recent partner linkups that have not resulted in a tangible benefit to the Society.

By necessity we have had to look at outsourcing some tasks. An example was the switch to use of a postal house to mail the Newsletters. For less cost we were able to eliminate at least eight processes previously carried out by two committee members. I believe there are other tasks that may benefit from carefully evaluated outsourcing.

Recently some opportunities appear to be evolving from new networking connections. One educational contact appears particularly promising, but more on that when and if it develops.

Using partnerships, outsourcing and networking, I'm convinced some initiatives can run in parallel with our regular tasks; although stretched we may move more slowly than we wish, but we do not have to stand still.

Now, as positive as all that may sound, we cannot escape the fact that we still need more help from members in many aspects of the Society's functions.

Yes, --- it's that broken record again and no apologies.

Did I mention we have vacancies?

Billy McCone



View of the Mourne Mountains from Castlewellsan

Notice of the 37th Annual General Meeting of the Irish Garden Plant Society to be held at The Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle, County Down on 19th May 2018 at 09.45 am.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM held on the 13th May 2017 at The County Arms Hotel, Birr, County Offaly.
3. Matters arising (if any)
4. Chairman's Report – to note the report.
5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 2017 -2018 – to adopt the Accounts
6. Election of Officers and Committee members
 - Vice Chairman
 - Honorary Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Membership Secretary
 - Munster Representative
 - Two Committee Members
7. Any Other Business

Details of Your National Executive Committee Members 2017 – 2018

Chairman: *Billy McCone* has served 2 years of a four year term and 3 years of a maximum of 10 years on the committee.

Acting Vice Chair: *Anne James* completed her 4 years as Vice Chair in 2017. As no nominations were received for the position of Vice Chair last year, she agreed to continue in office until a replacement was found. She has served 9 years of a maximum of 10 on the committee and is willing to continue on the committee.

Acting Hon. Secretary: *Claire Peacocke* has served 1 year of a maximum of 10 years on the committee. Claire's position as Northern sub-committee representative was confirmed at the 2017 AGM.

Hon. Treasurer: *Pascal Lynch* has served 4 years of a four year term and 4 years of a maximum of 10 years on the committee. He is willing to continue on the committee.

Membership Secretary: *Patrick Quigley* has served 4 years of a four year term and 9 years of a maximum of 10 years on the committee. He is willing to continue on the committee.

Leinster Representative: *Stephen Butler* has served 2 years as a regional representative and 4 years of a maximum of 10 years on the committee. Stephen also leads a working group for the conservation of Irish cultivars.

Munster Representative: Position Vacant

Northern Representative: *Claire Peacocke* (see above)

Committee Member: *Paddy Tobin* has served 6 years of a maximum of 10 on the committee. Paddy is the Society's web site editor ensuring the maintenance of the site and the regular update of information.

Committee Member : *Ali Rochford* has served 2 years of a maximum of 10 years on the committee. Ali is the Society's ebulletin editor responsible for collating and distributing of IGPS event news.

Committee member: *Ricky Shannon* has served 4 years as a committee member (having held previous office as Treasurer) and 9 years of a maximum of 10 years on the committee.

Invitation for nominations for office bearers and committee members:

Vice Chair Requirements: To actively participate on the National Executive Committee, to support the Chairman in his duties and to deputise in his absence.

Honorary Secretary Requirements: The duties of the Honorary Secretary shall be to record the minutes of the Committee and general meetings, to issue notices of these meetings and conduct

correspondence on behalf of the Society. Basic computer skills are desirable with a working knowledge of word processing software such as Microsoft Word or equivalent.

Treasurer Requirements: To oversee and administer the finances of the Society and produce timely reports to the National Executive Committee, Society auditors and regulatory bodies as required. A working knowledge of spreadsheets or financial software is required.

Membership Secretary Requirements: To maintain membership records of the Society and produce regular reports to the National Executive Committee. A working knowledge of spreadsheets and/or databases is essential.

Munster Representative Requirements: To represent the Munster sub-committee on the National Executive Committee and produce quarterly activity reports for both committees.

Committee Members: Applications are invited for an additional two (2) committee members.

It is desirable that committee members will eventually take on the duties as an office holder as and when existing office holders reach their full term of a 4 year service.

Please send nominations to the Acting Hon. Secretary, Claire Peacocke, stating the name of the candidate, the names of the proposer and seconder, and a statement that the person has agreed to stand for election.

Nominations may be sent by email to igps.ireland@gmail.com or by post to IGPS Acting Hon. Secretary c/o 28 Madison Avenue, Belfast BT15 5BX to arrive **no later than Friday 4th May 2018**.

More about the AGM Weekend 19-20th May 2018

With almost 90 people already booked for the AGM weekend by the end of February, everything is shaping up for an exceptional two days in south County Down on Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th May. Once the business meeting in the Burrendale Hotel in Newcastle is over (see elsewhere in the Newsletter for the formal notice calling the meeting

and the agenda) and we are fortified with coffee and a scone, we will board coaches and head for the beautiful and historic Castlewellan Arboretum. The land was bought by the Annesley family in 1741 with the parkland and walled garden being developed over the centuries; this is the same Annesley family as the owners of Annes Grove garden in Co Cork. Hugh Annesley, the 5th Earl (1874-1908), was particularly responsible for much of the exceptional planting which has resulted in an arboretum of international importance. How lucky we are that our tours will be led by the current Head Gardener, Alwyn Sinnamon, and Seamus O'Brien of Kilmacurragh National Botanic Garden.

Following lunch which has been booked in Castlewellan village, we will walk the short distance (about 500- 600 metres) to the private woodland garden of Sam Harrison, the former Head Forrester of Castlewellan Park and Arboretum. The coaches will take us back to the hotel after this visit.

Sunday offers the opportunity to experience two gardens of very contrasting sizes: the extensive grounds of Ballyedmond Castle on the shores of Carlingford Lough where much of the planting is new, followed by a plant-packed garden in Bessbrook developed over the decades by Hilary and William McKelvey, both noted members of the Alpine Garden Society, Ulster Branch.

We start our visit to Ballyedmond Castle with refreshments in the Orangery overlooking the spectacular fountains and water garden and will continue with guided tours of different lengths so that everyone can enjoy the experience. Lunch on Sunday is a DIY affair en route from Ballyedmond to Bessbrook with a map and plenty of suggestions being provided. Once parked in Bessbrook, a charming, model, mill village which used to boast of having neither pub nor police station, Hilary and William will be on hand to tell us about the development of their garden and about their exceptional collection of plants before a final cup of tea and tray-bake to see us on our way home.



Hilary and William McKelvey's Garden



Castlewellan Gardens, Photo: Robert Trotter

Important

While there are some paths, particularly in the two larger gardens, please be aware that in places there will be steps which may be slippery, slopes some of which are steep, and rough ground so be sure to wear stout footwear and dress for both the worst and the best of weather.

The Annual General Meeting is of course open to all members free of charge but please book in advance on Eventbrite so that we know the numbers for tea and coffee. For the comfort and enjoyment of all concerned, the garden visits will be limited to 100 people. Bookings can be made through the Events page of the website www.irishgardenplantsociety.com/events assuming that the limit has not been reached by the time this Newsletter appears.

If you have any special dietary requirements, eg vegetarian, gluten-free, please let Barbara Kelso know in advance so that we can ensure that you are catered for appropriately: igps.northern@gmail.com or phone or text either Barbara +44 7449 484050 or Maeve Bell +44 7713 739 482 .

Members of the Northern regional committee and working group are delighted that so many members have booked early; we look forward to welcoming you for registration between 5.30pm and 8.00pm on Friday and from 8.30am to 9.45am on Saturday and throughout the weekend.



[Castlewellan Gardens
Photo: Jenny Constable
IGPS collection]

Sustainability

Barbara Pilcher

It was refreshing to read Mary Montaut's editorial in her role as guest editor (IGPS Newsletter, September 2017), as it points up a side of gardening that tends to be neglected or ignored.

It's a fact that a garden is a collaboration between gardener and nature, with nature as perhaps the wiser partner. It follows that any attempt at total control is doomed, even counter productive, if you take the long term view. I enjoyed reading American Michael Pollen's views on 'nature' versus 'culture' and other thought-provoking issues in his 1991 book 'Second Nature', that are still relevant today. Amongst other sage, if controversial, remarks he voices his conviction that lawns are 'a symptom and metaphor of our skewed relationship to the land.'

As an organic gardener of long standing – I go back to when the term was as *outré* as tree-hugging– it is heart-warming to see the change in attitude that has resulted in the organic approach becoming mainstream. Almost all the 'media' gardeners embrace it, at least to some extent, and rarely do you hear the so-called 'garden chemicals' being advocated for general use (except by their manufacturers). And so few of the really harmful treatments are still available. Surely this is a good way forward.

Nevertheless, I agree with Mary that years of chemical abuse of our gardens has left a legacy, as in the wider landscape. The most obvious effects are evident in depletion of our garden wildlife and in the serious decline of bee populations. Apart from aesthetic implications, this is having a real effect on pollination of crops, and natural control of pests. It will take years of an ecological approach to address this deficit and restore the balance that a garden should ideally have. Meanwhile though, as Mary has pointed out, gardens are vital as refuges for the wildlife around us as habitats and ecosystems are threatened. We can provide a home for small mammals and birds, insects and pond creatures, and this must be part of any gardener's remit.

To add to Mary's views on our management of gardens, I'd like to voice an additional concern about hard landscaping. It would be good to see a more sustainable trend here. Even in these days of financial strictures, it seems to be *de rigueur* for new garden owners to clear the site and start afresh. I have even seen good plants, old roses or lovely camellias uprooted and thrown in a skip along with perfectly good paving slabs or bricks, often broken up prior to tossing away. The resulting mess is neither sorted nor recycled, but goes to landfill. Often what they are replaced with is energy intensive artificial paving, or real stone hacked from some natural landscape. There is little attempt to use recycled or reclaimed material. This is also the case with fences, often perfectly good wood is removed and dumped, to be replaced with expensive (financially and environmentally) new wood. This has become the standard, and is not sustainable. Our aspirations are further inflated by the impossibly exotic gardens of marble, stainless and corten steel on display at shows, Chelsea among them. I would welcome a conservative approach that is more than a token: gardens that are not dependent on expensive and energy intensive materials.

I am now beginning to feel a bit of a kill joy, but would extend my own polemic to the use of mass imported plants, especially trees and shrubs, that ideally should be sourced from our own excellent nurseries, thus reducing the risk of importing with them yet more serious pathogens, while at the same time supporting local enterprise.

On a personal level we decided, on down-sizing to our present plot, that we would try to make our garden as low impact in terms of materials as possible. Concrete paving slabs have been retained as has any other potentially usable building material; selected plants have been reused, donated to good causes or propagated from; soil has been improved using homemade compost, leaf mold and seaweed, and we have even riddled gravel for reuse. A fence is planned made from recycled wood; recycled windows and other materials have been used to build a shed; and raised bed edgings supplemented with jetsam from the beach. An enlightening experiment, it continues to provide great satisfaction and an outlet for creativity in its ongoing development.

I ask myself what is the place of gardens in today's or tomorrow's world? For sure, gardens must not contribute to what ails today's

world: depletion of resources, depauperation of flora and fauna (not to mention introduction of invasives), or risk of flooding. Better that they mitigate these problems, and here I believe gardens have a real role to play. I have mentioned creativity and the satisfaction that brings. That is great, but surely there have to be strong elements of conservation, eco-awareness (less use of peat), environment consciousness, self-sufficiency? In that way, maybe we can help our planet steer a better course than at present. Or, you could argue, as nimbly put by Pollan, that I am advocating cultivation of virtue rather than beauty? I believe there is room for both.



Eucryphia x nymansensis 'Castlewellan' and *E. x nymansensis* 'George Graham' both have their origins in Castlewellan Arboretum while *E. x intermedia* 'Rostrevor' was marketed by the former Slieve Donard Nursery.

Generic Names

Brendan Sayers

'All I have taste for is natural history, and that might possibly lead in days to come to a genus named *Harveya*...'

[letter written in 1869 by William Henry Harvey to Jacob Henry Harvey]

Taking a lead from Mary's mention of *Edgeworthia chrysantha* in the Editorial of the last issue, it may interest some to know that there are other generic names (the first of the two names that make a species name, the latter is the specific epithet) that commemorate Irish or Irish associated horticulturists.

Moorea was first applied by Charles Lemaire (1801- 1871) to what we now know as *Cortaderia* in 1855, as *Moorea argenteum*. It was named for **David Moore** (1808-1879), Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin and is also used as the title for our Society's periodical. A pen and ink illustration of *Cortaderia sellowana* by the late Wendy Walsh adorns the front cover of the first Volume and an explanation of the name of the periodical by Charles Nelson tells the interesting tale. However the name did not become popular, so again, in 1890 Robert Rolfe (1855-1921) applied the name to a spectacular orchid which he named *Moorea irrorata*, this time commemorating David Moore's son and successor in leading the gardens at Glasnevin, Frederick Moore (1857-1949)*.

In 1904 Rolfe had to make a change to the name as it was already applied to the 'fine tall grass' that was introduced through the gardens at Glasnevin. The orchid is now the only known species of *Neomoorea*, *N. wallisii*.

William Henry Harvey (1811-1866) colonial administrator to South Africa who later became Keeper of the Herbarium at Trinity College Dublin, is honoured in *Harveya* a name given in commemoration by William Jackson Hooker (1795-1865) of the University of Glasgow and later of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. *Harveya*, is a genus of 28 parasitic species related to the broom-rapes, *Orobanche*, of which we have three native species. A nice read is Plate 281 of *Curtis's Botanical Magazine*, Vol. 12 Part 4, which was a celebratory part to mark the

bicentenary of the National Botanic Gardens. It shows *Harveya pulchra*, with text by Charles Nelson and botanical illustration by the late South African botanist and artist, Auriol Batten.

Frederick Burbidge (1847-1905), famous as a plant collector, author and Curator of the Trinity College Botanic Gardens is commemorated in *Burbidgea*, a genus of five species of gingers from the island of Borneo in South East Asia.

David Fitzgerald (1830-1892) emigrated from Tralee, Co. Kerry with his family and became an Australian naturalist and orchidologist. Although now reduced to a synonym, *Fitzgeraldia* is a commemorative name given to an Australia terrestrial orchid by Ferdinand Mueller (1829-1896) in 1882.

A trawl through *A Heritage of Beauty* will reveal more information on the above and also give a few additions. *Brownea*, the tropical American tree with spectacular balls of flowers, is dedicated to the Co. Mayo native, **Dr. Patrick Browne** (c.1720-1790). **William Harris** (1860-1920) hails from Enniskillen but is best known for his botanical work in Jamaica. He has the cactus genus, *Harrisia*, and the orchid genus, *Harisella*, as his generic commemorations. The latter is now a synonym of *Dendrophylax*, a genus of leafless orchid. There are more, if you take the time to continue the trawl ...

Note*

The orchids named to honour Frederick Moore have been painted by botanical artist Margareta Pertl and will be shown at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, as part of an exhibition titled *Three Threads - of the orchid tapestry created by Frederick William Moore*. The exhibition will also show paintings by the official botanical artist of the Royal Horticultural Society's Orchid Committee, Deborah Lambkin who hails from Co. Dublin and material from the orchid archive of the Gardens. The exhibition runs from *March 29 to April 25, 2018*.

The RHS Orchid Committee will hold their meeting at the Gardens on Saturday, April 21st - Sunday, April 22nd, 2018. This is the first time the committee has held its meeting on the island.

Heritage Irish *Bergenia* Trial Update 2017

The Irish *Bergenia* trial, supported by the Irish Plant Garden Society, marches steadily at the National Botanic Gardens. Plants included are ones which have been attributed to being bred or selected by Tom Smith of Daisy Hill, Newry in the 1880s and Desmond L. Shaw-Smith at Ballawley Park, Dublin in the 1940s. Plants have, and are still being sourced from nurseries, private gardens and institutions from across Ireland, the UK and Germany. Overall some 27 plants, of eleven cultivars are currently growing as part of the trial with at least another 22 expected to be included in 2018.

The majority of cultivars sourced arrived as plants and were planted in the trial plot in early summer. Some material was submitted as rhizome cuttings and these will spend the winter in propagation houses. These will require the 2018 growing season to yield discussable specimens.

The nursery trade intermittently has some Irish Heritage *Bergenia* available. So far eight nurseries provided plants for the trial and it is hoped that additional cultivars like *B.* 'Irish Crimson' and *B.* 'Croesus' will be offered in the trade again at some point in 2018. Ten public and private gardens have also contributed plants. 2018 will also see another half a dozen plants submitted including rare *Bergenia* from the National Collection in Greenbank, a National Trust Garden in Scotland and Windsor Great Park in the UK. These two are the only sources as yet to hold plants of *B.* 'Progress' and *B.* 'Distinction' both Tom Smith cultivars and listed on National Plant Collections and Threatened Plants Project Red Lists.

Research will continue in regards to tracing the status of provenance and location of these cultivars. Online research tools has greatly improved since the publication of Nelson's *A Heritage of Beauty* with OCR software (Optical character recognition) hosted by sites such as Achive.com and the Hathi Trust Digital Library. In addition, browser software such as that found in Google Chrome which quickly translates foreign text which allows one to quickly scan webpages for information. This has been especially important for translating findings from a previous *Bergenia* trial at the Experimental Station at Boskoop, Holland in the 1970's and John Bergman's often cited rock garden book *Vaste Planten En Rotsheesters* from 1939.

Should readers know of any gardens which might have Heritage Irish *Bergenia* please contact Gary Mentanko at the National Botanic Gardens. gary.mentanko@opw.ie



Bergenia Trial Bed at Glasnevin, 2017

The Tropical Ravine at Belfast Botanic Gardens: a Renaissance

Barbara Pilcher



In September 1889, the Belfast Newsletter included a report on a Fête in the Belfast Botanic Gardens at which the new 'Tropical Glen' was revealed to local dignitaries and the general public. The report noted that 'nothing of the same character in Ireland is worthy of being compared with this fernhouse' and added that 'the Botanic Gardens can boast of possessing the finest specimen of what we are convinced will be the greenhouse of the future.' Professor F.W. Burbidge, visiting in 1904 from Trinity College Dublin, said that he had 'never seen so fine and satisfying a collection of ferns, bamboos, mosses and climbing and trailing plants under a glass roof before.'¹ Charles McKimm, Curator of the gardens, had excelled himself in producing this magnificent addition to Belfast's Victorian heritage, acting as

architect, contractor and landscaper for the project, assisted by his team of gardeners. Built on a slope to accommodate a sunken ravine, McKimm's 'Fernery', as it was originally known, was a huge attraction for visitors from near and far, for decades. They came to admire the luxuriant 'artistic' planting that formed a series of natural landscapes. Nine years later another Belfast Newsletter report spoke of this 'Crowning glory' of the Belfast Botanic, extolling the 'verdure of dwarf ferns' along with *Dicksonia antarctica*, *D. squarrosa*, *Cyathea dealbata* among many more specimens that would have been real novelties at the time. And the Ravine continued for over a century to amaze and delight after periods of extension that enabled it to house tropical flora with a heated pond for *Victoria Regia* (now *V. amazonica*), the giant water-lily.

Alas, the years eventually took their toll and despite several renovations, the Tropical Ravine building declined into a state of disrepair and had to be closed for the safety of the public in November 2014. But a new exciting phase has been going on behind the scenes. The Friends of Botanic Gardens, by fund-raising and campaigning, supported Belfast City Council in its successful application for Heritage Lottery funding for the restoration of this gem of Victorian Belfast, the Tropical Ravine. Restoration work on site began in 2014.

The opening is scheduled for April 2018, an event that will gladden the hearts of the many visitors who have missed the tropical glen experience and of the staff who have seen the £3.8m project through to completion. This was an enormous, difficult and demanding process. First, the careful removal of plants to alternative housing was accomplished, and the construction of temporary greenhouses around plants judged too large to move. The ongoing care of these was an understandably exacting procedure necessitating many hard-hat visits by the staff in dark and difficult conditions over the years of restoration.

Their skill and dedication has paid off, and to a wonderful degree. It was, at least metaphorically, a champagne moment when, in the completed and heated structure, the *in situ* cycads, banana grove and the firewheel tree *Stenocarpus sinuatus* began to push forth their new shoots and again when a cycad *Lepidozamia* produced its spectacular seed cone.

Outside, the fine brick exterior has regained its integrity, along with the reinstated lantern roof. The modern glass porch entices the visitor in to a foyer where you come face to face with a glass wall giving a spectacular view of the interior, stretching right to the far (uphill) end, now that the intervening brick wall of the original orchid house has been removed. Stepping inside on an early visit, we were hit with a change of atmosphere, charged with warmth and almost audible growth. It is extraordinary how the plants have so quickly settled in and begun to luxuriate in their new temperature and humidity-controlled surroundings, and even in those early days, it was not hard to fancy notes of ginger, cinnamon, and cocoa bean. On a subsequent visit to the Stove End or Tropical Zone we marvelled at the male *Encephalartus ferox* (another *in situ* survivor of the building works) displaying both last year's and this year's pollen cones; pink-flowered *Averrhoa carambola*, the star fruit tree, still growing very close to where it was originally; the Cavendish banana 'Goldfinger' and pineapple, ginger and Vietnamese coriander providing groundcover in a central bed. A striking specimen of one of several tropical giant arums *Amorphophallus paeoniifolius*, showed off its green mottled stem when its solitary giant leaf is viewed from below, not giving a hint of the bizarre pungent inflorescence that hopefully will follow, nor of its use as a tuber crop, hence the common name elephant-foot yam.

Provision for visitors has been enhanced, with gathering areas, broader high-level walkways and a viewing platform at the temperate end which has been described by at least one observer as the Titanic Prow, a reference to the Winslet film. The views are indeed spectacular, of the reinstated cascade, pool, and grotto, the tree-ferns and cycads seen from a vantage point that nature never intended. A striking specimen of *Dombeya x cayeuxii*, tropical hydrangea, displays its large heart-shaped hairy leaves and a promise of pink balls of flowers to come; the banana grove with astonishingly vigorous new giant leaves unfolding, the rediscovered well with its test plant of the treasured Killarney fern *Trichomanes speciosum* together with monitor instruments recording temperature and humidity. And my favourite, an overhead view from the crossways path of the cycad *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*, its spectacular crown of huge arching pinnate leaves spreading symmetrically around the central point.

I think McKimm would be very proud, and gratified to see how his fernery has sailed (to continue the Titanic reference) into the 21st century. And if Professor Burbidge were to return again since his 1904 visit, I feel sure he would once more be lost in admiration for this extraordinary Victorian building, the significant plant collection, and the way in which both are now assured to indeed be 'a glasshouse of the future.'

¹McCracken, E. 1971 *The Palm House and Botanic Garden*, Belfast, Ulster Archaeological Heritage Society, in www.uahs.org.uk

Article by Barbara Pilcher, on behalf of the Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens. Thanks to Derek Lockwood, Adrian Walsh (IGPS), Frank Caddy and Jonathan Pilcher (IGPS) for their comments.

The Friends of Belfast Gardens, FOBBG, exists to preserve, support and fund-raise for the present and future development of Belfast Botanic Gardens, a site of great horticultural and historical importance in the Queen's Quarter of the city of Belfast.

www.fobbg.co.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Belfast-Botanic-Gardens>

<https://mobile.twitter.com/FoBBG>

Lepidozamia peroffskyana



Worth a Read

Paddy Tobin

Winter Gardens – Reinventing the Season, Cedric Pollet, Frances Lincoln, London, 2017, Hardback, £30, ISBN: 978-0-7112-3915-9

The winter garden is an opportunity for imagination, surprise and great beauty and Cedric Pollet's book will certainly open your eyes to the possibilities, inspire you and move you to no longer think of winter as the closed season but as another vibrant time in the garden.



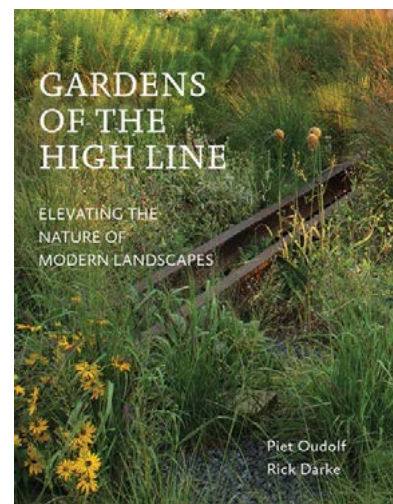
The winter garden is often very simple and effective where the use of a limited range of plants seems to work best. Plants with interesting and attractive winter bark are most valued. Winter flowering plants and those which carry berries are also greatly valued. Cedric Pollet has always been fascinated by this form of gardening and has spent years photographing winter gardens and he allows his photographs to carry this book – “an image is often much more effective than long descriptions” – and so this is a book where photographs dominate though it must be

acknowledged that the text, though short, is well written, effective and a perfect companion to the illustrations.

There are three main sections in the book: ‘Four Favourites’ gives extended reports on the gardens of L’Etang de Launay, Jardin de Bois Marquis, Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Bressingham Gardens. ‘Sources of Inspiration’ gives a brief insight into sixteen other gardens while ‘The Plant Palette’ lists plants suitable for the winter garden. All in all this is a visually very appealing book with a pleasant text to link the illustrations tastefully and effectively.

Gardens of the High Line – Elevating the Nature of Modern Landscapes, Piet Oudolf and Rick Darke, Timber Press, Oregon, 2017, Softback, 320 pages, \$40, ISBN: 13:978-1-60469-699-8

The interaction between the industrial hard landscape and the gradual but persistent encroachment of nature is always fascinating and it was such a scene in New York which inspired the development of the High Line, one of the most interesting and challenging of modern gardens. Landscape architectural firm James Corner Field Operations along with the architectural firm of Diller Scofidio and Renfro collaborated on design and Piet Oudolf brought the project to life with his naturalistic plantings. This book tells the story of this project to date.



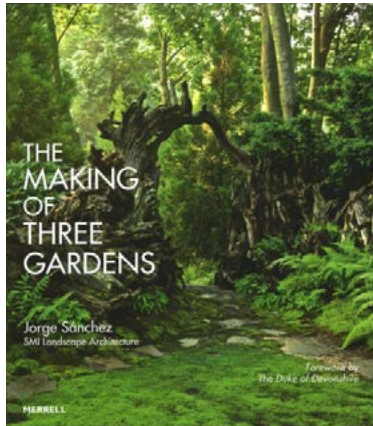
The railway line was built in 1931–’34 and was quite literally a life line for the city and now in its new reinvention might be considered such again. It was an all freight line bringing produce from upstate farms into the city until it closed in the 1980s and ‘90s. Nature crept in. The designed garden of the High Line aimed to be in line with nature. There is “a sense of letting wildness come through”, of letting it happen yet managing this change. It was designed and planted with the intention of being perpetually unfinished, allowing growth and change over time. The structure was preserved and is an essential part of the

experience. It is a very interesting experiment, most certainly a garden, yet quite different and without a doubt a fabulous addition to the city of New York and a pleasure to its citizens.

This book will give you a wonderful insight into the history, development, philosophy and beauty of The High Line. It is well written and the photographs are more than excellent.

The Making of Three Gardens, Jorge Sanchez, Photography by Andre Baranowski, Merrell, London, 2017, Hardback, 208 pages, £45, ISBN: 978-1-8589-4665-8

From front cover to back this book is a dream and a delight; we cannot imagine that we will ever have a garden comparable to those shown on its pages but we certainly can appreciate and enjoy them. They are examples of the most wonderful creativity, imagination, architectural dexterity, installation perfection, aesthetic beauty and no shortage of disposable income!



Jorge Sanchez is a principle partner of SMI Landscape Architecture in Palm Beach, Florida, an award-winning firm with clients throughout the United States and the Bahamas. The company is best known for its public gardens and street planning as well as large private gardens and this book presents three of these private gardens, two in Florida and one in New York. These gardens, by location and scale, are quite apart from our usual experience yet, by their art, design and planting, they transcend geographical

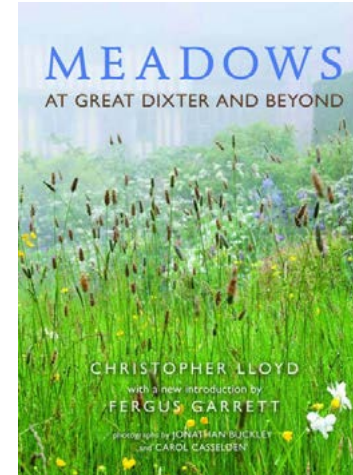
boundaries and have a universal appeal. They are superb examples of art in gardening.

Despite his obvious success and fame the voice of the author is one of openness and humility where he generously acknowledges those who influenced and inspired him in his work and lavishly praises those with whom he collaborates and those who implement his designs.

The photography is by Andre Baranowski and is quite outstanding, a perfect accompaniment to the text and, along with the design plans, gives the reader a perfect insight and understanding of the designs and the gardens. It was all wonderfully informative and very pleasant reading.

Pimpernel Press has recently reissued two great classic gardening books, both successful and enjoyed when first published and now refreshed with new forewords and new photographs they will surely appeal to old admirers and those coming to them for the first time.

Meadows, Christopher Lloyd, Pimpernel Press, 2017, Hardback, 240 pages, £30, ISBN: 978-1-910258-03-3



Fergus Garrett's extensive introduction is an excellent addition to this book but Christopher Lloyd's original text is as wonderfully written and as delightful to read as ever. He truly was the champion of garden writing, ever entertaining, enjoyable and informative and his guidelines on meadow gardening, first written in 2004, are as perfectly relevant and applicable today as they were then.

Beth Chatto's Shade Garden – Shade Loving Plants for Year Round Interest, Pimpernel Press, 2017, Hardback 232 pages, £30.00, ISBN: 978-1-9102-5822-4



Beth Chatto's Woodland Garden was first published in 2002 and was quickly acknowledged as classic of garden writing. Her “right plant, right place” dictum succinctly encapsulating her gardening philosophy. The new introduction by Head Gardener, David Ward, is an excellent addition as are the revised layout and additional photographs. With her guidance planting shady and woodland positions in the garden become a pleasure rather than a challenge.

Around the Regions

Northern Committee Lecture, 6th December 2017

‘A View From The Palm House’: Matthew Jebb, Director, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin

Report by Adrian Walsh, IGPS Northern Committee

The subject of Matthew Jebb’s lecture sounded very enticing - a glimpse into the horticultural treasures to be found in the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin – but it delivered so much more than this. Starting with a biography of Sir Patrick Geddes (1854 – 1932), a Scottish biologist, philanthropist and town planner, whose mantra of ‘act locally, think globally’ is one which resonates even more today, Matthew took us on a whirlwind journey, showing us the National Botanic Gardens in a new light. The view from the Palm House that he shared with us, was a view of Glasnevin Gardens, and how it looks out on, and is also influenced by, Dublin, Dublin County, Ireland, Europe and the world.

A captivated audience heard about a diverse range of influences such as classical Greece, politics, education, history, sociology, sustainability, technology, innovation, health, economics and climate change.

From the order beds in front of the Palm House (established to educate people about how plants are linked), Matthew brought in the influences of Plato and Aristotle, atomic theory and the entire evolution of plants from the most ancient of plants (e.g. magnolias, which are still pollinated by beetles) to the development of wider plant groups such as the rose family.

Amongst many other things, the history of Dublin and Ireland that Matthew presented covered issues such as the availability of natural resources and sustainability, as well as the effects on the environment from the introduction of alien plant species.

The world view covered climate change and the plants growing in the Palm House, including the most deadly plant in the world!

All in all, this was a most informative and thought provoking talk that was enhanced by Matthew’s enthusiastic and engaging delivery.

Earlier in the day Matthew and Northern IGPS Committee members visited the Palm House and the Tropical Ravine in Belfast Botanic Gardens at the invitation of Belfast City Council, Belfast Botanic gardeners and Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens.

Leinster Region Lecture, 15th February 2018

‘Blarney Castle Gardens’

Adam Whitbourn, Head Gardener at Blarney Castle Gardens

Report: Mary Montaut

If kissing the Blarney Stone bestows the gift of eloquence, it is hard to believe Adam Whitbourn’s protestation that he has never kissed it, in all his twelve years at Blarney. He spoke with infectious enthusiasm and confident knowledge about the development and history of the gardens at Blarney Castle, switching sometimes from touristic anecdote to detailed botanical information almost in the same breath. It was a wonderful, thrilling experience to hear him.

It is very clear that he absolutely loves the gardens: he spoke about ‘favourite’ trees and plants, and his photographs, taken at all times of year, and showing both works in progress as well as established planting, gave us a most enjoyable ‘tour’ of the whole estate. It is enormous; there are twelve full-time gardeners, and many volunteers especially in the summer when students may come and work in the gardens too. The scale of the undertaking is daunting, though not to Adam apparently. He seems to be constantly planning and developing new ideas for different areas, both for conservation of existing specimens and for the introduction of new and heritage plants. He describes the entire garden as being involved in Irish Heritage Plant Conservation; as he explained, different plants require different conditions and there is no use in just putting a ‘heritage section’ together regardless. He involves his colleagues in this, and has encouraged one to set up a ‘Hosta collection’ which has over 200 varieties. He has Irish Heritage Plant projects with IGPS, and has designed a special label for these plants, with an Irish harp on them - so when you go, look for these labels.

It was also very clear that he is steeped in the history of the estate, both of the ‘lost’ historical gardens and the buildings. One felt that the

rocks and the old yew trees were almost like friends of his, especially one 600 year old Irish Yew which has literally rooted into and through rocks. He tenderly described how delicate the roots of such an old tree must be, and the care he lavishes on them. What a contrast with the way he spoke about a 'plantation of sitka spruce in a square block' which had been, most fortunately, blown down and irreparably damaged in a gale - giving him the opportunity to landscape the area properly and do away with the dull conifers entirely. This frank way of expressing his views was most refreshing, and it was clear that the audience absolutely appreciated his openness.

One interesting theme was the economic constraints of working on a private estate, in this case one where the owner actually lives in the big house most of the year, and is himself a keen plantsman. On the one hand, such an owner might be unwilling to spend money on garden equipment, but on the other hand, generous beyond words in purchasing plants and supporting the dramatic landscaping effects which Adam comes up with. An example would be the 'Seven Sisters' stone ring with its accompanying 'myth' to satisfy the tourists' expectations. Adam told us about this with a delightful combination of fun and mystery - obviously, he is very used to holding an audience in the palm of his hand.

A very serious side of his work involves 'responsible introductions' of plants. He has been on several plant-hunting expeditions to Vietnam, with the aim of conserving plants which are under threat in their native habitat. At the other end of this scale, he has 'the only plant of poison ivy in Ireland' (the only known plant, that is, of course). This scary creature is kept in an iron cage in the 'Poison Garden' where lots of other plants which are medicinally interesting but poisonous too are grown, including Rue and Foxglove, Mandragora and Lupins. Adam notified the Dept of Agriculture of his intention to grow the poison ivy, half expecting them to refuse permission; but in fact they were interested, and came along to see the plant as they had never seen one growing so they could not be sure of recognizing it.

I cannot believe that anyone came away from this lecture who was not full of determination to visit the gardens at Blarney Castle.

Munster Region Lectures: 'Changes in Irish Gardening': Shirley Lanigan

All our members were so delighted to be heading out again after the long week of snow keeping us hardy gardeners confined to barracks so it was an extra special treat to have the company of Shirley Lanigan coming to us Tuesday evening. Shirley told us she is working on her fifth book, her most recent one being a new comprehensive guide to gardens in Ireland that are open to the public. Her talk was entitled *Changes in Irish Gardening: Are we on top or on the slippery slope?* As she said herself, her task of compiling the material for her book has got to be one which any of us would gladly undertake. She actually has to travel all around the fair land of Ireland and go and visit each garden, meet the owners and get a background and flavour of each garden, all so different. So her talk took us on a brief journey with her on her trip around the country, chatting to the owners, picking up many anecdotes en route and sharing the passion that all of these people have for their own plot. What was amazing was the diversity of gardens that are scattered throughout, especially along the western seaboard which has been an area not typically known for its many gardens due to the ferocity of the landscape and climate. I was amazed to see so many gardens tucked into little sheltered oases here and there. And it wasn't all about the plants. So many gardens had the quirky and unusual, be it animals, stone walls, sculpture, water features. We saw the formal grand landscape garden, the tiny cottage garden crammed with plants, the wild romantic style, the vegetable gardens incorporating flowers and trees, with one unifying factor..... they were all much loved and cared for and lived in and enjoyed by their owners. Shirley wound up her journey around the gardens of Ireland with the good news that, since her previous book some years ago, the numbers of gardens open has increased quite dramatically, especially in areas which had hitherto not too many gardens. So when the weather warms up a bit and our gardens start to come to life again, we can jump into the car with a copy of Shirley's lovely book under our arm and go visit as many of many as we can fit in on an excursion.

'Auriculas and Primulas' by Paul Smyth

Paul Smyth who hails from Co. Carlow but works as head propagator at Crug Farm Plants in North Wales was our speaker in February. His subject was *Auriculas and Primulas - their origins and uses*.

Paul began by telling us of the earliest records of Primulas and about the various myths and superstitions attached to *Primula vulgare* in particular. We then progressed to the more colourful introductions available from Paddy Kennedy and Pat Fitzgerald and how they might be used in various planting schemes and positions.

Following that Paul gave us an insight into the growing of auriculas - their preferred growing medium, pot type and of course their display. When in flower Auricula theatres were quite the thing to have in days gone by it would seem. Paul gave us some recommendations for those looking to add to their collections and as there were plants for sale some of us did just that.

Also in February we had a request from researcher Gill Weyman to give us a short talk on her work in relation to the *Harlequin Ladybird*. Gill is working on a project with Fota Wildlife Park and UCC. It looks at the distribution and hibernation of the ladybird which is an invasive species to Ireland. She showed images of the ladybird so that we could identify it easily and asked that members would inform her of any sightings. Further details on www.biology.ie. Records of sightings may also be made on this website.

Janet Edwardes

Snippet - Ferns

Margaret Kennedy, a member of the Society who gardens near the shores of Belfast Lough, is particularly interested in ferns and recently hosted a visit by the British Pteridological Society. She would be keen to hear from anyone who shares her interest and any suggestions as to gardens with good collections of ferns; she can be contacted at margaretkennedy@me.com

Forthcoming Fixtures

NORTHERN REGION:

SUNDAY JUNE 10TH 2018, 2.00PM – 4.00PM

A visit to MONTALTO ESTATE

Montalto is a well known wedding venue in an extensive estate with a walled garden adjoining the house, a lake, propagating houses, many architectural features, extensive planting, stable yard, etc.

The head gardener PETER HARRIS who is a member of the Society will be guiding the visit and describing the future plans for this impressive estate / garden

DIRECTIONS: From Belfast proceed through Ballynahinch then turn right for Spa. After about a mile the gated entrance to the estate is on the right. Follow the long drive towards the house.

ADMISSION £7.50 for both members and visitors.

This includes coffee / tea and biscuits

SATURDAY JUNE 30TH 2018, 1.30PM – 4.00PM

A visit to CASTLE DOBBS

This castle/garden has a fascinating history and I would recommend a visit to the web site for some background information on the Dobbs family.

The present house of 1730 stands in a splendid position overlooking Belfast Lough and the County Down shore. Features include woodland, parkland and avenue trees with vestiges of a formal garden from an earlier house. There is a landscaped park for the 18th century house with a lake, a bridge and a cascade. There is a walled garden looks that looks magnificent. David Ledsham, with whom I'm sure you are all familiar, and a personal friend of the family, will be conducting the visit NB. YOU ARE WELCOME TO BRING A PICNIC.

DIRECTIONS: From Belfast drive through Carrickfergus and on to Kilroot, turn left into Tongue Loanen and proceed to the entrance to the estate which will be indicated.

ADMISSION: MEMBERS FREE (PAID BY THE SOCIETY)

VISITORS £4.00

SATURDAY AUGUST 4TH 2018, 2.00PM – 4.00PM

A visit to ASHFIELD HOUSE, Painstown, Beauparc, Navan, Co. Meath, ROI. Post code:C15RV10

A traditional Irish house and estate with stables, an extensive garden and surrounding planting. Fully functioning walled garden serving both the kitchen and the social needs of the family. Respecting its original layout ornamental planting surrounding the house and embracing the existing mature trees and shrubs. Within this and beyond are many icons relating to Irish History and Mythology, giving the garden a fascinating and unique atmosphere.

The remodelling of the garden was completed over several years by two of the Society's expert gardeners. Mike Snowden, whom you may know, among his many achievements, from his time as Head Gardener at Rowallane, focused on the major transformation of the walled garden. Accomplished garden designer Angela Jupe, was responsible for re-designing other areas of the extensive gardens. We are very fortunate to have both Mike and Angela as our guides.

NOTE – The visit is limited to 60 (Members only) and must be booked on-line through EVENTBRITE. (Link will be activated in early June.)

DIRECTIONS: From the *North* through Slane over the River Boyne on the N2 continue past the turn off to Newgrange approximately 2 miles turn right on to the L1013 just before Brink Service Station.

From the *South* N2 to Brink Service Station turn immediately on to L1013

After approximately half a mile Ashfield is on the left with a gated entrance midway along the estate wall.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 1st 2018, 2.00PM – 4.00PM

A visit to KATHLEEN MC GEOWN'S GARDEN, N'EOGHAIN LODGE, 32 Ennislare Road, Armagh, BT60 2AX

A three acre country garden developed over thirty years. Fine specimen trees and shrubs, herbaceous beds and borders, water

features, gravel garden and woodland area under-planted with shade loving plants and much, much more.

DIRECTIONS: From Armagh City take the Keady Road A29, drive 2.5 miles along and opposite a row of cottages, turn left into Ennislare Road, take the second left on Ennislare Road and house is first on the right.

VISITORS £4.00 ADMISSION:

MEMBERS FREE (PAID BY THE SOCIETY)

MUNSTER REGION**September 4th, 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm, Northridge House****'The Delicious Edibles of our Gardens' Orlaith Murphy**

Orlaith was one of the first participants in Carraig Dulra's organic garden complete course in 2006. A keen allotment grower, Orlaith has a level 3 diploma in Horticulture from the RHS. She also has completed courses in Forest Gardening and most recently Geoff Lawtons Permaculture Design Course.

She is currently teaching organic gardening with the VEC in North Dublin and Tallaght and has a passion for cooking sumptuous meals with her home-grown produce. Orlaith will take us on a botanical gastro journey to discover the bounty that hides in our gardens.

LEINSTER REGION**April 19th 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm National Botanic Gardens Glasnevin****'Plants and Gardens at Home & Abroad', Frances MacDonald**

Frances MacDonald is the Garden Tours Manager for Travel Department and guides the majority of their garden tours each year both at home and abroad. Over the past twenty years, she has visited most of the well-known gardens in the British Isles as well as gardens in France, Italy, Spain, South Africa, China, Japan and Pennsylvania. This talk shows some of the gardens she has visited, plants she has seen but also indicates how lucky we are to live in the temperate climate of Ireland where we can grow those same plants from all over the world.

Obituary

Bob Kavanagh

It was with much regret that we learned of the death of long term member Bob Kavanagh who passed away on the 25th December 2017.

Bob was well known for his award winning Raphoe garden, Ros Ban, which was part of the Donegal Garden trail.

Bob and his wife Ann have welcomed delighted visitors to their 1.5 acre wildlife garden for many years. Anyone who visited the garden could not avoid absorbing some new knowledge of culinary and medicinal herbs or new planting ideas. Nor could one escape the warm welcome and generosity in visiting with Bob and Ann.

A great gardener who will be very greatly missed.

Bob and Ann Kavanagh welcoming visitors to Ros Ban



[Photos: Gareth Austin]

Irish Heritage Plant

Cornus capitata 'Kilmacurragh Rose' bred at Kilmacurragh Botanic Garden, Co Wicklow.



IRISH GARDEN PLANT SOCIETY

% National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9

Contact Us:

Website www.irishgardenplantsociety.com
Facebook www.facebook.comIrishGardenPlantSociety
Twitter <https://twitter.com/igpstweets>

Email Addresses:

Northern Region igps.northern@gmail.com
Leinster Region igps.leinster@gmail.com
Munster Region igps.munster@gmail.com
Irish Heritage Plants igps.heritageplants@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor igpseditor@gmail.com

Officers:

Chairman Billy McCone
Phone: +0044 112 44568
Email: igps.ireland@gmail.com

Membership Sec. Patrick Quigley
24 Arema Drive, Dunmurray, Belfast, BT 17 0QG
Phone: +0044 78012 99263
Email: igps.ireland@gmail.com

Acting Hon. Sec. Claire Peacocke
% 28 Madison Avenue, Belfast, BT15 5BX
Email: igps.ireland@gmail.com

Registered Charity No. CHY 7893