



THE ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY
ULSTER GROUP



Newsletter No. 17 August 2018



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Editorial

Around 17 to 18 years ago Margaret Glynn suggested that instead of sending out an A4 page with the programme we should be more ambitious and have a Newsletter. This would not compete with the AGS Bulletin – now the Alpine Gardener – but more to give local news and information and as secretary I was responsible for the first one. Over the years, thanks to all the contributions from members and friends and with Liam's help in putting it together, I have acted as

editor for the Newsletter. Last year I felt it was time for a fresh look and a change and, as my sister-in-law said, I really should give someone else a chance. While I have enjoyed doing it and am happy to continue helping as is Liam, this time I hope the committee will find a new editor. Again, thanks to all the members who contributed so much in the past and made it all happen.

As this is my swansong I have taken the liberty of putting in my own pet hobbyhorses. These include encouraging seed sowing, advertising our excellent meetings as I feel they should be more widely known, and both giving and getting support from all the societies and everyone interested in gardening in Ireland, more especially alpinists.

From a weather point of view the past year has been challenging with rain starting in July 2017 until well into the New Year, then a long freezing spell, a few storms with the 'Beast from the East'. followed by one of our warmest summers and a hosepipe ban.

The trip to Birr in early June was therefore all the more welcome and I must congratulate Agnes and Cilla for one of the most enjoyable Ulster AGS tours I have been on along with friends and members of the Irish Garden Plant Society. My thanks also to Don Patterson who has both written and illustrated a very full account which helps to keep it in all our memories. The early snowdrop day, our summer tour and the late summer day (which unfortunately I miss this year) all seem to come just at the right time so thanks to all who put time and effort into ensuring their success.

My thanks also to Mrs Penny Moodie and Mrs Elizabeth McPherson for material and thoughts on Dr. Molly Sanderson which seemed appropriate this year.

As you will see we have some wonderful speakers on the programme who, after a real summer, will (almost) make me look forward to the winter this year – I think it will help to shorten it for everyone.

Joan McCaughey, Ed.

AGS Visit to Birr - June 2018

Monday, 4th June 2018

It was with great anticipation that 30-plus members joined the Ulsterbus coach for the Garden Visits tour covering various counties west of Dublin. We stayed at the County Arms Hotel, on the outskirts of Birr. The weather outlook was good and everyone was looking forward to some exciting gardens.

Collon House

Collon House was built in 1740 by Anthony Foster, Lord Chief Baron of the Irish Exchequer, and was the home of the famous John “Speaker” Foster, his son.



Despite, or more possibly due to, long periods of neglect, much of the house retained its original architectural features and has, more recently, gone through a period of restoration and conservation. Built in the style of an Irish Long House, it is located at the main crossroads in the town of Collon in the Boyne valley.

Although it fronts onto the main street, it has interesting rear and side gardens plus a small centrally located courtyard where a group of hostas was the main feature.

Collon house has been comprehensively refurnished with an eye-watering selection of period antiques and artwork, sufficient to enthrall the keenest antique or art collector and resulted in numerous questions from our tour group.



Outside, the house is approached from the side by a short curved driveway lined by high mature trees, bedecked with climbing roses plus a small raised garden area of perennials and shrub roses. As we gathered outside the rear entrance door to be welcomed by the owner, we were ushered through a stone paved passageway into two period dining-rooms laid out

for refreshments. These had been converted from original carriage houses at the rear of the main house.



The main side garden is a long rectangular area divided into two distinct garden spaces; the first being a lawn area bounded by broad perennial beds and separated from the main road by a very high laurel hedge. Roses and peony were to the fore in this planted area but it had an excellent selection of other

perennials and herbaceous plants.

The second, located towards the front of the house, consisted of a sunken, box lined, parterre with a raised stone walkway surrounding it. The area also included the original front (side) door and porch accessed by a small gate and steps from the main street.



In all, an excellent stop for refreshments and certainly outranks the Applegreen at Lusk.

Gash Gardens

Gash is a small garden centre, '**Keenan's Nursery**', with a sizeable rose, perennial and woodland garden attached. The name of 'Gash' originated from that of the local townland and it is run by a husband and wife team who live in an attractive stone cottage on site. The garden centre stocked a comprehensive range of familiar plants together with some more unusual items.



The house's rear garden, situated on a reverse sloping site, had numerous roses and shrubs plus an area of rockery planting.

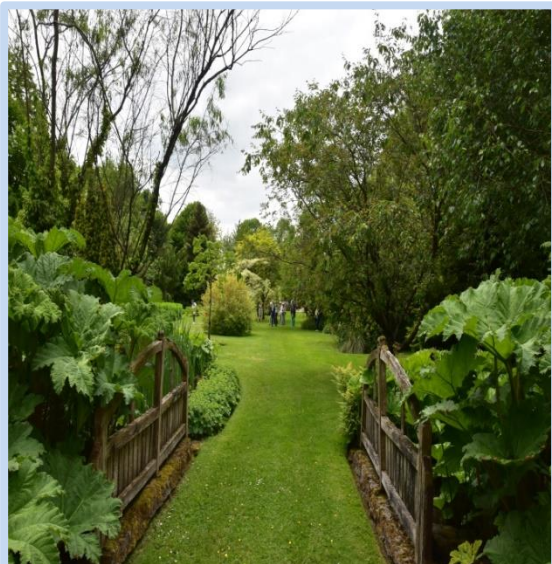
The first area of the main garden, which extended to several acres, had a substantial section of azalea and rhododendron planting which, unfortunately, was now past its best but also included a great selection of ornamental grasses of varying textures and sizes.



Winding paths led down to a major feature pond with a water pipe cascade which dropped about 8 feet into its centre. A small stream which branched in several places and incorporated a number of small islands, ran the length of the woodland gardens. The open woodland area had many interesting and unusual

trees and shrubs and was well recovered following major damage by the hurricane last year. Tea, tray-bakes and cake were served on the upper lawn followed by a short period to allow members to peruse the wide range of plants on sale.

Altogether a very enjoyable late afternoon visit.



Tuesday, 5th June 2018

Fancroft Mill and Gardens : garden designed by Angela Jupe`

This was the first of three gardens designed by Angela Jupe.

Fancroft is located on a tributary of the *Little Brosna* river, part of the greater Shannon system, and is about 4km north of the town of Roscrea, Co Tipperary. The name 'Fancroft' comes from the Irish 'Fion Choradh' meaning White Weir. The imposing five storey mill buildings, now restored by the present owners Marcus &

Irene Sweeney, were originally commenced in 1780, with a number of later additions. The current dwelling house at Fancroft dates from c1820. The Mill now produces its own flour and provides a water-powered electricity supply to the house and mill. It also has an excellent tea room.



It was during a period in the 1990s when Angelia Jupe lived at 'Fancroft' that the gardens were designed and created. They consist of a beautiful walled garden, built from stone recovered from a Pim family house destroyed by fire. The Pim family were the original Quaker family who built the Mill.

There was much to see and enjoy in the walled garden including a large selection



of alpine plants, spreading randomly across a circular paved area, some identifiable and others still to be identified. A circular dovecote style tower folly, complete with external stone steps to its upper floor, was located at one end of the garden and presented an idyllic photographic opportunity. A true haven for the enthusiastic alpinist and all photographers.

Beyond the walled garden there is a substantial woodland garden with its own stream, a small display and photographic gallery and all traversed by several woodland garden paths with areas devoted to ‘wildflower meadow’ planting.



Oxmantown Mall Garden, Birr

(guided tour by Angela Jupe, the garden Designer)

Oxmantown Mall, Birr is a tree lined street of opulent Georgian townhouse only a stone's throw from the walls of Birr Castle. Angela Jupe was engaged to redesign the long rectangular garden which is located to the rear of a sizeable cobbled



courtyard, complete with box-hedged beds and a curved glass conservatory. A modern interpretation of a sundial stands centrally in the courtyard directly in front of the stone pillars complete with wrought iron gates leading into the garden.

The first section of the garden is a classical cross-shaped geometrical layout with a wide central path, bordered with blue nepeta, together with a square pool and fountain at its midpoint.



Short cross paths to right and left of the fountain led to steps up to a narrow raised lawn plus a broad bedding area along each boundary wall. The rear of this area of garden has steps leading to a classical style summer house beyond which was the second and smaller section of the garden. In contrast, this consists of a sunken circular grassed area surrounded by a raised path and bounded on all sides by flower beds. These were filled with masses of flowering plants with many varieties of peony in prominence.

Bellfield Gardens- home of Angela Jupe

Bellfield House was originally a farmhouse with numerous outbuildings now converted into self-contained accommodation. When Angela Jupe first bought the property, including its walled gardens, the gardens had been neglected for many years and were complete overgrown with self-sown trees and shrubs. She set to and cleared the site and restored the original formal network of paths throughout the garden. Specimen trees were retained and an extensive mixed planting bed was created along three of the walls.

These are now planted with a great variety of perennials intermingled with numerous climbing and rambling roses. Four smaller gardens areas in the centre had wild flower meadow planting with hardy orchids and pleiones in bloom. Irises and lilies were also plentiful.





An eastern 'temple-style' summer house occupied a central spot in the garden with exotic hand painted scenes on the internal wall. Somewhere cool and shady to hide away from all the cares of the world.

The fourth side of the garden was designed around a long rectangular

water feature with a circular pool at one end and a large conservatory/orangery at the other. Rows of blue iris bounded the main water feature and the circular pond was full of newts, a creature seldom seen in modern gardens. The 'piece-de-resistance' was a giant bronze dragonfly sculpture skimming along the surface of the main pond.

Altogether a most enjoyable sight.

At the end of our allotted time we all drifted towards the plant sales area, in an adjacent barn, where they were plants to satisfy all tastes.



A peaceful and quiet haven with much to see.



Wednesday 6th June 2018

Fruitlawn Gardens near Abbeyleix, Co Laois (Arthur Shackleton : Garden Designer & Consultant)

In 1999, Arthur Shackleton transformed two derelict farm buildings and their accompanying land outside Abbeyleix, Co. Laois, into his own garden. He shares Fruitlawn with artist, Carol Booth, and grows a wide selection of plants originally from his father, David Shackleton's garden at Beech Park in Clonsilla. It has been called "enchanted" for its "billowing borders and quiet corners" by The Irish Garden Magazine.



The main planting area to the side of the house was absolutely packed with a phenomenal range of large perennial and herbaceous plants, ornamental grasses and shrubs arranged in two broad borders with a path up the centre.

At the furthest point, plant sales were housed within the ruined walls of an old building with many unusual plants on offer.

A second section of this garden included a small orchard and wildflower meadow and the final section contained vegetables and soft fruit.

Refreshments were served on the terrace in the small garden immediately to the rear of the house which also has a range of colourful herbaceous border plants on display.



Wildflower garden at Fruitlawn

Burtown House & Gardens, Athy, Co Kildare

Burtown House, an early Georgian villa, is surrounded by 10 acres of lush flower, vegetable and woodland gardens with beautiful park and farmland walks. The gardens at Burtown are unusual in that they were worked by three generations of the family; the late Wendy Walsh, one of Ireland's finest botanical artists; Wendy's daughter the painter Lesley Fennell, and her son James, a professional photographer.



The gardens at Burtown are made up of several areas, including large herbaceous borders, shrubberies, a rock garden, a yew walk divided by a pergola, a sundial garden, an old orchard, a more formal stable yard garden, a walled organic vegetable garden and a large woodland garden surrounded on all sides by water.



The stable yard buildings also house an artists' school concentrating on the many fine vistas to be found within the gardens. The Green Barn provided refreshments and a display of many fine items of art work.

An interesting garden with many fine views and colourful planting but with a structure more akin to that of public gardens.

Thursday, 7th June 2018 - Time to return home.

Coolcarrigan House (Naas, Co Kildare)

The Georgian house, dating from 1830s, was built by Robert Mackay Wilson and was originally used as a hunting lodge. The house is now occupied by the 6th generation of the same family.

A fantastic 15 acre garden full of rare and unusual trees at the end of a long avenue. The arboretum contains many rarities, and a special wildflower meadow. Coolcarrigan gardens give a continuous display of colour all year.



A major renovation program was undertaken in the 1970's after the garden was hit by a windstorm. Some clearing of a mature and rather overgrown Victorian garden had been done. A storm in January 1972 caused devastation and major replanting took place with the assistance of Sir Harold Hillier, the eminent English plantsman. The arboretum was extended by an additional seven acres in 2003 with many new rarities, and a special wild flower meadow.

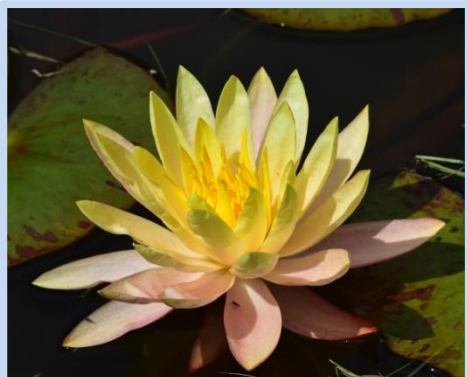


Although primarily an arboretum, Coolcarrigan's gardens are adequately complemented with a fine lawn, an elegant greenhouse

and a superb lily pond. For those who did not want to walk through the demesne, a quiet seat at the side of the lawn both delighted the eye, rested the body and worked wonders for the mind. Blue tits nested in the stone wall and bees buzzed as they flew from their nest in the eaves of the house.



‘Coolcarrigan’Gardens - An ideal place for rest and contemplation.



Homeward Bound

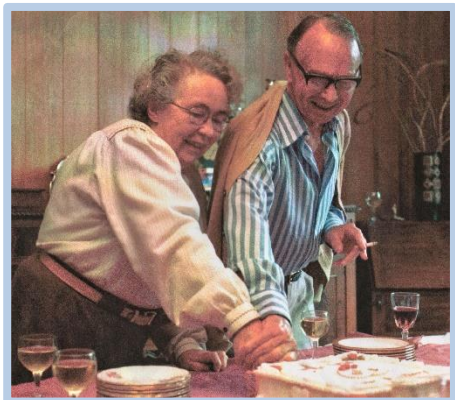
We arrived home, as is usual on these occasions, with many plants, but fully contented that we had enjoyed the journey.



Dr Molly Sanderson

An appreciation of the life and contribution to the Ulster Group of the Alpine Garden Society of Dr Mary Elizabeth Sanderson – ‘Dr Molly’.

At our last Annual General Meeting many members noted that the name of Dr Molly Sanderson was no longer attached to a particular lecture on the programme card and, although she had been mentioned in earlier newsletters, I realised that she was unknown to many of our newer members.



In 1993/94 President Molly Sanderson decided to sell her complete set of A.G.S. Bulletins and present the proceeds to the group for an award, trophy or some other suitable purpose. The committee decided a lecture would be appropriate and

augmented the funds with plant sales. With Molly in agreement this meant that for a period of time the Ulster Group would be able to finance at least one well-known alpine lecturer a year and by this ensure her love of alpinism could be carried on and inspire future enthusiasts. Over the years many eminent speakers, including Roy Lancaster and Christopher Grey-Wilson, were honoured to give the Dr Molly Sanderson Lecture. However, that original donation has long since expired and, while for many years members of Molly's family faithfully attended, both her daughters had moved to England and recently found it more difficult to come, expressing the view that they did not think it would have continued for so long.

Her daughter, Mrs Penny Moodie, and her half-sister, Mrs Elizabeth McPherson, (a medical colleague and friend of mine) were keen that the Newsletter would bring a conclusion and it is really their words that I have brought together in this tribute to Dr Molly. I did not know her myself but I do remember visiting her retirement garden in Ballymoney and also was at the inaugural lecture in 1994 which was given by Helen Dillon at Molly's request. Although in poor health and requiring oxygen she was able through her determination to attend the lecture.

Molly was born in 1913 in Belfast and her early life wasn't easy as her mother died when she was a child and her only full sister was to die early. School was Belfast Royal Academy and from there she went to Queen's University, gaining University Colours for hockey, before qualifying in Medicine in 1938, also graduating with a B.Sc. in physiology.

Elizabeth, her younger half-sister and a doctor, tells me it wasn't easy for a young woman doctor working in Belfast during the Blitz and, as in all wars, having to deal with death and body parts, something we all prefer to forget.

In 1944 she married Noel, also a doctor who had served in the R.A.F. during the war, before they both settled down to family life and general practice in Ballymoney, just at the start of the National Health Service.

At that time there were no fixed hours of service, the surgery was their own home and there were no mobile phones. They were both 'on call' 24/7 although they did manage to have one half day per week provided a colleague in the other practice in Ballymoney could cover. While they both had enjoyed rally driving and golf, being tied to the surgery led to the interest and enjoyment in gardening at Ishlan, their Ballymoney home.

In the book '*In an Irish Garden*' by Sybil Connolly and Helen Dillon Molly gives a great account of her garden (well worth reading) and how her interest in Alpines was stimulated by hearing a lecture by Will Ingwersen at the Ulster A.G.S. Her enthusiasm and ability shines through the article in which she describes the difficulties, her love for different genera and all aspects and facets of gardening - although the A.G.S. held her loyalty and affection as the inspiration to be a 'real' gardener.

Her family tell me that the highlights of her gardening career were being invited as speaker at the International Conference in Seattle in 1976, and attending Chelsea Flower Show in 1992 with her daughter where *viola* 'Molly Sanderson' was shown. She was honoured by the A.G.S. with the Award of Merit in 1988.

In 1984 the R.H.S. featured the garden at Ishlan in their journal 'The Garden' and that same year Ulster Television showed her garden in 'How does your Garden Grow'. Penny also sent me a photocopy of part of a book by Alex Pankhurst 'Who does your garden grow' which I had not come across before and which describes how *viola* 'Molly Sanderson' got its name.

Molly was not just a gardener but found time to play an active role in the community, being a founder member of both the Abbeyfield Trust and the Soroptimists Society in Ballymoney, serving on the garden committee of the National Trust and being active in their involvement in the Giant's Causeway project.

Apparently, her mantra was 'everything should be shared' and both Penny and Elizabeth pay tribute to her great generosity in everything. The Ulster Group of the A.G.S. were indeed to benefit from that generosity not only when she was active in the Group but also in a decade of excellent lecturers giving the Dr Molly Sanderson Lecture.

One of her granddaughters described her as 'a big personality in small bounds'. I feel that in this age of celebrities and in a year when we remember women suffragettes, the war to end all wars and the start of the N.H.S. – here is a woman to emulate and worthy of tribute.



The Millennium Seed Bank Partnership, Wakehurst Place

I enjoy growing plants from seed, perhaps influenced by the words and advice of Bob Gordon who, some years ago, was President of the Ulster Group and a great plantsman. Bob felt that in growing seeds there was always something to look forward to in life and, while I can't express it as well as Bob, his ideas went something like this:-

- 1st The waiting and expectation of the seed lists arriving
- 2nd Researching the seeds and choosing your own selection
- 3rd The anticipation of the seed packets arriving and what you might find
- 4th The preparation, sowing and labelling of the seeds
- 5th Waiting and inspecting for signs of germination
- 6th Growing the seedlings on and looking forward to flowering

--- and by that stage the cycle was about to begin again with no time for boredom or depression. Well sometimes our dreams aren't realised but we all live in hope that one day we will grow that prized plant!

So it was this interest that, during a family trip to England in July, led to a visit to the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership at Wakehurst Place, West Sussex, an international conservation project coordinated by the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. The purpose is to provide an 'insurance policy' against the extinction of plants in the wild by



storing seeds for future use as today 60,000 to 100,000 plants are faced with the threat of extinction. In this changing world plant diversity is in great danger due to various causes but especially loss of habitat due to land conversion and climate change. Every year more species are lost and plants are essential not only for food but the very air we breathe. Plants are also vital for medicine and 70% of the world's

population rely on traditional plant remedies for cures. At present only one in five plant species are screened for western medical use and we can't afford to let these potential cures die out. The purpose- built facility at Wakehurst is based around a vast vault for long term storage of seeds where following in-country collection the seeds are cleaned, prepared and dried before storage in deep freeze chambers. Research is always ongoing and of course it is vital that the stored seeds are viable and can be germinated.



The modern millennium buildings not only store the seeds but have large public exhibition areas and through the glass walls you can see the staff at work with the various stages of seed storage.

As well as the seed bank, Wakehurst Place has formal and informal gardens with collections of plants from both the UK and around the world, an Elizabethan Mansion with galleries of botanical paintings, and we managed to get lost in the 500 acres of woodlands. It is well worth a visit – so much to see we didn't allow enough time – and it puts my seed sowing into perspective! I have also since discovered on checking their website that they give advice on sowing and germinating seed. It would be nice to think that as alpine gardeners we can play a part in conserving and propagating alpine plants for future generations.



Speakers for the coming year – A Star-studded Cast

We have, as usual, a star-studded cast of speakers lecturing this coming year and I have often felt that we haven't broadcast enough just how brilliant these speakers are. Here is some more information on each of them so please do tell your friends and neighbours and feel free to invite them along – they will not be disappointed and it's no use telling them after the talk is over!

September – First talk of the year sees **Averil Milligan**, Head Gardener at Rowallane, who needs no introduction to local people as we hear her broadcast frequently on BBC Ulster *Gardeners' Corner*. Widely travelled, knowledgeable on many aspects of gardening and floral art, I hadn't realised that she had also developed the art of making soaps and creams from plants and natural ingredients and I am sure there will be more surprises in her lecture.



October – brings our first visitor, **Ian Christie**, from Scotland where he has been running the Alpine Nursery at Kirriemuir for many years. He has travelled round the world to see alpinists growing in the wild and the nursery is recognised as one of the best for alpine plants. Many of our older members will never forget the sight of Paddy Duffy – alas no longer with us – struggling with a large wheelbarrow needed to bring all his choice purchases from Ian's Nursery to the Ulsterbus. I remember the beautiful gentians but Ian's name also hit the headlines in connection with one of the most expensive snowdrops, 'Elizabeth Harrison'. As well as being a plantsman par excellence he is also an expert rock garden designer and builder so there should be a lot to interest alpine gardeners.



November – has our second Scottish speaker, **Ken Cox**, who is Managing Director of Glendoick Nursery and Garden Centre. Ken is the 3rd generation of his family which has introduced so many rhododendrons, azaleas and countless other plants to the British Isles from around the world. His grandfather, Euan, went on expedition with Reginald Farrer, sometimes described as the 'patron saint' of alpine gardeners. Ken himself has led nine planthunting expeditions to Tibet



and Arunachal Pradesh and has been the author or co-author of quite a few books – I especially enjoyed his account of reexploring and reintroducing Frank Kingdom Ward's 'Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges'. His book on 'Garden Plants for Scotland' also applies to our gardens here and is full of common-sense advice so I look forward to his new book on Woodland Gardening. All who were at Termonfeckin last year enjoyed his talks – I just don't know how he finds time to play Brazilian music!

NB: Change of venue for this lecture to Malone Presbyterian Church Hall and the Irish Garden Plant Society are welcome.

December - Back home **Seamus O'Brien** is our Irish authority on the temperate plants of China and currently manages The Kilmacurragh Botanic Garden, Co Wicklow. It is a real pleasure to walk round Kilmacurragh with Seamus where he brings every tree, bush, plant and stone to life with an encyclopaedic knowledge of its history and story. He brings this talent along with his experience of travelling widely to his books. Following the success of 'In the footsteps of Augustine Henry' in which he traced the travels in China of the Irish plantsman and collector, Dr Augustine Henry, he continues with the launch in October of a book 'In the footsteps of Joseph Dalton Hooker- A Sikkim Adventure'. As one of my best memories was seeing *Chionocharis hookeri* flowering at well over 14,000 ft on the Baima Shan in Yunnan, I am interested in learning more about Joseph Hooker.



Chionocharis hookeri, in the Baima Shan, Yunnan, China

January - To open the New year we have **Jamie Chambers** who originates from New Zealand but is now firmly planted as Chairman and Web master of the Dublin Group of the AGS. Those who have been to Termonfeckin will know Jamie well from his cryptic gardening quiz in which he has us all racking our brains for answers. I am sure this talk will prove to be interesting, thought-provoking but above all, entertaining - just what we need to start the new year.



February - First time to the Ulster Group **Julian Sutton** comes from Devon where with his wife Sarah, he runs the Desirable Plants Nursery. Being a trained botanist as well as a gardener Julian brings both together to increase our knowledge and appreciation of plants. The nursery specialises in new and interesting plants with a special emphasis on South African bulbs and plants. Having heard him speak in Carlow I was very impressed and envious of his real gift for lecturing - so again don't miss this talk.



March - last but not least our own **Brian Duncan MBE** gives the final talk in this year's programme. Like Maggi Young I have pinched part of a blog from the American Daffodil Society- "Brian Duncan is one of the best known and most successful daffodil hybridizers and exhibitors in the world." To list all Brian's gold medals, cups and awards from the Royal Horticultural Society and the American Daffodil Society and to name all the committees he has served would fill this newsletter. Yet over the years I have come to know Brian and his wife, Betty, as the most young-at-heart and fun-loving couple it has been a real pleasure to travel with into the world of bulbs. Brian is both the founder and now President of the Northern Ireland Daffodil Group to whom he gave this lecture, a most appropriate and enjoyable talk to end our year and right in the middle of the daffodil season.



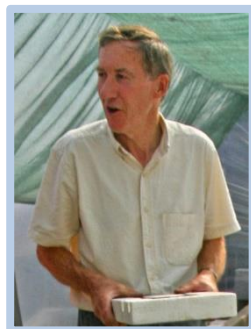
With Sympathy

To all our members who have had family illnesses and bereavements we send our sincere sympathy.



Dr Kenneth Maguire – Some of us attended the funeral of Dr Kenneth Maguire, husband of our past Chairman, Paddy. Ken served as a GP in Larne and on retirement, joined us on several AGS tours. He was a very welcoming host on garden visits to their home in Larne. Our sincere condolences to Paddy and their family.

Dr Keith Lever – It is with great regret that I record the death of Dr Keith Lever of Aberconwy Nursery. Keith's expertise as a nurseryman was legendary and we will miss his friendly advice and presence at our shows. At this sad time we send our deepest sympathy to his wife Rachel, their son Tim and all the family.



Alpine Cuttings or 'Out and About'

I am sure many of you had or will have interesting garden and plant experiences this year, either on holiday, with other garden societies such as the IGPS, at shows such as Chelsea, or in your own garden. Please write a few notes, take some photos – your phone is useful – and offer them to the editor for next year. I am sure they will be appreciated and, after all, it is YOUR Newsletter.

Snowdrop Day

Whether you are a galanthophile or not our visits to see the first signs of spring are always something to look forward to, very enjoyable and this year proved no exception. I was especially interested to visit the legendary Primrose Hill House and Garden in Lucan where from the late fifties the late Cicely Hall and now her

son, Robin, have built up one of the most famous collections of snowdrops. It was a privilege to both meet and be shown round the garden by Robin Hall who gave us such a warm welcome, paying compliments to many of our Ulster gardeners. The regency house with its history and the charming garden creates a peaceful atmosphere but I am sure the rare snowdrops caused a stir of excitement in all the galanthophiles.



Robin Hall

In some ways our second visit to Anne O'Dowd's Newcastle House and garden had a similar atmosphere where once again we were met with kindness and a garden chock-full of interesting plants and treasures.



We are again indebted to Cilla and her team who make these days so smooth-running and memorable.

Northern Ireland Daffodil Group Dutch Visit

The NIDG ran an unusual visit to the northern part of the Netherlands including Texel Island which some of our members joined at the beginning of March. We were to see the early bulb show at Breezand with an added bonus of some snowdrop gardens plus an alpine garden and nursery. The visit coincided with the'



Beast from the East' which froze the canals and even part of the North Sea – first time in 100 years -as well as the outdoor snowdrops. Highlights of the tour for me were the exquisite displays of small bulbs at both the Breezand Show and bulb nurseries, the interesting alpinists both to see and buy in the small nursery and the warmth and generosity of our Dutch hosts – more than enough to melt the ice.



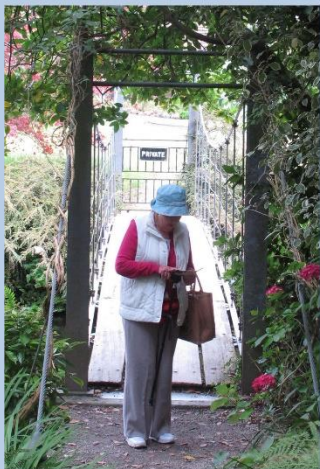
Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh

After our lecture in January by John Mitchell who is in charge of the Rock Garden and alpinists I was curious to see the new alpine house in the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh. The easiest way to describe it is by a photograph – perhaps in a more modest form it might inspire some new ideas on growing alpinists here.



Wicklow 2017 - Every picture tells a story

I promised something on our Wicklow visit last year to Mount Usher Gardens and Mount Venus Nursery – But I think every picture tell a story – and look forward to hearing about this year's visit.



Information

Thanks to the Chairman, secretary, the whole committee, the plant stall workers, the 'tea providers and helpers and all who make our meetings such smooth – running and enjoyable events and to everyone who comes – “They also serve who only stand and wait” . Milton

Venue **NB** **St. Bride's Hall, Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast - 2.30 p.m.**
Except on November 10th when we will be in Malone Presbyterian Church Hall (junction of Lisburn Rd. and Balmoral Avenue).

Dues - Local current subscription rates are £10.00 single, £15.00 family, due at the A.G.M. or before the end of the current year. Cheques should be made out to 'Alpine Garden Society Ulster Group'.

** Please give or send subscriptions this year to the **Membership Secretary, Mrs Sandra Munro**, who will update the records before forwarding the money to the treasurer, **Mrs. Hilary McKelvey**.

This subscription is for the local Group only and subscriptions to The Alpine Garden Society must be sent direct. A limit of one year's grace is given.

With the increasing cost of postage, it is helpful to have as many email addresses as possible and this year, to update our records and have accurate information, we ask everyone to fill in the membership forms (also see below). It is hoped in the future by either emailing or texting to be able to keep members in touch with both events and unexpected news. If you are not receiving emails, please send one to the secretary (secretary@alpinegarden-ulster.org.uk) so that she is sure of having the correct email address or let her know your preference for keeping informed.

GDPR

With the introduction of the GDPR (*General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)2017*), organisations, including ourselves, are required to have specific permission from members to hold their information. You will therefore be asked when you renew your membership of the Group, to agree (or not) that this information is held, for the purpose of informing you of Group and related events.

Data Protection - Notice for members.

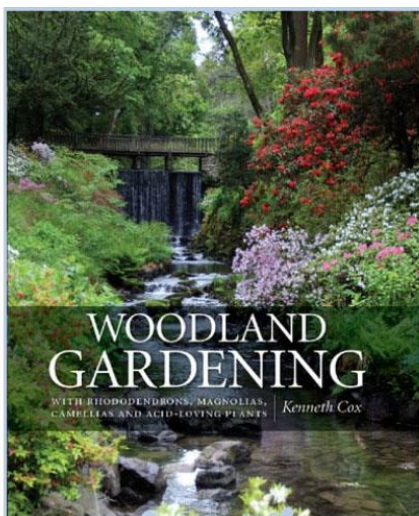
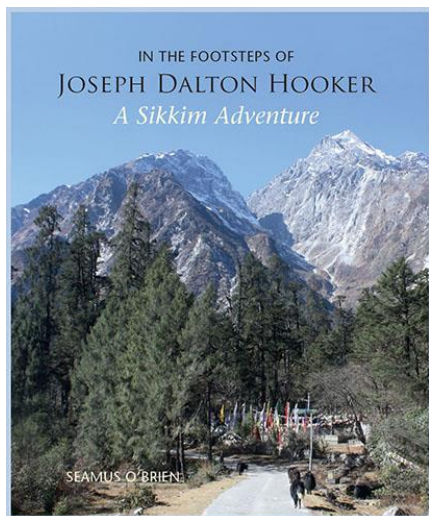
- All personal data held by the **Alpine Garden Society** will be subject to the appropriate legal safeguards under the *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)2017*
- We use personal data for the purpose of general administration and communication with members of the Society; plus the organisation of Society activities and events, involving third parties, in which members participate.
- Data will be stored safely and direct access to personal data records will be restricted to designated member(s) of the Committee.
- Personal Data will not be released to any third-party other than where deemed necessary, by the Committee, to organise an official Society event.
- Our data protection policy and procedures will be available on the AGS website, or written copies can be provided by submitting a written request to the Honorary Secretary.
- Donald Patterson has been appointed as Data Protection Lead, on the Committee, for our group.
- If you do not wish your personal information to be held by the Society please inform the Honorary Secretary or our Data Protection Lead member of the Committee, who will arrange for it to be removed from our administration files.

New Books

As mentioned with our speakers here are two books to keep in mind, both excellent for birthday or even Christmas presents – you will know more about them after the lectures where, I suspect, some may be for sale or you may want to buy them earlier and get them signed.

Woodland Gardening by Kenneth Cox

In the footsteps of Joseph Dalton Hooker – A Sikkim Adventure by Seamus O'Brien



Web

Programmes and Newsletters can all be found on the website where 'Plant of the Month' is also archived since 2006 - Contributions are always needed, so if you have a plant and a picture - in the garden or in the wild, please send it in. The website is visited from all over the world, so you can be assured of an appreciative audience. To visit the site, go to www.alpinegarden-ulster.org.uk

We do not currently have a Facebook page, so if any of our members have expertise in Social Media please share your opinion and advice on its use with the committee.



Pulsatilla campanella - by Harold McBride

This Pasque-flower is not the most glamorous or widely grown species of the genus, however I feel it should be more popular as it is a most attractive plant & is easily catered for in our Irish climate.

P. campanella comes from the mountains of Central Asia, found as far east as Siberia & centrally in Tien Shan & N.W. China.

Growing as high as 4500 m in rocky montane, moraines and tundra or grassy slopes.

I have grown several colour forms under this name from wild collected seed; however the form with violet flowers is most widely seen in cultivation.



P. campanella in flower in the garden, May 2017



CULTIVATION.

Easily grown from fresh seed, it reaches flowering size in two years. The adult plants thrive in raised - bed conditions or in a large trough, where they enjoy perfect drainage.

It is one of the latest members of the genus to flower, being seen at its best in mid-May, when many other Pasque-flower flowers are showing fluffy seed heads.

Seed is usually listed on both AGS & SRGC seed exchange lists.

And finally, don't forget the Plant of the Month on the website – the place to publish your favourite Alpine plant.

Showtime

The first Ulster AGS Show took place in 1939 so by my reckoning next year it will celebrate its 80th Birthday. A special effort will have to be made and Pat Crossley and her team will need all your support.

The wonderful splash of colour and perfect plants at the shows never fails to amaze me and a special thanks is due to the Dublin Alpine Garden Society who so faithfully support us and give friendly competition – this is reciprocal and long may it continue.

Please start thinking and planning now for both members and main shows to ensure their success and here are some pictures from this year to inspire you with more photos and reports of all the shows on the web pages.

| | |
|---|--|
|  <p>Alpine Garden Society Ulster Group Greenmount Show April 2018</p> | |
|  |  |
| Dionysia aretioides - Billy Moore - Farrer Medal (H5) | Shortia uniflora - Nancy Derby - Betty Hill Trophy (H5) |
| <p>Dublin Group Show April 2018</p> | |
|  |  |
| Trillium albidum - Gordon Toner - Farrer Medal (BM) | Primula henrici - Gavin Moore - Best Primulaceae (BM) |

Programme 2018 - 2019

2018

September 15th Annual General Meeting

Averil Milligan

“Rowallane – a Plant Paradise”

October 20th

Ian Christie

“Thirty-five Years and still Growing”

*** November 10th**

Ken Cox

“ Woodland Gardening”

November 16th -18th

Termonfeckin Weekend – Dublin Group

December 15th

Seamus O’Brien

“Joseph Dalton Hooker”

2019

January 19th

Jamie Chambers

“Insane ? – or an Ardent Botanist”

February 16th

Julian Sutton

“Making Sense of the Iridaceae”

February 23rd

Snowdrop Day and Luncheon

March 16th

Members’ Show

Brian Duncan

“Life after Snowdrops”

April 6th

AGS Dublin Group Show, Cabinteely, Dublin 18.

April 27th

AGS Ulster Group Show, Greenmount

- Note change of venue on November 10th



Above : *Fritillaria michailovskyi*
Paddy Smith, Ulster Group Show, 2018

Front Cover – *Caladenia carnea*
Grampians, Victoria, Australia

