



*The Newsletter of the
Irish Garden Plant Society*



Issue 104, April 2007



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Front Cover Illustration: Narcissus ‘Colleen Bawn’

This is a small trumpet daffodil which was introduced c. 1890 by William Baylor Hartland of Ard Cairn, Cork. It grows to approximately 10 inches high, is white, tinted pale primrose yellow, especially the corona, which is turned back at the mouth and much frilled. The perianth tube, just above the ovary, is a deeper greenish yellow, fading towards the ovary.

William Baylor Hartland collected daffodils from many old gardens in the Cork area in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century and it seems likely that this is the origin of this daffodil.

Reference: A Heritage of Beauty

Photograph: Paddy Tobin



Editorial

As members of the Irish Garden Plant Society, we obviously have an interest in plants of Irish connection and relevance. We have been conscious of the cultural significance of these plants and have made efforts to grow them in our gardens. Our growing of these plants was, as well as simply enjoying them for their own beauty, a conscious effort to conserve a plant which was of significance to Irish horticulture.

Our efforts as members of the I.G.P.S. have been significant. I have no doubt that we have contributed to the conservation of Irish plants and I am also sure that we want to continue with this work. Perhaps, 'work' is the wrong word here as it is more a case of having an Irish aspect to our gardening. It is hardly a major strain on any of us and our continued interest will continue to help in the conservation of Irish plants in the future.

Following the special meeting of the 4th of March, there is a plan of work outlined for the attention of the national committee. The vast majority of members will not be involved personally or directly in this work. Indeed, it strikes me as quite a burden of work for someone involved in an amateur society. However, this is something for the committee.

From my viewpoint, there is a far greater opportunity open to all members, an opportunity to add a new, important and very enjoyable aspect to your gardening with Irish plants. The committee will deal with the major programmes of this initiative but there is a great opening and indeed need for the general membership to become actively involved in a most direct and practical way.

We all have our particular favourite plants or plants in which we take a special interest. This could be a plant which originated locally or had a connection with some local person. It could simply be the coincidence of a name appealing to us. It could be the plant simply catches our eye and our heart. Likewise, this interest could be for a group of plants. I find the snowdrops fascinating, for instance. For whichever reason it is, we all keep one plant or other and give it that extra attention.

In the future you will be asked to let a co-ordinator know what plants you are keeping as your part of conserving Irish plants but, in the meantime, if you want to let me know the plants in your care, please drop me a line. I would find it very interesting to hear of your particular interest and why this plant appeals particularly to you.

Material for the newsletter should be sent directly to: Paddy Tobin, "Cois Abhann", Riverside, Lower Gracedieu, Waterford. Telephone: 051-857955. E-mail: pmtobin@eircom.net



Special Meeting Report

By Paddy Tobin from Brendan Sayers' notes.

As announced in the last issue of the Newsletter, there was a special meeting of the society on Saturday, 4th March at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. After a brief introduction, Brendan Sayers made a presentation to the assembled group, initially outlining the society's aims and then the present position regarding the conservation of plant of Irish interest.

As a society we aim to promote

- The study of plants cultivated in gardens in Ireland and their history.
- The development of horticulture in Ireland.
- The education of members on the cultivation and conservation of garden plants.
- To research and locate garden plants considered to be rare or in need of conservation, especially those raised in Ireland by Irish gardeners and nurserymen.
- To co-operate with horticulturalists, botanists, botanical and other gardens, individuals and organisations in Ireland and elsewhere in these matters.
- To issue and publish information on the garden plants of Ireland and to facilitate the exchange of information with other interested individuals and groups.

[The above is taken from the Irish Garden Plant Society Constitution Paragraph 2, a – f]

Efforts to achieve the aims of the society over past years have included the members of society propagating and distributing plants through the annual plant sales, a method which though informal, somewhat disorganised and undocumented, has, at least, meant that many plants which would otherwise not have entered general cultivation and which were not generally available were made available to members, something which helped ensure their continued survival. More recent activities have included the discussion document in 2004, *A Strategy for the Preservation of Irish Cultivars*, discussions at committee level of a proposed way forward and the present extraordinary meeting of members.

Certain Irish cultivars have been popular with the horticultural trade and this has meant the widespread distribution of the likes of *Betula jacquemontii* 'Trinity College' and *Betula* 'White Light'. However, there are many Irish cultivars which do not enjoy the popularity of those mentioned and the society also aims to preserve these. To proceed

with this work we need a formal strategy, one that can be easily followed and that will allow the preservation programme to continue despite changes in committee membership. It must also be on a more professional basis and not simply dependant on the goodwill of the society members. Funds accruing from the sale of A Heritage of Beauty continue to be set aside for the sole purpose of plant conservation but there will also be a need for further funding and Bord Bia, The Heritage Council and various Horticultural Trusts were suggested as possible sources.

Brendan enumerated the categories under which Irish cultivars will be organised: trees, coniferous and deciduous, shrubs, herbaceous plants, alpiners, ferns, tropical and sub-tropical plants, bulbs, fruit and vegetable (an area already well served by the Irish Seed Savers Association) and Irish-associated plants, for example, the Augustine Henry Collections.

He also outlined the proposed method of the conservation procedure. The initial work will require an analysis of the plants which fall within the interest of the Society, classifying them into either Category 1, plants known to be extant or into Category 2, plants that are known or thought to be extinct. This work is something which would be undertaken by a group appointed with committee approval.

Regarding those plants thought to be extinct, little can be done other than research and hope that some example may still exist. Such material would receive the highest priority for our conservation efforts.

The plants known to be extant will be sorted according to the level of endangerment in which they are. Priority 1 status would be applied to a plant such as *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Newryensis', as only one labelled plant is known to exist and if this was not prioritised for propagation it could quite likely be lost within a few years.

Plants to which Priority 2 status would be assigned are those in low numbers where action for their continued survival is needed as soon as possible. An example would be *Anemone* 'Green Dreams' which is known to be in cultivation here in Ireland but is not propagated by any nursery and is in need of propagation and distribution to ensure its continued survival.

Anemone 'Hannah Gubey' is an example of a plant where numbers are low but action can be delayed once their numbers can be monitored; it was listed in the Plantfinder by four nurseries in 1997/'98, by three nurseries in 1999/2000 but today is a plant seldom grown except by the specialist grower. Such a plant would be given Priority 3 status.

Priority 4 status would be for cultivars that are stable and well distributed and where only periodical monitoring is needed, for example, *Acer palmatum* 'Senkaki' which was listed by more than 30 suppliers in the 1999/2000 edition of the Plantfinder.

The expertise to carry out this work could be found within the Society, the horticultural industry, the Botanical community, among National Collection holders and from specialists in particular fields. Brendan stressed that there is a need for the IGPS to collaborate with nurseries; where an arrangements might be put in place that as nurseries sell these plants they would pay a royalty to the IGPS for the preservation work. There would also be a need for collaboration with wholesale nurseries which could promote Irish cultivars abroad and also with the specialist nurseries for specialist cultivars.

A question remained in Brendan's mind regarding who might undertake this work. He felt that previous efforts along these lines had met with disappointing results and cited the example of his appeal to members in the newsletter to list the Irish plants they were growing in their own gardens and send them on to him so that a record could be kept of them. Unfortunately, the response was very poor.

On a positive note he mentioned the interest shown recently where an informal group of members wished to gather and record information on Irish *Galanthus* cultivars and establish collections of these cultivars to be held between them. Such an approach is along the lines of the model used by the Hardy Plant Society in the U.K. and would be an excellent way for individual members to become involved.

A general discussion followed and at the conclusion the meeting was in general agreement on the following points:

- Proceed with an official and professional strategy – we will need to have a group who will assist in the development of the draft strategy. This will involve assessing the draft to date and adding in elements that will allow us to have a clear approach to the task ahead.
- The inclusion of an 'adopt-a-cultivar' programme in the official strategy. This will allow members who do not feel themselves proficient enough to be involved in the 'bigger' picture to be involved.
- The inclusion of 'plant-groups' in the strategy. This is where people who are interested in a specific group of plants can network in their propagation and distribution.
- The agreement to include the horticultural industry in the promotion and distribution of Irish cultivars.
- The OK to spending money set aside from the sale of *A Heritage of Beauty* for the employment of a part-time coordinator for the project.
- The OK to approach bodies for finance for the Preservation Programme.
- The general agreement that the strategy could have the ability to bring the IGPS membership back to the main purpose of the Society.



Calling all Members 1

By Mary Bradshaw

Those of us who organise IGPS Plant Sales in Munster, Leinster and Northern Ireland need support from all members.

We need

(a) Plants to sell,

(b) Members to attend and buy plants and

(c) Personnel to sell plants on the relevant days.

Plant Sale income is very important to keep the society "afloat" financially, to publish "Moorea" and to keep membership fees down.

I don't think the average member realises how much effort the various committees put into organising Plant Sales, sourcing plants, hiring tables, organising sales teams and catering facilities, raffles etc.

We need your support.

Now that Spring has arrived, please put aside some divisions or seedlings, take some cuttings and grow them on for your local IGPS sale.

Don't forget to label them please.

Irish cultivars are especially welcome.

We know your intentions are good

but we need plant material and financial support from you all.

Dates and times of plant sales will appear in the fixture lists.

See you on the day!



Calling All Members 2

By Mary Bradshaw

Would you like a voucher for 100 euro/£70 or 50 euro/£35 to spend at your favourite Garden Centre?

Would you like to participate in a quiz that awards the above-mentioned prizes?

Would you like to enter as often as you like by making a small donation with each entry?

Well, your wishes are being fulfilled by the Leinster committee.

QUIZ. 20 Questions:

1. Explain the connection between Great Dixter and Lambay Castle.
2. Mr. John Annan Bryce was associated with which Irish garden?
3. Name (a) the author and (b) the illustrator of "A Prospect of Flowers".
4. 'Rip Van Winkle', 'Hot Affair', 'and Empress of Ireland' are Irish cultivars of what genus?
5. What was the importance of *Phytophthora infestans* in 19th century Ireland?
6. Why would you not expect to find *Trichomanes speciosum* at an IGPS Plant Sale?
7. Which of the following European orchids does not grow in Ireland- *Anacamptis morio*, *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, *Neotinea maculata*, *Cypripedium calceolus*?
8. One of the new Irish stamps (55c) portrays an insectivorous plant which grows on the Burren. Give its botanical name.
9. Name the artist who designed the above mentioned stamp.

10. Division 10 tulips are associated with which bird?
11. Explain the role of *Phasmarhabditis hermaphrodita* in 21st century horticulture.
12. Ionic columns from the former Irish Parliament (now the Bank of Ireland, College Green, Dublin) are to be found in which Irish garden?
13. Increasing plants by means of runners is called _____?
14. Name the shrub that could be said to be "ablaze with spines" (Common Name)
15. What is the Common Name for *Campanula rotundifolia*?
16. The Carroll Oak, reputedly 400 years old may be found in which Irish garden?
17. *Geum* is a perennial plant from which family?
18. Where is the famous rose-garden of Empress Josephine?
19. What is the origin of the genus name *Gentiana*?
20. The vegetable Okra is commonly called "Lady's _____" ?

Three prizes will be awarded.

1st Prize will be a voucher for 100 euros/£70 and there will be two prizes of vouchers for 50 euros/£35.

In the event of a number of entries being completely correct, names will be drawn in the usual manner.

Entry Fee: 5 euros/ £3.50. Please send a cheque payable to the IGPS with each entry. Please do not send cash by post.

Send entries in writing to the IGPS, c/o National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9. Mark your envelope "Quiz" in the top left- hand corner. The

Closing date: June 8th 2007.

Results and winners' names will be published in the July newsletter.

Quiz Master: Mary Bradshaw.

Adjudicator: Dr. Dermot Kehoe. The Adjudicator's decision will be final.

Do not forget to include the Name, Address and Tel. No. of the Garden Centre of your choice, as well as your own details with your entry.



An Irish Introduction to an American Treasure

By Nicola Milligan and Peter Milligan

Part of the title to this article is borrowed from a very interesting book, *American Treasures* by Dan L Jacobs and Rob L Jacobs. Those familiar with this text will know that the full title is *Trilliums in Woodland Garden - American Treasures* [1] and therein lies the 'clue' to the plants that will feature in this article - Trilliums. At this point you may well say, "What have American plants to do with Ireland?" but bear with us and read on.



We (my wife, Nicola, and I) fell in love with Trilliums when we saw them in flower, in magnificent colonies, in the garden of the late Alan Bloom (Bressingham Hall, Diss, Norfolk). We were very fortunate to be friends with Alan, who was a magnificent gardener, and one of the few worthy of the title plantsman. One October evening, whilst enjoying a post-dinner chat in Alan's sitting room, he told us an interesting story concerning the introduction of *Trillium grandiflorum* 'Snow Bunting' to UK gardens.



Alan Bloom was one of the leading nurserymen in England. Blooms Nursery had the largest catalogue of perennials in Europe - the 1939 catalogue is a fascinating read - and Alan's garden, containing his famous island beds, was home to some 5000 plant species and cultivars. Consequently, Alan was in the favourable position of being able to swap plant specimens with many other gardeners including the curators of national gardens. From one such exchange, with the curator of a Canadian Royal Botanical Garden, came a sample of *Trillium grandiflorum* 'Snow Bunting'. Alan related how he struggled for some time to increase this plant, before risking a new approach to

*A sequence of 3 photographs of Trillium grandiflorum 'Snowbunting' as it opens from bud to fully-opened flower.
Photograph: Peter Milligan*

opening the problem. This approach was successful and subsequently he went on to produce and introduce this plant to the gardening public. Alan kept this process a closely guarded secret, only revealing it to one other member of the garden staff at Bressingham.

Anyway - the following year Alan led us on an expedition to the Trillium nursery beds



Trillium grandiflorum 'Snowbunting' fully open.
Photograph: Peter Milligan

in his private garden and presented us with specimens of *T. grandiflorum* and *T. chloropetalum*. From this generous beginning our collection began - growing to include specimens of *T. catesbaei*, *T. chloropetalum*, *T. cuneatum*, *T. erectum*, *T. erectum blandum*, *T. grandiflorum*, *T. grandiflorum* 'Snow Bunting' (the beautiful double form), *T. kurabayashii*, *T. luteum*, *T. recurvatum*, and *T. simile*.

However, our most recent addition came as an anniversary gift from my wife, and it is the real focus of this story - *T. grandiflorum* forma *roseum*. This is the very beautiful pink flowered form of *T. grandiflorum* and is described by Case [2] as locally frequent along the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. Our specimen came from a nursery, Rare Plants, run by Dr Paul Christian. In his description of this particular specimen, Dr Christian noted that it was produced by vegetative propagation from stock obtained from the Botanical Gardens in Edinburgh. However, it was the source of Edinburgh's plants that came as a surprise. Dr Christian's notes went on to say that Edinburgh's stock had been obtained originally from the nursery that introduced the plant to cultivation in Ireland (and GB) - Daisy Hill Nursery, Newry. In his current catalogue [4] Dr Christian notes that ".... At last the fabulous pink *grandiflorum* is available in good numbers. The wonderful **Daisy Hill** strain is the seed source and straight from germination these youngsters have made the diagnostic light green foliage of their parents, quite unlike the white flowered plant, which has comparatively dark green leaves the pink is a little less intense than the deep pink of the **Daisy Hill** type" . So there you have it, the **Daisy Hill** strain of *Trillium grandiflorum* forma *roseum*.



Trillium grandiflorum forma *roseum*
Photograph: Peter Milligan

It would appear that this information adds strength to the entries contained in *A Heritage of Beauty* [5] and in *Daisy Hill Nursery Newry* [6] supporting the view that this was a plant introduced by Daisy Hill. We hope that this 'link' will be of interest to IGPS members and will generate a wider interest in this wonderful plant family - the Trilliums. For those who want to read more we would recommend the work of Case [2] and Henderson [3]. Case has produced an excellent book reviewing and describing these fantastic plants - he writes with authority having grown and propagated most of the specimens he describes. Henderson's book is another good read - she runs a specialist nursery in New Zealand and has been growing Trilliums for over 35 years.



Trillium grandiflorum forma roseum.
Photograph: Peter Milligan

Trilliums are native to North America and Asia. There are about 35 eastern North American Trilliums, 7 North American and 5 or 6 eastern Asia Trilliums. But beware, as Case points out, there is disagreement between botanists as to the exact number of distinct species. In general, botanical taxonomists should be treated with caution as they will split plant species as easily as others split hairs! (Or they may merge them). An example of this can be found in a recent edition of *The Plantsman* [7]. You go to bed one day believing that you are growing specimens of *Leucojum* and wake up to discover that the taxonomists have struck again and you are growing *Acis* !

We have found Trilliums relatively easy to grow. Our plants reside in a raised, north facing, bed containing a layer of coarse grit (to provide good drainage) on top of which is a deep mix of peat, leaf mould and garden compost. When planting, we add a little grit to the bottom of the planting hole, then a layer of compost on top of which we place the rhizome, in-filling with the aforementioned mix. Once in place we leave the Trilliums to settle. One word of warning - Trilliums can be 'shy' the first year after planting - no leaves may appear and at this stage a well intentioned 'poke' to discover if the plant is alive will do more harm than good. Basically, leave well alone, and wait for leaves to appear in a subsequent year. Once established, the plants will increase

gradually and can form spectacular colonies. They can be grown from seed but it is a slow process as most Trilliums can take five to six years to reach flowering size.

If you do decide to obtain a *Trillium grandiflorum forma roseum* expect to pay a reasonably high sum - the plants in Dr Christian's current list are seed raised and are less costly than the few he offers that have been produced by vegetative propagation. Nicola was very generous and my plant came from the latter source - I am sure the overdraft will be cleared in the not too distant future. However expensive, the 'true' propagated version gives pleasure at three levels

- firstly it is an anniversary gift from my wife, secondly the flowers are the true deep pink that characterise the plant, and thirdly I like to think that there is a direct line all the way back to Daisy Hill - a little bit of Thomas Smith's handicraft grows in the garden.



Trillium grandiflorum forma roseum.

Photograph: Peter Milligan

To conclude, try growing a few Trilliums - they are relatively easy given suitable conditions, so why not introduce some to your garden and then treat yourself to a *Trillium grandiflorum forma roseum* and enjoy this old Daisy Hill introduction in your garden.

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Marvels

By Chris Mahon

The simple, and the largely free things, of life which surround us, are too often taken for granted.

The stunning parade of marvels
in our wonderful modern world
the exponential knowledge curve
our scientists have unfurled
creates a blase attitude
making everything commonplace
excising the sense of wonder
from a querulous human race
How often have we mere mortals
spoken in wistful tones
of the crushing crescendo of sameness
in life's boring monochrome;
beset by the brash and the novel
by technocratic parlance
we long to experience that one surprise
the rare unplanned circumstance.
It happened to me but recently
in the simplest and silliest way
when I bought a simple packet of seeds
for my front garden floral array.
Such tiny insignificant things
and precious few for the price
were a change from planting potted flowers
my normal gardening device.
Their gaily-coloured packets
peppered with puff and hype
had me agonising for ages
as I viewed each variety and type;

I finally selected two
that promised precipitate growth
and a coloured cornucopia
to rival the late Joseph's coat.
I interred them in peaty potting trays
and impatiently awaited results
devotedly attending their needs
like Priest of some Eastern cult.
Within days a tiny marvel
slowly began to unfold
restoring faith in miracles
to a mind on permanent hold;
As tiny buds peeped shyly forth
As tiny buds peeped shyly forth
my eyes were opened wide
by Mother Nature's ability
to so elegantly hide
inside an insignificant husk
in apparently lifeless clay
a complicated life-support
which waits upon the day
when energy from sun on high
and water from below
would merge their matching magic
and suffer life to flow.
What price this age's wonders
or its knowledge and science diverse
when expressed in a single seedling
is the complex Universe.

*Marcella Campbell sent on this 'ditty' from her friend Chris Mahon.
Chris grew up in Tullow, Co. Carlow and now lives in South Africa. He is a very keen
gardener who likes to write on the subject now and then.*



The Warren Gardens

By Frank Mason

Doing some research recently into my maternal Grandfather, Thomas O Connor, I awakened some distant memories and found out some very interesting things about him and my home town. As a youngster, I had a very good teacher who taught ‘outside’ the curriculum and we all benefited from it. I distinctly remember him telling us, one day, that there was a most interesting daffodil cultivated in our hometown – Lismore, Co. Waterford. I was impressed but thought little about it at the time. I may have been ten years old then and that was the time in a boy’s life when to be an engine driver was top of the list of things to be. Another interest that I had then was stamp collecting and one day I was searching in a drawer at home and found a small sheet of stamps, unused. These stamps were from the Netherlands and I wondered how they got into our house. I asked my Grandmother and she told me that my late Grandfather ‘had business’ in the Netherlands. I let that sink in but did not question Granny further.

About forty years later, my last surviving aunt showed me an old photograph that had been reproduced in a local newspaper. It was of a group in a garden. She identified my Grandfather, her Father, in the group. He is the man with the white hat and the bow tie in the photograph below. The lady with the elaborate hat, seated in front of Grandfather is Miss Frances Wilmot Currey. I don’t know the date of this photograph but would guess that it was around 1912.



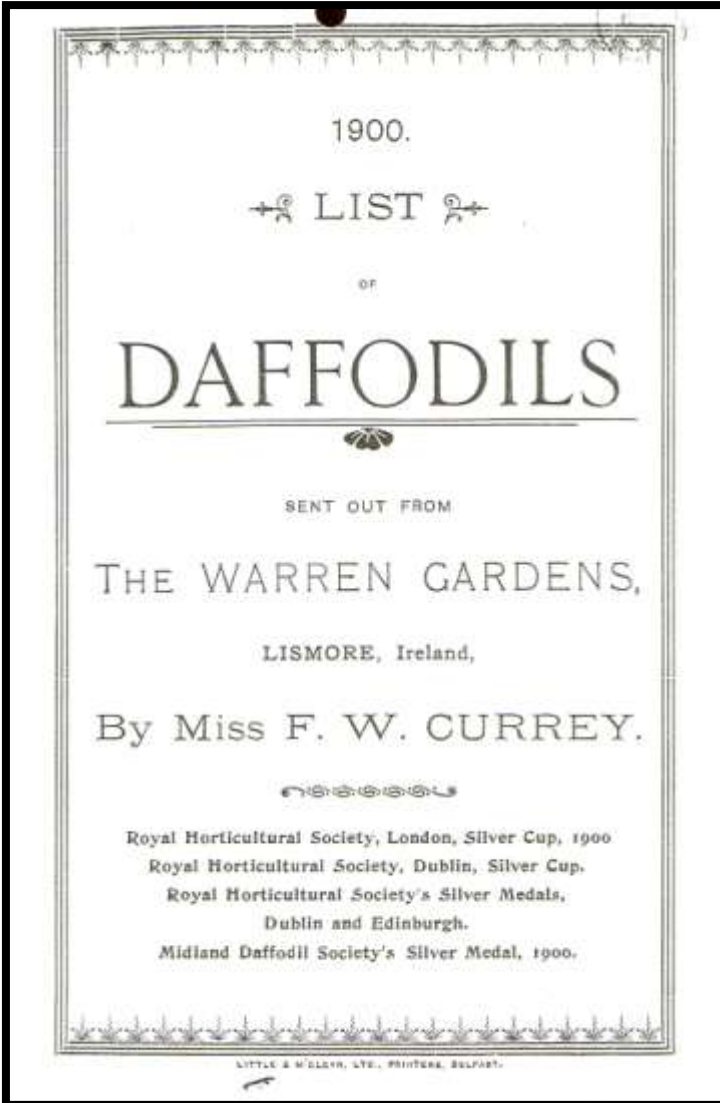
Group at the Warren Gardens, Lismore, around 1912

Photography was in its infancy then and few had the facility to take photographs. Miss Currey's Father was a 'pioneer' amateur photographer and it is very likely that it was he who took the photograph. The location of the photograph was The Warren Gardens and the occasion must have been special.

Fanny Currey, as she was known, was an amazing woman and had travelled widely and was an accomplished water colourist. She exhibited paintings in Ireland, England and on the Continent and was highly acclaimed. She was a founder member of the Irish Watercolour Society and was also a published writer. Her last known painting was done in 1895 and was of a rhododendron. Landscapes were her main interest but she seems to have taken an interest in painting flowers towards the end of her painting career. She was a contemporary of Claude Monet, 1840 - 1926 and may have been somewhat influenced by him. She is reputed to have planted *Rhododendron ponticum* at the 'Mountain Barracks', a few miles up the mountain road towards the 'Vee' from Lismore and where she spent some time painting in the Knockmealdowns. These rhododendrons are still thriving while the ruins of the old barracks can barely be seen in the foliage.

If she wasn't influenced by Monet in starting her commercial garden, she certainly was influenced and helped by William Baylor Hartland, 1836 - 1912. He was a seedsman and had a premises at 24 St. Patrick's Street in Cork City. Fitzgerald's Gentlemen's Outfitters now trade from this address. While Fitzgerald's now have a Gentleman's Outfitters Hartland had an 'Old Established Garden Seed Ware-House'. Originally from Mallow, although the family were English, his Grandfather worked in Kew Botanic Gardens, he had extensive gardens, about ten acres, at Ard Cairn in Ballintemple near Cork City. He moved there from Temple Hill in Mallow in 1890. He and Fanny Currey became collectors of daffodils many of which had been found self-propagating in old gardens in Ireland having been planted there perhaps over a hundred years previously. These were not native to Ireland. One find, described by Hartland, was of 'Bishop Mann'. This was found in an old garden of the Dioceses of St. Fin Barr's where Bishop Mann has been the last resident. This was in Bishopstown, now a suburb of Cork City and the bulbs had been planted there, as far as could be deduced, about one hundred and fifty years previously. He also located an old species of late keeping apple in 1890, now known as 'Ard Cairn Russet' and sent samples to the Royal Horticultural Society. He is remembered in Cork by the naming of Hartland's Avenue and Hartland's Road in the Lough area where he had one of his nurseries.

It seems that Fanny concentrated on setting up her garden after her last painting in 1895 and by 1900 she was sending out 'Lists' of Daffodils. Fortunately, the Lindley Library of the Royal Horticultural Society in London has copies of these Lists from 1900 to 1911 and they make very interesting reading. The cover of the list from 1900 is below. Interestingly it was printed in Belfast even though our next door neighbour and lifelong family friend had a printing business at the time. Over the next eleven years



she had her lists printed in Glasgow and Dublin. The bottom few lines, of the cover, tell of the awards made to Miss Currey for her daffodils up to then. They include the Royal Horticultural Society, London, Silver Cup, 1900, and the Royal Horticultural Society, Dublin, Silver Cup. This indicates that the garden was up and running, trading and exhibiting extensively by the year 1900.

Below is page 4 of the 1900 list and gives a small sample of the numbers of

different named varieties that were produced. A daffodil named 'Lismore' is among the 'Trumpet Daffodils'. This daffodil was cultivated before 1899 and may be the 'unique' daffodil that my teacher, all those years ago, mentioned. The clarity of the picture of the page may not reveal the name or the price but she was charging 21s. for a single bulb. I can't imagine what a week's wage would have been in 1900 but would guess that 21s would pay the wages of a gardener for a month or more.

Business seemed to have thrived and by 1907 the list had a photograph on the front page. This was a monochrome photograph but bearing in mind the year; it was quite an achievement to get a true photographic reproduction in print. The daffodil shown then was 'Atlanta'. On the front of the 1911 list the featured cultivar was *Narcissus* 'Challenger', again a fine monochrome reproduction. It seems that she changed her printer to N. Adshead & Son, Glasgow, from Little & M'Clean Ltd. of Belfast, to avail of the developing technology in printing I presume. Guy & Co. Ltd. Cork printed the list of 1903. The back page of the 1911 'list' showed the 'principal' awards received. They represent a wide area and show that Miss Currey was very energetic in advancing her gardens and her produce. Societies and Shows who gave awards and medals were the Midland Daffodil Society, Royal Horticultural Society, Dublin, Royal Horticultural Society, London, Royal Botanic Society, London, Colchester Spring Show and Shrewsbury Spring Show to mention just some. There is no mention of the Banksian Medal that was awarded in 1907 which is surprising as this was called after Sir Joseph Banks, 1743 – 1820, who was a noted plant collector and botanist and who sailed with Captain Cook to the South Seas in 1766. This was a prestigious award.

	Per doz.	Each.
	s. d.	s. d.
Grandis Per 100, 22/6	3	4
Horsefieldi Per 100, 17/0	2 6	3
Irish Princeps, per 1,000, 35/- and 30/-; per 100, 4/6 and 3/6	6	
Irish Princeps, (Special Tall-growing Strain, extra large Trumpet), per 100, 6/- and 5/-	1	
J. B. M. Camm	28	2 6
Madame Plomp		18 6
Michael Foster	4 6	5
Mrs. Walter Ware	41	2
Portia	1 9	2
Sir Walter Raleigh		2 6
Victoria	25	2 3
Weardale Perfection, £100. each.		
TRUMPET DAFFODILS.		
(White and Sulphur Coloured Varieties).		
Albicans	3	4
Bishop Mann J.S.	12	1 3
Cernuus	6	7
Colleen Bawn	21	2
Cernuus Fulcher J.S.	15	1 6
C. W. Cowan	6	8
Duchess of Connaught	7 6	8
Leda	7 6	8
Lady Grosvenor	7 6	8
Lismore		21
Madame De Graaff (Largest of White Daffodils)		22 6
Marchioness of Lorne	7 6	8
Mrs. J. B. M. Camm	24	2 6
Mrs. Thompson	6	7
Pallidus Procox	1 6	2
Princess Ida	3 6	4
Robert Boyle	15	1 6
Silver Bar	12	1 3
Snowflake		7 6
W. P. Milner	1 9	2
William Goldring	9	10
DOUBLE TRUMPET DAFFODILS.		
Capax Plenus (Queen Anne's double Daffodil)	10 6	1
Cernuus Plenus		10 6
Telemonius Plenus (Double Golden Yellow Daffodil), per 1,000 60/- and 50/-; per 100, 6/6, 5/6 and 4/6	1	

Such was the development of the garden that she was now offering 'Cultural hints and Instructions as to planting in gardens and grass can be sent to all purchasers of Bulbs'. Good commercial sense is also evident by now as she is advertising 'Fine Crushed Bones, best and safest Daffodil manure, for use when planting at a rate 1½ ozs. to square yard. Bag of 7 lbs., 1/3 (sic), postage extra'. A further adjunct to the range of goods on offer was 'a labour saving tool for planting bulbs in grass'. The price of this was 10/6. (Note: for those who don't remember pre-decimal days this was an abbreviation for

10s. 6d. or ten shillings and six pence). An explanation as to how to use this tool is as follows – '*Method of Working* – at each insertion of the tool into the grass a round sod is clean cut out, which is released from the tool at the making of the second insertion, when it lies beside the hole ready to cover it up after the bulb has been put in place'.

1911 - LIST OF - 1911.

DAFFODILS and other BULBS.



NARCISSUS "CHALLENGER."

Sent out from THE WARREN GARDENS,
LISMORE, Co. Waterford, Ireland,
By Miss F. W. CURREY.

For List of Awards, see back of Cover.

In the same list there was a paragraph headed ‘**Colonial and Foreign Orders**’. Underneath this heading is the stern ‘request’, ‘As it is expensive and difficult to collect Accounts due on above, (refers to all orders) prepayment is requested, and where Bulbs are to be sent by post an additional sum should be sent to cover cost of same’. A hard-nosed business woman I have no doubt.

	EACH.
	s. d.
Sahib (P. D. Högness)—Perianth pure white, with circular segments, 3½ inches across; fine brilliant eye of uniform red, fully 1 inch in diameter ...	12 0 0
Sirius (E)—Long creamy-yellow perianth, long cup of brilliant scarlet-orange; tall and fine ...	6 0 7
Strongbow (E)—Broad circular extra strong white perianth, large flat expanded yellow crown. A.M., R.H.S. ...	6 1 6
Sunspot—Rounded perianth, pure white, three and half inches across; flat cup one inch across, of bright canary yellow, deeply margined orange-red, and prettily frilled. A new break in form and colour ...	10 10 0
Tooth (E)—Perianth bright yellow; long full cup of bright orange-scarlet; tall, brilliant flower ...	0 1 0
The Martian (E)—Large solid imbricated white perianth; long cup, heavily stained orange-vermillion ...	2 10 0
Topaz (E)—White perianth, long cup, glowing orange-red ...	0 0 6
Victory—Very large segments of creamy-white, broad and overlapping; pale lemon cup ...	2 0 0
Whitewell—A most symmetrical flower, broad white perianth and orange-yellow cup; well balanced and solid ...	0 10 0
Will Scarlet (E)—The largest of all scarlet cups. Considered Mr. Englemart's most remarkable production. F.C.C., R.H.S. ...	0 5 6
DIVISION III.—BARRII.	
Including the Varieties hitherto classed as Burbidgei.	
Astrardente (E)—White broad perianth; very fine expanded flat crown, yellow, heavily stained orange-scarlet ...	0 12 0
Beacon (E)—Very fine; broad creamy perianth, with fiery cup ...	0 2 0
Blood Orange (E)—Broad creamy perianth; vivid scarlet cup ...	4 0 0
Bullfinch (E)—Fine well-shaped flower; pale yellow cup, heavily stained orange-scarlet ...	0 0 5
Cardinal Wolsey—Full pale cream perianth, slightly recurved, hatelike wide cup of orange-scarlet ...	3 3 0
Charm—Broad solid perianth of pure white; cup of fiery orange-scarlet; very striking in colour ...	6 6 0
Challenger—One of Mr. Crosfield's finest productions. Solid circular perianth of pure white; flat cup of a full chrome-yellow, with deep vivid scarlet rim; very perfect. (See <i>Illustration J.</i> A.M. ...)	32 10 0
Cœur de Lion—Large tall flower; solid rounded perianth of creamy-tone; handsome fluted cup, very open, and of rich orange-red ...	0 5 6
Cossack—Broad white perianth; flat cup of orange-scarlet, deepening in tone at edge ...	2 10 0
Cresset (E)—Cream perianth; flat gold cup deeply edged scarlet, A.M. ...	0 1 0
Debonair (E)—A very fine plant, tall and vigorous; large broad white petals, flat and vellum-like in texture; flat crown, one inch in diameter, of a very bright chrome-yellow ...	0 15 0
Egret (E)—Broad, solid perianth of pure white; immense flat golden cup; a most striking flower. F.C.C. ...	0 5 6
Fair Maiden—Perianth pure white, very broad; expanded crown, elegantly fluted; yellow, with buff margin ...	0 5 6

In that ‘list’ from 1911 there is one particular bulb included in ‘Division III – BARRII – Including the Varieties hitherto classed as Burbidgei. The significance of this heading will have to be explained to me! The bulb that caught my eye is ‘*Challenger*’ – ‘One of Mr. Crosfield’s finest productions. Solid circular perianth of pure white; flat cup of full chrome-yellow, with deep vivid scarlet rim’; very perfect. There is a further note, which says – *see illustration*. The initials A.M. follow this. The illustration referred to is on the cover of the 1911 list reproduced above. All very well but the cost of

a single bulb of this cultivar was £32 10s. Od. – and that was 1911! I wonder if this

cultivar is still available. The page with that information is shown below. Such are the vagaries of 'market forces' that by 1911 'Lismore' was selling at 8d. each. This list from 1911 is the latest that the Royal Horticultural Society has in their archives in the Lindley Library in London. It may very well be the last sent out from The Warren Gardens. Miss Currey died in 1917 and the strain of producing such lists and running the commercial side of the garden may have been too much for her failing health.

Lismore Castle and the vast lands attached were once owned by Sir Walter Raleigh and we all know about his potato and tobacco growing! Maybe the first potatoes and tobacco were grown in the fertile Blackwater valley. The castle and estates passed from Sir Walter to the Boyle family and a son of that family inherited the family wealth. He was Robert Boyle and contributed to science and chemistry. He is probably best known for 'Boyle's Law' but he also did experiments with plants and flowers. Lismore was a place of learning and science from long before the 17th century but it was not until Boyle's time that the transformation from cookery to science really began. He experimented with colour indicators and other constituents of plants; did exhaustive and repetitive experiments and had the approach of what we now would call a research scientist. Maybe it is a coincidence that nearly three centuries later there was a 'Nicotine Factory' in Lismore. This factory processed tobacco plants and extracted various chemicals from it. These were used as insecticides and disinfectants. This was a thriving commercial enterprise for many years.

My research into my grandfather has led me in many directions and one of them now has me looking for cultivars from The Warren Gardens where he was the gardener. First on my list are the following daffodils - 'Lismore'; 'Sir Walter Raleigh'; 'Robert Boyle' and 'Helen'. Helen?, you may ask. I haven't mentioned Helen. She was Helen O'Hara and lived in Lismore. She was a painter and illustrated a childrens' book that Fanny Currey wrote. This was called 'Prince Ritto'. As well as daffodils there were two woodland anemones cultivated in The Warren Gardens by Fanny Currey. These are 'Lismore Pink' and 'Lismore Blue'; these are also known by some as 'Currey's Pink' and 'Currey's Blue'. Fortunately these are currently available and I plan to have some flowering in my garden by 2008.

I regret that I am not now living in Lismore but I would like to think that the spirit of this Heritage town may eventually develop a Physic Garden to reflect the introduction of the Potato and Tobacco plants by Sir Walter Raleigh and the experimental work done on plants by Sir Robert Boyle. As well as that I think that the daffodil should be adopted as the flower of Lismore and that as many as possible of the old cultivars from The Warren Gardens should be sourced and grown and what better place than Lismore to have profuse carpets of the woodland anemones 'Lismore Blue' and 'Lismore Pink'.



Irish Snowdrops

By Paddy Tobin

As mentioned in the report on the special meeting held at the Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin at the beginning of March, one of the strategies for the conservation of plants of Irish interest is “*the inclusion of ‘plant-groups’ in the strategy. This is where people who are interested in a specific group of plants can network in their propagation and distribution.*” Such a group is already in existence, at present in a very informal and unstructured way but enthusiastic, willing and making headway with research and the collections of Irish snowdrop cultivars.

The initial phase of activity will be the collection of a list of names and of information on snowdrops with an Irish connection. *A Heritage of Beauty* was the obvious place to start and from there we have made contact with a number of people who are enthusiastic collectors of snowdrops. In this way a longer list than that published in *A Heritage of Beauty* has emerged. There is a need to check for synonyms among the names and that work is ongoing at present. Great work has been done by Chris Sanham of West Sussex who is a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable collector of snowdrops, has a great many contacts with other people who share the same interest and a flair for research which is outstanding.

Research to date has led to the following list. I should point out that not all known Irish cultivars are listed. Some are omitted as they growers have not yet published the name for their particular snowdrop or because a snowdrop is being passed about under several informal names and we don’t wish to add any confusion to the situation; better wait until an accepted name has been assigned.

If anyone can add to this list, we would be most anxious, delighted and grateful to hear from you. An account of the snowdrop, description and origin, would also be especially welcome – see my contact details at the bottom of the editorial. If you would like to be kept informed, or become involved in this group, you are most welcome.

G. ‘Brocklamont Seedling’

G. ‘Brenda Troyle’

G. ‘Castlegar’

G. ‘Cicely Hall’

G. ‘Coolballintaggart’

G. ‘Elsae’

G. 'Greenfield'
 G. 'Hill Poe'
 G. 'Kildare'
 G. 'Lady Ainsworth'
 G. 'Macedonicus'
 G. 'Mrs. Rita Rutherford' (an informal name)
 G. 'Pat Schofield'
 G. plicatus 'Newry Giant'
 G. 'Primrose Hill Special No. 1'
 G. 'Primrose Hill Special No. 2'
 G. 'Primrose Hill Special No. 3'
 G. 'Ruby Baker'
 G. 'Serotina Schofield'
 G. 'Straffan'
 G. 'The O'Mahony'
 G. 'The Stalker'
 G. elwesii 'Blaris'
 G. elwesii 'Davis Shackleton'
 G. elwesii 'Drummond Giant'
 G. elwesii 'Robin Hall'
 G. elwesii 'Rowallane'
 G. elwesii 'The Whopper'
 G. ikariae 'Emerald Isle'
 G. nivalis 'Irish Green'
 G. nivalis 'Lady Moore'
 G. nivalis 'Liam Schofield'
 G. nivalis flore pleno 'Nicola'
 G. nivalis X plicatus 'Mark's Tall'
 G. plicatus 'Mary Hely-Hutchinson'
 G. plicatus ex Primrose Hill
 G. 'Rachelae'

This is a working list; corrections, comments and additions are earnestly requested and will be very, very welcome. If you are growing any of the above, please do let me know – I promise not to call to your door with cap in hand! Recording is the first aim; collection is another day's work.

Great praise is due to Paul Cutler of Altamont Gardens in Tullow, Co. Carlow for his now established annual Snowdrop Week. He has raised the general interest in snowdrops and has also gathered the nucleus of an excellent collection which is on view to anybody interested.



Seed Distribution Notes March 2007

By Stephen Butler

Well as I write this in mid March, I've received just over 100 requests for seeds. As usual the list was a mix of the rare and unusual, and the really easy and quick to grow – but isn't that sort of mix one of the great things about our society.

Browsing through seed catalogues it's easy to run up quite a bill quickly, whereas from our scheme you just give it a try – and as the majority of our seed is fresh collected, you might even get better germination! There's also the fact that we normally send out a lot more seed per packet than most commercial catalogues.

How many people out there have a choice plant courtesy of the seed list over the years? – I (and no doubt our Newsletter Editor) would love to know.

So far this year, with a preliminary count only, I have no league table of popularity, you'll just have to wait, we have had a great demand for *Cyclamen mirabile* 'Tilebarn Nicholas', not too surprising, only listed by 5 nurseries in the Plant Finder, and as it is a selection, the seedlings will come true, but probably have some variation within them.

Second to that though has come *Dierama pulcherrimum* (ex 'Blackbird'), which was probably a selection many years ago, and has been diluted down over the years – resultant seedlings will show much variety probably, and will need selecting again for the best form and colour.

To all those who have taken seeds, good growing – and don't forget to pot on some spares for plant sales!

*[The first seed should shortly be ready for harvesting and can be stored in the refrigerator and later sent on to Stephen for the Seed Distribution Scheme.
Address: Stephen Butler, Dublin Zoo, Phoenix Park, Dublin]*



Wonderful Winter Gardens

By Rae McIntyre

Many gardening writers are fond of using clichés. You'll have read about 'the autumn blues', the 'brassy yellow' flowers of late summer (why brassy I wonder because any bits of brass I possess, even unpolished, bear absolutely no resemblance to the yellow of flowers) and the 'spidery blooms' of the hamamelis. God preserve me from ever meeting a spider with a cluster of yellow legs. Snowdrops are invariably described as 'harbingers of spring'. A harbinger is a forerunner, a thing which tells the onset or coming of something. To me snowdrops are the epitome of winter, to be deeply enjoyed in their own right and not to be the forerunner of anything. Margaret Glynn, a consummate galanthophile, has in her beautiful garden in Ballymena, species and hybrids of snowdrops that delight from October until April when the show ends with *Galanthus* 'Baxendale's Late'. She obviously hates their passing and I would say so do June Dougherty and Bob Gordon. June and Bob opened their memorable gardens near Portglenone in mid-February for the I.G.P.S. At the risk of using another cliché their gardens are celebrations of winter.

It was misty in Bob's garden where we went first which was not ideal for photography but gave that little touch of mystery to the place. It was very much a 'bottoms-up' kind of day because people were bending down to look into the many varieties of snowdrops and hellebores. It is almost impossible to distinguish between the different markings of many snowdrops without viewing them in close-up. Hellebores with bowed heads often surprise with their inner markings when they're lifted up because no clue is given by the outside of the petals. The doubles, like the aptly named 'Party Dress Hybrids', are a special delight.

Hellebores are truly amazing plants and it's little wonder that they are so popular or that breeders are having field days breeding them. Their rather saturnine colours of magenta, deep crimson, purple, deep rose are perfectly suited for winter. Warm pinks, whites, blush pink, pale yellows and apple greens add a cheerful note to any winter garden. Much as I love glowing scarlet I sincerely hope no genetic modifier ever breeds a hellebore in this colour.

Bob has countless hellebores in his garden many of which have seedlings around them, another point in favour of the genus; they're not just gorgeous, they're generous as well. Some years ago, Bob (he's generous too) gave me a small seedling which has turned out to be a good doer, white, subtly washed with green within and highlit with

deep crimson spots. Hellebores are very much in the ascendant in his garden in February but if you return in June you're not aware of them because they're quite happy to retire for the warmer months under a summer blanket of herbaceous perennials. The snowdrops will, of course also have disappeared off the face of the



earth by then.

A photograph of the woodland area of Bob's garden from February 2004. Photograph Paddy Tobin

Bob's garden goes on and on. Ask him how big it is and he'll reply, "More than a quarter acre." It is much, much more and there's plenty to see away from the main groupings of hellebores and snowdrops. In one part, close to the stream that runs down the side of the garden, there's a clump of *Narcissus cyclamineus*. The only other one I have seen to equal it was at the R.H.S. Gardens at Wisley

Visitors found the stems of some of the trees very tactile and were stroking the trunks of *Prunus serrula* and *Betula jacquemontii*.

The sun appeared rather tentatively towards lunchtime and some stalwart souls were sitting out eating packed lunches. There seemed to be a general reluctance to leave – always an excellent sign that a garden visit has been a success.

June Dougherty's house and garden can induce flagrant breaking of the tenth commandment. The house was originally a Georgian rectory and is maintained in an

excellent state of repair. It sits among rolling acres (another cliché but that is best how to describe it) of grass and beech trees are the dominant trees on the boundaries of the property. Rhododendrons grow in close proximity to these but June has an efficient computerised system of irrigation so they don't suffer.

There are some special snowdrops growing in sheltered corners but the spectacular main display is of plain *Galanthus nivalis* interspersed with *Crocus tommasinianus*. To June 'a snowdrop is a snowdrop is a snowdrop' and the grass is very liberally spangled with them, carpeted in some places. Another cliché; this is truly an awesome sight. When June and her late husband moved into the property nearly forty years ago there was only one clump of snowdrops inside the gate but she has kept on dividing and replanting them over the years. Every year she hires one of those machines that cut into top few centimetres of turf and roll it back like a carpet. Bulbs that have been dug from elsewhere are chucked unceremoniously on the bare soil and the 'carpet' is rolled back. That's it. The system obviously works because there are tens of thousands of snowdrops. In one place they are so thickly planted that they look like a river of snowdrops flowing down a slight rise in the ground. The purple crocuses complement the snowdrops. Growing in grass they don't seem to flop any which way as they do when grown in beds and keeping to purple shades means they are unattractive to birds which apparently cannot see blue-hued flowers.



June's garden in February 2004 showing the wonderful spread of snowdrops. Photograph: Paddy Tobin.

The first of many of the camellias in June's garden was in flower and these will be followed by the rhododendrons. According to the late Billy Douglas of Portadown, who ran a successful rhododendron nursery, June had one of the best private collections in Ireland. She has been collecting attractive hellebores too.

As I write this in the third week in March spring is officially here but we've had strong northerly winds and very damaging hail showers in recent days. The snowdrops have only little green bobbles of seedheads to remind us of their flowers. There's only one late bloomer in my own garden (I'm only very slightly galanthophilic so I don't know its identity) that seems to have a symbiotic relationship with an astelia. It grows about a foot (30 cm) tall in among the tall astelia leaves and reminds me of a kitten sitting between the paws of an Irish wolfhound. The crocuses, except the large Dutch ones, are flopping on the ground and any yellow ones have been pecked at by the birds. All twelve of the rhododendrons in flower have been frosted and daffodils are prostrate in the beds after gales. The hellebores are not nearly as pristine as they were earlier on.

I am inclined to agree with Mirabel Osler in her book *In the Eye of the Garden* when she wrote,

*For a gardener can there be any words
more cheerless than: 'Winter is over?'*

I would ask if there any words more cheerless than: 'The snowdrops are over?'



Galanthus atkinsii Moccas Form and Narcissus cyclamineus from Bob's garden in February, 2004. Photograph: Paddy Tobin



Regional Reports

Leinster Reports

Karen Foley's lecture, "Planting Styles" at the National Botanic Gardens on 18th January 2007

Many of us "design" our gardens in a somewhat random way with scarcely a nod towards the context and without a mature realisation of the many alternative styles that may be used. Karen Foley lectures in the school of Architecture, landscape and Civil engineering at U.C.D. and in this talk outlined the elements of garden design throughout its history from classical times to the 21st century.

The contrasts and interactions between the rigid classicism of French design as exemplified at Versailles and the softer more informal but no less "designed" gardens of the English school for example at Stowe were shown to have persisted in varying forms up to the present.

In the 20th century varying movements in art history have been reflected in changing emphasis as illustrated in Antoni Gaudi's 1910 art nouveau Parc Guell in Barcelona. Here the hard landscaping takes on a convoluted plant-like form. At Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion of 1929 pure geometry triumphs and plants are routed, leaving a strictly formal relationship between water garden and building. Plants made a reappearance in the Barcelona Olympic Games Park in 1990, but only in a very controlled way and very much subservient to the overall design.

More recent experiments shown included Robert Smithson's spiral design into Lake Utah, Richard Long's landscape art with a strong bias towards the use of stones and Christo's park "wrapping" designs.

These modern approaches have so far not attracted much practical interest in Ireland, but Martha Schwartz whose "Splice Garden" was illustrated has drawn up designs for the area fronting the new Daniel Liebeskind theatre in the south docks area of Dublin. In the future increasing urbanisation will present more challenging conditions for plants and ecology will become more important. The "living wall" at Newbridge

was an example shown.

This highly unusual talk for the I.G.P.S. stimulated many questions for me. Should I call in a landscape artist and the J. C. Bs?

Ah well! Maybe next year.

Dermot Kehoe

Brian Duncan's lecture at the National Botanic Gardens on 22nd February

This talk was a veritable history of daffodil growing in Ireland. As Brian has no less than 402 cultivars registered it is clear that daffodil breeding and hybridising has been his life-long passion. But he is by no means the only Irish grower to achieve fame with these plants.

Daffodils have been grown in Ireland for centuries. By 1629, ninety had been recorded. Nowadays, there are some 26,000 species and cultivars although there are clearly some synonyms. There is still some confusion between the "Lumpers" and the "Splitters" of the Narcissus profession, but some beautiful progeny have emerged from their efforts.

Dean Herbert, around 1850, recognised the potential future of daffodil hybridisation. He was followed by William Baylor Hartland who established a nursery at Mallow and, after 1874, moved to Cork. Hartland is described as a collector rather than a breeder. He is credited with introducing 'Bishop Mann' found in an old garden in Bishopstown, Cork.

Hartland gave all his daffodils botanical names but these names were not really accepted by the R.H.S. However, he was the inspiration for later growers like Fanny Currey of Lismore, Co. Waterford (1848-1917). She had 7 cultivars recorded, among them 'Lismore' and 'Sir Walter Raleigh'. Hartland also inspired Guy Wilson who registered 631 cultivars at Broughshane, Co. Antrim. Among these were 'Vigil' and 'Rowallane'.

Sir Josslyn Gore-Booth of Lissadell, Co. Sligo had approximately 70 cultivars recorded, but had a catalogue of 180 (mostly trumpet) varieties for sale between 1906-1915. He also had "Poultry and Butter for Sale by Post". J. Lionel Richardson of Prospect House Co. Waterford was, according to Brian, "the most successful raiser of daffodils who ever lived". He was encouraged by Sir. Frederick Moore. Richardson dominated the daffodil world for 50 years. He won the Engelheart Cup on 30 occasions, 20 1st class certificates, 71 Awards of Merit, an RHS Gold Medal in 1941, a Veitch Memorial Medal in 1951. In 1961 he became Vice President of the RHS. He left a huge legacy of daffodils in a full range of colours. He is remembered especially

for 'Mary Copeland' an early white and orange double which he later improved to 'Gay Time'. His large range of doubles e.g. 'Salome' and 'Tahiti' are still grown in Holland and are very popular.

Also mentioned were William Dunlop, who registered 132 varieties including 'Newcastle' in 1957, and Tom Bloomer who registered 171. Brian regards the latter as his mentor and Brian took over his business producing 'White Star' and 'Silent Valley' which are still very popular cultivars. This nursery, Ringhaddy Daffodils, was bought on Brian's retirement by Sir Frank Harrison and it continues to trade at Killinchy, with a catalogue from which I hope to purchase some bulbs in the autumn.

Looking at Brian's slides it is clear the lure daffodil hunting can have especially in Andorra and in the Picos de Europa.

The long painstaking route from seed to hybridisation to viable and saleable bulbs is a labour of love. So, what kind of person goes into this business? Brian made some interesting points about them all. They were eternal optimists, but malcontents, never satisfied with apparent "perfection", always seeking further improvements in their plants. Most of them lived very long lives. All of them named too many cultivars and only very few of them remain popular today. None of their children appeared to follow their parents into the profession. Nevertheless, thanks to their efforts and dedication a very wide range of Irish cultivated daffodils will continue to gladden our hearts and our landscape with each new spring.

Mary Bradshaw

Munster Reports

Nigel Everett's lecture: "Plants from the Iveragh"

12th January 2007

Nigel presented us with an informative and entertaining lecture on plants and gardens from the Iveragh from the 16th century onwards. The coastal area of Iveragh evolved on its own because of its geographical isolation and the ruggedness of the landscape. There was regular trading with France and Italy. Among the items imported were wine and plants, while fish and timber were exported. Smuggling of goods was commonplace.

In the 16th century, the chiefs of the area were the MacCarthys and the O' Sullivans. At Ballycarbery the MacCarthys imported jasmine, roses and exotic fruits. Gardens contained medicinal plants and roses. The status symbols were goshawks and apples.

In 1790, at Derryquin Castle, 200 acres were set aside for a landscaped park which was used for walking and horse riding. Trees were for ornament, not for timber; cutting them down was considered undignified. In 1810 a walled garden was added in the same style as the castle.

In 1800, there was no garden at Derrynane, just shrubbery around the house and an orchard. Daniel O' Connell preferred hurling, shooting and hunting.

From 1860 to 1920, due to poverty, disorganisation and land purchase agreements, landlords became totally disengaged from their estates and focused instead on their gardens. In an effort to express their own identity they planted their gardens with plants from anywhere outside Ireland and England. Plants came from South America, Australia, New Zealand and China. In 1870, at Derreen near Kenmare, the Marquis of Landsdowne planted rhododendrons, eucalyptus and the tree fern, *Dicksonia antarctica*. The fresh, damp and warm climatic conditions at Derreen suited these plants and they began to grow faster and bigger than in their native lands and soon got the attention of the Royal Horticultural Society.

In 1910, John Annan Bryce, M.P. and his wife, Violet le Strange, began plans for a garden at Innacullin, Garnish Island. Good soil was introduced and shelterbelts of trees were put in place. An Italian style garden was built with pavilions and a viewing terrace called, 'The Temple of the Winds'. Plants were gathered from the four corners of the earth, Australian bottlebrushes, New Zealand tea trees, Italian cypress, Dawn Redwoods from China, pines from Tasmania, Chilean Flame trees, northern shrubs, such as azaleas, dogwoods and pieris and southerners, such as Olearias, Eucryphia and Mimosa. In 1910, Innacullin was simply a barren and rocky island; now it is often compared with the Garden of Eden.

Over time and with the progress of modern development, most of these ancient gardens have disappeared (with the exceptions of Innacullin and Derreen) most without trace, most being replaced by hotels, golf courses and, at Derrynane, by a municipal park.

This was a most appropriate and inspiring lecture, totally in line with the aims of the I.G.P.S. – going forward by going back to our roots.

Michael Kelleher

Stephen Redden's lecture, "Spring Planting inspired by Graham Stuart Thomas" on the 2nd March at SMA Hall Wilton Cork

Some members of the committee were certainly a little fitter and possibly a few stone

lighter after carrying at least a hundred potted plants up the stairs to the meeting room prior to the talk given by Stephen Redden. The effort was all worth it as a most enjoyable and entertaining evening was had by all present.

Stephen started his career in horticulture at Van Veens nursery in Limerick, but then started his own nursery, called Hillberry Nursery at Crecora near Limerick over seven years ago. Stephen gets most of his inspiration from Graham Stuart Thomas and I gather that he owns most of the famous man's books. He has a special interest in the Magnolia family. Stephen went through most of the material that he had brought to the lecture, giving very useful tips about the plants accompanied by some very funny anecdotes. On talking about hellebores, he advised us that the best time to remove the old leaves was immediately after your Christmas dinner, although I guess there would not be too many people enthusiastic enough to do this. He brought along some rather expensive and special tree peonies including 'Claire de Lune' and 'High Noon'. I, for one, am glad I had the foresight to leave my chequebook behind!

By the end of the evening, we were all exhausted by the knowledge and unbridled enthusiasm of this very true nurseryman!

Martin Edwards

Paul Maher's lecture, "Tender plants at home in Irish gardens" (Experiments with USDA zone 9 and 10 plants.) on the 2nd March at SMA Hall Wilton Cork

Paul Maher paid us a visit in Cork on Feb. 2nd '07. His talk was entitled 'Tender plants at home in Irish Gardens.' It proved very topical. Temperatures in winter are gradually rising, and consequently we can experiment with tender subjects in our planting schemes. Of course not all will survive. We have to be prepared for that. The secret is to use plants that you can afford to lose, so to speak. Ideally have a second plant for back-up, but remember 'never venture never win'

Paul's advice was to venture forth, and experiment with all sorts of plant material.

He first explained the USDA classification of zones. Formulated by the United States Dept. of Agriculture, the system is now internationally recognised, though not entirely foolproof. Basically it is a plant hardiness map, which charts the average winter minimum temperatures, to create a series of zones. Zone 1 starts at -46*. The zones relevant for Ireland are 8, 9, and 10. At a broad glance you could categorise the midlands as 8, the coastland areas as 9, with some zone 10 areas on gulf-stream influenced coasts. From 8 & 9 we are probably moving up to 9 & 10, and zone 11, which is above 4* may be edging closer if global warming continues.

Gardening is all about control of the environment to produce plants. It is about getting as many plants to perform in a given area, to produce maximum interest. Hence our need for, and interest in new plants, and indeed, old plants adapting in new ways.

With the aid of beautiful slides and very digestible commentary, Paul then proceeded to take us through the results of experiments conducted in the NBG during, and since, the restoration of the glasshouses there. As there were logistical problems in housing the many plants, some were trialled in the open air, out of necessity. The results were remarkable in many cases, and now there are several specimens growing happily out of doors, which previously enjoyed much higher temperatures indoors. In several cases the plants are more robust, and in some cases have produced healthy offspring e.g. a *Phoenix canariensis* has a 6' replacement growing alongside.

For many, many years the custom in the NBG has been to house certain plants indoors for winter and take them into the open from April to September. This always involved a lot of work. In 2000 they undertook a new experiment with these plants. With a bit of lateral thinking a walled front yard, which had been earmarked for utilities, was found to be eminently suitable. With plenty of shelter and warm south facing walls it was waiting to be pressed into service. The results were amazing, and very gratifying. After many years a refreshing change in routine took place, which freed up time and energy for other tasks. A lot of learning took place also. Examples of plants in this experiment are *Musa silkinensis*, which grew to 12', *Puya alpestris*, *echiums*, *Auaucaria cunninghamii*, *Cussoina paniculata*, *Doryphora sassafras* etc.

What application does all this have for us?

Already we have found some plants happily making it through the winter in the garden. So the advice is to experiment further. Buy plants that are borderline, find a sheltered spot and give it a go. Use south and west facing walls and create sheltered corners. Take a chance even with some houseplants. See how they survive, and possibly thrive outside in a sheltered airy spot. Be prepared for some losses, but also for great surprises, and above all for more variety.

Some examples of zone 9 and 10 plants:

<i>Melaleuca wilsonii.</i>	<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>
<i>Holboellia coriacea</i>	<i>Aloe striata</i>
<i>Buddlei farreri</i>	<i>Ficus pumila</i>
<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	<i>Firmiana simplex</i>
<i>Olea europea</i>	<i>Butia capitata</i>
<i>Psuedopanax lessoneii</i>	<i>Cussoina paniculata</i>
<i>Cordyline australis atropurpurea</i>	<i>Citrus species</i>

T. Murphy.



Annual General Meeting Agenda

Irish Garden Plant Society Annual General Meeting 2007

The 26th Annual General Meeting will be held in the Woodlands Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick on Saturday 5th May 2007, starting at 10:00 a.m.

All members are welcome

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM, 2005
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Election of Committee Members
7. A.O.B.

NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE

Nominations for election to the Committee must be forwarded to the Honorary Secretary, I.G.P.S. c/o The National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, at least two weeks before the Annual General Meeting.

All nominations must be in writing and signed by two paid-up members of the Society and by the Nominee.

[See 'Snippets' for some information on accommodation in the area.]



AGM Garden Previews

By Martin Edwardes

A Preview of the Gardens to be visited during the Irish Garden Plant Society AGM 2007. The society will be visiting three gardens on the Saturday and four gardens on the Sunday. For those who wish to stay until the Monday, the committee can recommend some interesting nurseries to visit.

Saturday 5th May

After the AGM in the morning, we will be visiting a lovely award winning garden situated in an old estate. It is full of rose beds, shrubberies and herbaceous borders and magnificent two hundred year old trees. It has a recently restored Victorian glasshouse and a very substantial four acre walled garden of which only two are worked. Within the walled garden, there are good mixed beds of Lilies, white Phlox, Daisies, Cosmos and Asters standing in front of a background of shrubs, such as Acer, Fuschia and Potentilla. There is a very large rose garden containing over a thousand bushes of which the owner is very proud. There are precious plants, uncommon varieties and roses that cannot be easily found, which were grown from cuttings. There is a fine alpine garden near the house containing raised beds of herbs and flowers in easy loose lines with lots of lavender baking in the sun. The owner is also very passionate about trees and has many very mature specimens.

After lunch we will be visiting a relatively new garden sitting in half an acre. This garden was started in 1993 and has also won awards. Although small, the garden is packed full interesting plants a lot of which have been grown from seed. It is not just a collection of plants, but the layout is arranged well with seating areas everywhere and a little wildlife pond well bridged and edged with cannas, lilies, golden gardener's garters and bullrushes. There is a tiny wooded area full of anemone, bluebells and lily of the valley. There are masses of attractive and unusual plants in the garden including *Duchesnea indica*, the mock strawberry, with red fruits that the birds do not like. This is a truly inspiring garden which will be of particular interest to those who work in a restricted space.

The final garden for Saturday is a beautiful rural prize-winning garden comprising of two acres of mature trees and shrubs in a farm setting. It contains an extensive herbaceous border with many unusual perennials. The garden contains a pool, pergola and arches covered with Roses, Clematis, Jasmine and a topiary section called "Animal

Farm”. Another hidden gem is a vegetable plot and an orchard full of various kinds of fruit.

Sunday 6th May

The first garden of the day is situated in a five hundred acre wooded demesne on the banks of the river Shannon. Formal pleasure gardens surround a castle which is covered lightly with *Wisteria* and *Rosa banksiae* and where spring is marked by *Camellias*, *Magnolia cambellii* and *Sophora tetreptera* in bloom. There is a formal garden next to the Castle with classical busts perched in niches cut into the hedges. An avenue of *Cordylines*, the babies of a big specimen elsewhere in the garden, leads out from the lawn towards an intriguing gateway that is glimpsed through the trees. There are many magnificent trees and shrubs to see in the surrounding area, including a canopy of very mature oaks, under planted with tree ferns. There is also a full working walled garden occupying two acres which is brim-full of vegetables and flowers.

We will then travel to another award winning one acre garden overlooking the Shannon. The garden contains many tender plants from the Southern Hemisphere planted in rockeries, herbaceous beds and a sunken garden. There is a greenhouse, conservatory and a vegetable garden. Close to the entrance there is a small and very perfect alpine bed which faces south and bakes in the sun. There is a small arbour facing the alpine bed so one can view the contents of the bed. Close to the alpine bed there is a lily pond, overlooked by a pretty shrub of *Griselinia littoralis* “Bantry Bay”. The herbaceous bed on one side contains *Delphiniums*, *Irises* and other blue flowers. On the other side there is bed containing yellow *Ligularia*, *Rudbekia*, *Alstromeria* and *Solidago*. The garden is well planted with small garden trees such as Myrtle(*Luma apiculata*) and there is a *Sambucus* laced through by the flowers of *Rosa* ‘Nevada’.

The third garden that we will be visiting is on a three acre natural site on three levels overlooking the Shannon estuary. This garden has been managed and worked by three generations over a period of seventy years. Originally the garden was based on collections of *Rhododendrons*, *Camellias* and *Azaleas* which thrive on the acid soil that dominates this garden, but laterally the planting has been varied by introducing bamboos, tree ferns and *Candelabra primulas*. *Roses*, *Clematis* and *Hydrangeas* bloom between a number of water features. Mature trees and an arboretum underplanted with daffodils offer interest throughout the year.

The last visit of the day is to a very interesting garden that is very close to the Shannon estuary. It has a magnificent collection of Southern hemisphere plants such as phoenix, tree ferns and cordylines. The couple who run this garden are at the cutting edge of the modern trend of exotic gardening and are testing the barriers all the time. This garden is a real treat for the “expert”.



Snippets

Annual General Meeting Weekend

Accommodation Information:

Hotel: Woodlands Hotel Adare tel +353 (61) 605100

Some Bed and Breakfast establishments

- Abbey Villa Kildimo Road +353 (61) 396323
- Avona House Kildimo road +353 (61) 396857
- Berkeley Lodge Station Road +353 (61) 396857
- Carrigane House Reinroe +353 (61) 396778
- Castleview House Clonshine +353 (61) 396394
- Churchview House Kildimo Road +353 (61) 396371
- Clonunion House Limerick Rd +353 (61) 396657

and there are numerous others.

Garden Trail in the South-East:

Thirteen private gardens open from 5th to 17th June 2007 inclusive. Further information from Margaret Power, Tel: 051-851111 or e-mail abbeyroadgardens@hotmail.com

West Cork Garden Trail:

The West Cork Garden Trail in association with the Harold Barry Trust will run from the 9th -24th June. Contact Phemie Rose for details: kilravock1@eircom.net

Visit to Kilmacurragh:

Seamus O'Brien has dropped me a note to say that regretfully he will not be in Kilmacurragh to show the visiting IGPS group around but instead Phillip Quisted from the Kilmacurragh Guide staff will be there to greet and guide you. Seamus will be travelling to Chile with a small group of Glasnevin staff to collect for Kilmacurragh at the time of your visit.

Senior College Dun Laoghaire, Official Opening by Diarmuid Gavin

Diarmuid Gavin will officially open Senior College, Dun Laoghaire's (SCD) graduate exhibition on Tuesday 15th May at 6.00pm. The exhibition, which will take place over three days from May 16th to 19th in Dun Laoghaire Town Hall, represents the culmination of three years hard work by the student body. For further information about the exhibition or SCD's range of educational opportunities, call save 1800 COLLEGE / 1800 2655343 or log onto www.scd.ie



Grass Cutting – Parisian Style

By Bob Bradshaw

This sports arena in Paris has a grass covered roof. Unlike most grass roofs that are

flat, this one has a very pronounced angle. I pass it from time to time and I always wondered how they ever managed to cut the grass, given the steepness of the slope. Did they use a special team of trained mountain-goats?



I never imagined that in the middle of November all would be revealed, as I came across a three man crew cutting the grass. How is it done? Simple really!

Mr B on top controls the mower, marked as A; Mr. C watches out immediately below, in part to ensure no stray kids get into the works, and Mr D has a role to ensure that the wire-guided lawnmower moves along. For each lawn stripe, the mower descends, centred on two wires, cutting away, rather like a window cleaner's cage climbs down a building. It stops at the

end of the run, returns back upward, giving a second cut to the same stripe. Then Mr B and Mr D move it on to the next downward cut. It must be a costly exercise.

They also had a hover mower to reach the places the other mower could not reach.

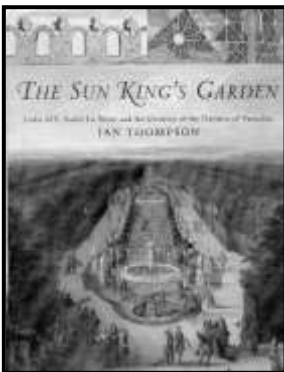
It is nice to cut grass on the flat, is it not?



Worth a Read

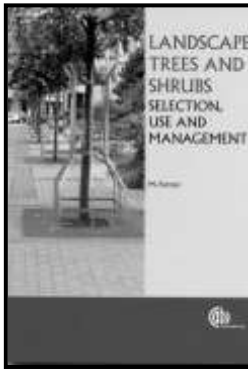
Gardening books are legion and to stand out from the general literature a book has to have something special to offer. I now assiduously avoid the 'how-to' type of book, not that I know it all but that this type of book in general revisits the very basic aspects of gardening again and again as though there was an unending queue of novice gardeners awaiting instruction. This approach reflects the general content of our gardening television programmes so very closely. Here in the Republic of Ireland, we have no home-made television programme on air at the moment but can receive the Northern Ireland programme from Greenmount Gardens and the B.B.C's. Gardeners' World where a group of 'expert' gardeners find they have to re-do the herbaceous borders for, it is?, the third time and the pond also for the third time, I believe, and all this within three years of starting work in this garden. Nor can I abide watching the Greenmount presenter showing propagation techniques even one more time. I am tired of seeing and reading about the humdrum activities of the garden; there is plenty of that for me at home. When I read, I want to read something which will take me away from the routine and transport me to new realms, eras, characters, and speciality areas of horticulture. I like a book with a bit of body to it, good solid content presented in a pleasant, clear and readable style. Fortunately, books of such quality are available though it may be necessary to search for them. Though I live in a reasonably big town, the selection of gardening books available in the best bookshop is very restricted indeed.

Here is a selection of my recent reading: Ian Thompson's *'The Sun King's Garden'* was a great book, fulfilled all my requirements listed above, was an informative, well-written and startlingly revealing read. Louis XIV was a fanatical gardener who had the wealth to turn his dreams and whims into reality. He also had the service of an outstanding gardener, Andre Le Notre, who being in character almost a direct opposite to the King proved to be the perfect partner to plan and build the gardens at Versailles. Louis used Versailles not only as his garden but it was also here that he held court; it was here that the great and mighty of France waited on their King's every whim; here he controlled them and manipulated them to his will. One of the fascinating facets of this book is the account of how the lowly gardener, son of a gardener, enjoyed the King's trust for a period of over forty years and who at his death had accumulated a substantial art



collection. The accounts of the garden itself are simply amazing. Louis' Grand Parc extended to 19,800 acres and the gardens at Versailles still cover 1,890 acres, about twice the size of Central Park in New York. Far more than simply the story of a garden, this book interweaves politics, war, romance, great friendship, intrigue, subterfuge and all centred in this great garden. Gardening was never so exuberantly exciting and this book captures the times in an informative, entertaining and readable manner. Well worth a read. [*The Sun King's Garden*, Ian Thompson, Bloomsbury, London, 2006, HB, 370p. ISBN 0 7475 76483, £30]

Difficult as it is to imagine, only six trees and 15 shrubs account for 75% of the plants purchased for landscaping purposes in Great Britain. Things are no different here in Ireland but a new book by Mary Forrest, *Landscape Trees and Shrubs – Selection,*



Use and Management, aims to rectify this situation by providing an informative book which is easy to use and will be of considerable assistance to those who work in landscaping. It begins with a description of the functional uses of trees and shrubs, outlines their ornamental features, digresses to outline plant nomenclature, and describes plant families and their functional use and management in landscape schemes. The author explores examples of plant associations both as examples of how plants could be used in landscaping and also as a starting point which might inspire those working in this field to broaden their selection plants and the uses they make of them. I could not say that this book has direct application for the everyday gardener; it is more in

the style of a textbook and I imagine that is where the author sees it being used.

Nonetheless, it presents a large amount of information in a very concise, clear and well organised manner which is easy to access and should the landscape contractors of the country make use of it, then our planted environment will certainly improve. Best wishes and every success to Mary, an I.G.P.S. member, with this book. [*Landscape Trees and Shrubs – Selection, Use and Management*, Mary Forrest, CABI, Oxon, SB, 179p, ISBN-10: 1 84593 054 1]

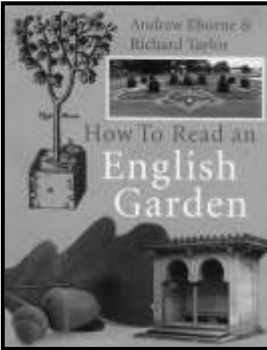


Vista - The Culture and Politics of Gardens is certainly a gardening book with a difference. This is a collection of sixteen essays which deal with areas rarely covered in horticultural writing – the philosophical meanings of gardens, the assumptions behind the idea of ‘naturalistic planting’ and the notion of gardening as installation art. Some of these essays present a challenging and thought-provoking read; others less so; but all are entertaining and interesting. [*Vista – The Culture and Politics of Gardens*, edited by Noel Kingsbury & Tim Richardson, Frances Lincoln, London, 2005, HB, 191p, ISBN 07112 2575 3, £16.99]



On his retirement some years ago the President of the British Allotment Association gave his single most important piece of advice: “*No man should have a garden bigger than his wife can handle*”. I have always followed this piece of advice and in this vein I recently gave my wife a copy of Liz Leendertz’s ***The Half Hour Allotment*** when she said she would take over the vegetable patch this year. She has read it and reports that it is excellent, basic, simple, tells her what she needs to know, no frills, down-to-earth and she guarantees that the veg. this year will be better than I ever grew. We shall see. She recommends

the book to anyone making a start on vegetable growing. [*The Half Hour Allotment*, Liz Leendertz, Frances Lincoln, London, 2006, HB, 160p, ISBN 13: 978-0-7112-2605-0, £16.99]



Were it not for the fact that the title has already been covered by copyright I imagine this book by Andrew Eburne & Richard Taylor could well have been titled, ‘The English Garden for Dummies’ however, it is instead ***How to Read an English Garden***. There are two other books in this series, *How to Read a Church* and *How to Read a Country House*. This aims to be a handbook for the 15 million who visit gardens in the UK each year, giving an account of the different elements of gardens of all ages and explains their meaning and their history. The major gardening styles and trends are well covered as are many interesting asides to inform on garden design, plant

introductions, the personalities of English gardens and much, much more. This is a very pleasant and interesting read, well worth your time. Be informed at your ease. [*How to Read an English Garden*, Andrew Eburne & Richard Taylor, Ebury Press, London, 2006, HB, 272p, ISBN 0 091 90900 7, £25]



Finally, and briefly, a whopper of a book from Ursula Buchan with photographs by Andrew Lawson, ***The English Garden***. The author aims to give a sense of the extraordinary richness and diversity of the English domestic garden. Organised by theme and describing a number of styles the book gives an excellent account of the trends and garden makers who have shaped the English garden. The photography is simply outstanding presenting fabulous images of beautiful gardens and plants. A beautiful book! [*The English Garden*, Ursula Buchan, Photographs by Andrew Lawson, Frances Lincoln, London, 2006, HB, 383p, ISBN 10: 0-7112-2638-5, £25]



The Newsletter of the Irish Garden Plant Society

The Irish Garden Plant Society

The Aims of the Society are:

- **The study of plants cultivated in Ireland, and their history.**
- **The development of horticulture in Ireland**
- **The education of members on the cultivation and conservation of garden plants.**
- **To research and locate garden plants considered rare or in need of conservation, especially those raised in Ireland by Irish gardeners and nurserymen.**
- **To co-operate with horticulturalists, botanists, botanical and other gardens, individuals and organisations in Ireland and elsewhere in these matters.**
- **To issue and publish information on the garden plants of Ireland and to facilitate the exchange of information with those interested individuals and groups.**

Correspondence: The Irish Garden Plant Society, c/o The National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9. (Please note that staff at the Botanic Gardens cannot take telephone enquiries about the IGPS. They simply facilitate by providing a postal address for the convenience of committee members.)

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