



# Snail Mail

**T**his will be a fairly brief newsletter—just long enough to reiterate some details of upcoming events and mainly to congratulate ourselves on a very congenial and busy Spring among our members. We’ve had a very informative program from Sean O’Gaoithin on Collum Cille and a very professional presentation from John Markham on growing vegetables. I think I will be much more critical when buying potatoes henceforth! Our monthly members’ garden walks were delightful and they are not finished. More on that see overleaf. We are a very sociable bunch and not only enjoy each others gardens, but also each others company. None, however can surpass the hospitality of Joyce and Michael Classon (and in this case also their daughter Caroline). Even though Michael was not yet up to his usual energetic self, he insisted on showing us all around and one can only say “we feasted” on a variety of treats afterwards. I do believe there were those among us who would have stayed to see the dawn come up.....!

The Cork trippers are about to depart and we wish them a good trip and hope to hear about it at our next meeting.

For the rest of us - by now the weeds are weeded, the hedges trimmed, the annuals planted, the tall flowers staked and the clumps divided— RIGHT?, well then there is nothing to do but sit back and just enjoy your gardens.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

- VENUE:** Salthill House, Mountcharles (unless otherwise specified)
- TIME:** 8 p.m. Plant sale and chit chat.  
8:30 (PROMPT) Program begins,
- Sept. 7 Derek Macloghlan, Biologist/Ornithologist on “Bird Habitat in Donegal”
- Oct. 5 Rosaria McCloskey, on “Seaweed for Gardens, Humans and Animals” **(in PORTNOO)**
- Nov. 9 To be advised
- Dec. 7 Christmas social (fun, mulled wine, quiz, mulled wine, slide show—did I mention mulled wine?)



**WE WILL MEET IN PORTNOO FOR THE OCTOBER MEETING**

## THE DONEGAL GARDEN TRAIL 2009



We will have to wait until after the season is finished to hear how successful the Donegal Garden Trail 2009 was but this is to let you know that there is still time to visit the gardens of our members who are on the Trail: Marjan and Tom Bangert during July by appointment; Carmel and Tom McLaughlin (our newest members) July 11+12 and August 1+2, 12 to 6 p.m.; Dorothy Jervis, June 22, 2 to 6 p.m. and Joan Evans, June 21 to 30, 2 to 6 p.m.

Of course Michael and Joyce Classon's garden remains open till September by appointment and Elisabeth Temple's garden is open till the end of September, Monday to Thursday 2 to 6 p.m. and in June and July also on Saturdays. If you haven't seen any of the above garden try to get there—they are all well worth a visit.

..... And then there was THAT rainy day in May—the 23rd to be precise. The day of our one day garden outing to the north of the county. To those brave souls (20) who came along to the Nunan Garden in Ramelton followed by a visit to Carrablah House in Portsalon .... RESPECT! In spite of the truly miserable, wet and cold condition we could appreciate the treasure that is the town garden of Tommy and Karena Nunan. The layout is challenging because the garden rises up behind the house to end up much higher than the house itself. This they have achieved by a series of stone steps creating a garden on four levels. The Nunan's have a pictorial history of what was there when they moved in right up to the present time. It shows once again what can be done by two people who have a plan and a determination. On to Carrablah House and even worse conditions if that was possible. This was a pity because the garden is on a very grand scale and the mature rhododendrons and azaleas plus a wide selection of specialty trees are wonderful. It needs another visit methinks — but in 'guaranteed' sunshine. Those of 'delicate' constitutions (or maybe the wise ones) went home after a lovely lunch at the Curlew Café in Kerrykeel, while a handful of diehards continued to Greenfort in Kerrykeel and had a leisurely stroll through the garden and the new tree plantation. Great time was had by all because dear reader, the sun SHONE! And then the true diehards (3 members) stopped in with Ann Kee of Ballybofey for a walk around her garden. Ann who is a member of the newly-formed-and-going-strong Finn Valley Garden Club in Ballybofey rushed home from her nursing job at the Letterkenny hospital to show us her amazing garden. What one woman has created is almost beyond belief. Her garden is situated on an inhospitable wind-swept hill from which she has carved out a truly amazing garden. Parts of it are a garden in progress and then you duck around a corner and come upon an area full of wonderful plants in a tranquil setting. There are three ponds—one of which was dug out by Ann herself. The scope of the garden is jaw-dropping. Aquilegias are a particular favourite of Ann's and I think she has more variety than any garden centre I have been in. At the end of our garden exploration we enjoyed a lovely cup of tea with home-baked apple pie and other goodies baked by Ann's mother. A great ending to a day which started so miserably.



### 2009 Membership

55 people have decided that €45/annum per couple is a good investment and have re/joined our DGS. Enclosed please find the 2009 directory. I urge you to look at your particulars closely and let me know of any mistakes in your address or spelling of names. Some members have dropped out for various reasons and some new faces will appear at our next meeting. Welcome!

If anyone has any suggestions, criticisms, ideas with regard to the running of the DGS ..... well, I don't know what you should do with them but I'll give it some thought.

*Finally, I wish you all a very relaxing summer, full of buzzing bees and home-grown fruit and vegetables. I am looking forward to family visits and lazy days in the hammock with a good book. See you in September.....*

