



American Horticultural Society
Travel Study Program

LEGENDARY GARDENS & CASTLES OF THE EMERALD ISLE

INCLUDING NORTHERN IRELAND
AND SPECIAL GROUP ACCESS

June 10 – 19, 2019

WITH AHS HOSTS NANCY AND HERBERT HARGROVES
AND TOUR LEADER HARRIET LANDSEER OF SPECIALTOURS





Announcing the American
Horticultural Society
Travel Study Program

American Horticultural Society
7931 East Boulevard Drive
Alexandria, VA 22308
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JOIN US FOR MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING:

- Viewing the Book of Kells, considered Ireland's greatest cultural treasure and a masterpiece of medieval illustration and calligraphy.
- Meeting with and seeing the gardens of Helen Dillon, the queen of Irish gardening.
- Visiting the National Gallery of Ireland, where a highlight is Caravaggio's rediscovered painting *The Taking of Christ*.
- Attending a performance at Dublin's Abbey Theatre, which has its roots in a theater company co-founded by William Butler Yeats in 1899.
- Touring Powerscourt Estate, whose garden was ranked the third best in the world by *National Geographic*.
- Exploring Glenveagh Castle Gardens, one of Ireland's outstanding horticultural masterpieces and home to many rare plants unique to Irish gardens.
- Visiting Belfast's Botanic Gardens, featuring the Palm House conservatory and a 400-year-old *Xanthorrhoea*.

THE SUPERB ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THIS PROGRAM ARE:

- The Merrion Hotel in Dublin, a fine example of Georgian architecture that features two 18th century-style gardens designed by Irish landscape architect Jim Reynolds.
- Culloden Estate and Spa in Belfast, which overlooks the County Antrim coastline and stands on 12 acres of beautiful secluded gardens and woodland.
- Belle Isle Castle in Fermanagh, a historic Irish landmark that was built in the early 17th century and stretches over 470 acres.

Please refer to the enclosed reservation form for pricing and instructions for reserving your place on this AHS Travel Study Program tour. For more information about Travel Study Program tours, please contact development@ahsgardening.org or (703) 768-5700, ext. 127 or ext. 132. Information is also available at www.ahsgardening.org/travel.

Designed with the connoisseur of garden travel in mind, the American Horticultural Society Travel Study Program offers an exceptional itinerary that includes many exclusive experiences and unique insights. Your participation benefits the work of the American Horticultural Society and furthers our vision of "Making America a Nation of Gardeners, A Land of Gardens."



Dear Friends of the American Horticultural Society,

I personally invite you to join our latest AHS tour, “Legendary Gardens & Castles of the Emerald Isle,” June 10 to 19, 2019.

This tour is so full of profound experiences that picking highlights is difficult. Suffice to say that within hours of our arrival we’ll have the first of many memorable events: We will view the Book of Kells at Trinity College Dublin. Dating from the ninth century and considered Ireland’s greatest cultural treasure, the Book of Kells is a masterpiece of medieval illustration and calligraphy. On the walk back to our nearby hotel, we’ll visit the National Gallery of Ireland. A highlight of its wonderful art collection is Caravaggio’s *The Taking of Christ*, a brilliant painting that was presumed lost for 200 years before its rediscovery in the 1990s.

Before going further, I want to touch on two important points that illustrate the extraordinary nature of this tour. First, it includes numerous instances in which the AHS’s reputation and relationships have facilitated special access to public venues or to private homes and gardens; and, second, it includes sites in Northern Ireland, a horticultural paradise often overlooked by comparable tours.

We will maintain that level of quality throughout the tour. Mount Usher is one of Ireland’s finest gardens and a prime example of Robinsonian design (more on that later), which is characterized by informality and a natural layout. We will visit similar gardens on our journey, though each one is unique.

A different kind of treat will be the performance we attend at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, which has its roots in the Irish Literary Theatre co-founded by the great poet William Butler Yeats in 1899. Another wonderful opportunity will be meeting the “queen of Irish gardening,” Helen Dillon, who will share her insights and expertise with us.

Our imaginations will run wild at Glenveagh Castle, which has been described as hauntingly beautiful and one of Ireland’s outstanding horticultural masterpieces. Built on the shores of Lough Veagh, it was conceived of as a Victorian Camelot and romantic retreat for lovers of nature and art.

Our accommodations are a delight in themselves. The Merrion Hotel in Dublin is a fine example of Georgian architecture that features two gardens designed by Irish landscape architect Jim Reynolds. The Culloden Estate and Spa overlooks the County Antrim coastline and stands on 12 acres of secluded gardens and woodland. Belle Isle Castle in Fermanagh is a historic Irish landmark that was built in the early 17th century and stretches over 470 acres.

Tour hosts Nancy and Herbert Hargroves are avid home gardeners and travelers who hold multiple memberships in the industry in addition to their AHS affiliation. Nancy has been a member of the AHS Board of Directors since 2014 and is president of National Garden Clubs Inc., where she was on the Executive Committee for nine years. She is also an accredited flower show judge, among her many other achievements and roles.

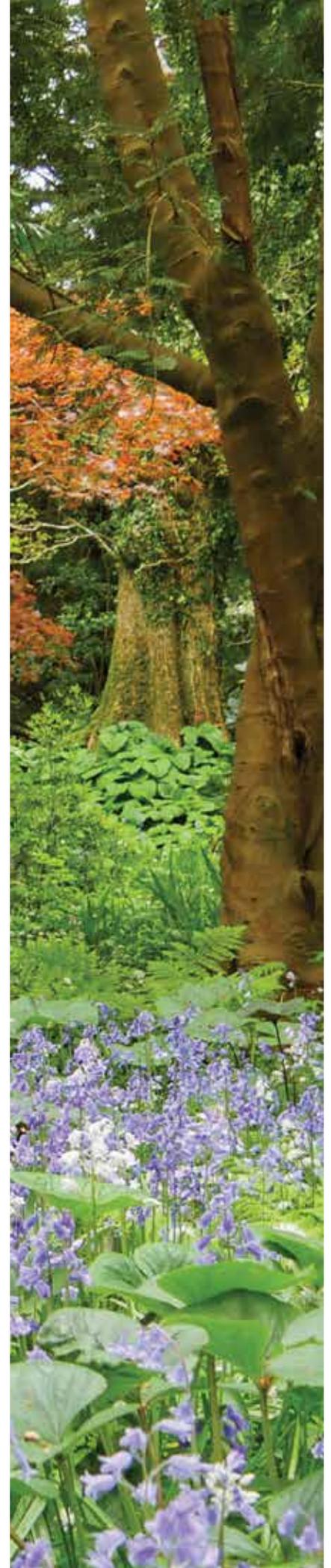
Our tour leader is Harriet Landseer of Specialtours. She has led tours for that company since 1996, including several for the AHS Travel Study Program. She has extensive travel experience and a history of art degree from Yale University. And being from an Irish gardening family, she is uniquely qualified to take us on this colorful tour of the Emerald Isle.

I highly recommend that you accompany us to Ireland in June. Our tours have become supremely popular and sell out quickly — some within a week! — so be sure to reserve your place as soon as possible. For your convenience, a reservation form is included in this brochure.

Most sincerely,



Beth Tuttle
President and Chief Executive Officer



WITH AHS HOSTS NANCY AND HERBERT HARGROVES AND TOUR LEADER HARRIET LANDSEER OF SPECIALTOURS



Join AHS Hosts Nancy and Herbert Hargroves and tour leader Harriet Landseer for this once-in-a-lifetime garden travel experience.

Itinerary Highlights

MONDAY, JUNE 10 — DUBLIN (L, D)

We will arrive at Dublin Airport and travel by private coach to the Merrion Hotel, centrally located in the Irish capital of Dublin. The hotel is a fine example of Georgian architecture, and it features two gardens designed by Irish landscape architect Jim Reynolds, who has re-created the feel of the 18th century through his elegant use of box hedges, water features, pathways, and statuary. Our next stop will be a momentous one: We will take a short walk to Trinity College to view the Book of Kells, considered Ireland's greatest cultural treasure and the world's most famous medieval manuscript. The ninth-century book is a richly decorated copy of the four Gospels of the life of Jesus Christ. We will pause on our way back to the hotel to visit the National Gallery of Ireland, whose wonderful collection includes Caravaggio's haunting painting *The Taking of Christ*, a long-lost work that was rediscovered in the 1990s. This evening, we will be treated to drinks and a special viewing of a new garden created by Helen Dillon, the queen of Irish gardening. She teaches classes on gardening and will generously share her knowledge and experience with us. Our first dinner will be at the hotel, where we will get to know one another.

TUESDAY, JUNE 11 — DUBLIN (B, L)

Our day starts with a drive to Wicklow to visit the romantic gardens of Mount Usher. The River Vartry runs through a 19th-century "wild" garden containing some 5,000 species. Mount Usher is one of Ireland's finest examples of a Robinsonian garden, a style popularized by Irish practical gardener and journalist William Robinson. Characterized by informality and a natural design, Mount Usher features a unique mix of trees and plants — including rare rhododendrons, azaleas, and camellias — and boasts the largest collection of Southern Hemisphere conifers in Ireland and an extensive collection of northern conifers. At our next stop, we might feel as though we've traveled back in time. Killruddery has been home to sixteen generations of the Brabazon family and is considered to have the finest 17th-century garden in the British Isles. French gardener Bonet designed the formal layout; he was a disciple of André le Nôtre, whose

masterpiece was the gardens of Versailles. Killruddery's notable features include the Angles, Long Ponds, Wilderness, Sylvan Theatre, Lime Walks, and Beech Hedge Pond. Inspired by the Crystal Palace in London, William Burns designed the Orangery in 1852. It houses a collection of marble statues that the 11th Earl of Meath brought from Italy in the 19th century; we will have a private lunch in their company. This afternoon, we will head for Powerscourt Estate, whose marvelous gardens were laid out in 1745 and embellished in the Italian manner with fountains and statuary by Daniel Robertson a century later. *National Geographic* has named Powerscourt the third best garden in the world. Our entrance is along an avenue lined with beech trees planted more than 250 years ago by the 1st Viscount Powerscourt. We will tour the Italian and Japanese gardens and marvel at the landscape of trees and the view of the surrounding countryside. After this busy day, we will return to Dublin and have the opportunity to sample the city's fine eateries as we dine on our own tonight.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12 (B, L, D) DUBLIN

We will depart (with luggage) for a brief visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral this morning. Dating from the 13th century, this imposing building is the national cathedral of the Church of Ireland and the heart of Dublin. From there, we'll continue to Hunting Brook, a private garden just outside the city that boasts one of Ireland's largest private collections of plants. It is the creation of Jimi Blake, a horticulturist and teacher who is known for his colorful large-scale plantings. Our next stop is another private garden, this one belonging to tour leader Harriet Landseer's family. It was created by her great-grandmother (née Shackleton) and cultivated by her grandmother, a celebrated botanical artist. We'll break for lunch at the Green Barn, a recently opened farm-to-plate restaurant that happens to be owned by Harriet's brother. Our afternoon will be spent at Altamont Gardens. Late owner Corona North lovingly tended the gardens for more than 50 years and bequeathed them to the Republic of Ireland on her death. Altamont's informal Robinsonian design features roses, herbaceous plants, native species, and exotic ones, such as swamp cypress, red oak, and giant redwood. A highlight is the walled garden; its Corona North Commemorative Border took more than a year to design, build, and plant. We'll return to Dublin for an early dinner, and then we're in for a special treat: a performance at the Abbey Theatre, which opened in 1904. The Abbey has its roots in the Irish Literary Theatre founded by poet William Butler Yeats and three other writers in 1899.

THURSDAY, JUNE 13 — BELFAST (B, L, D)

This morning, we will leave with luggage for another country: Northern Ireland. Our first stop is Malahide Castle and Gardens. Lord Milo Talbot, a 20th-century diplomat and enthusiastic plant collector, brought specimens from around the world — notably Chile and Australia — to fortify the gardens here. He also relandscaped the grounds to dramatic effect. There are upwards of 5,000 species and varieties of plants and seven glasshouses for us to view. Afterward, we will stop for a private lunch at Barmeth Castle, overlooking Dundalk Bay. The gardens were created by Thomas Wright, an 18th-century astronomer, mathematician, architect, and garden designer. The pleasure gardens are full of mature trees, there's a wonderful selection of rhododendrons and azaleas, and the enchanting walled garden features roses, fruit trees, a summer house, an herbaceous border, and a vegetable



plot. Next on our agenda are the historic gardens at Seaforde. They boast Ireland's oldest living maze and a spectacular collection of plants, many brought from distant corners of the world by late owner Patrick Forde. The view encompasses the Mourne Mountains, two lakes, and fine parkland that has been transformed into a wild rhododendron garden. Our adventurous afternoon continues at Rowallane Garden, whose 50 acres include a walled garden and wildflower meadows. The estate house is the headquarters of the National Trust in Northern Ireland. The garden was begun in the mid-1860s by the Reverend John Moore, who created the pleasure grounds and planted many trees. In 1903, the garden passed to his nephew, Hugh Armitage Moore, who added plants and trees from North and South America, Japan, China, Tibet, and New Zealand, among other places. Finally, we will check into our accommodations at the Culloden Estate and Spa, overlooking the coastline. It stands on 12 acres of beautiful secluded gardens and woodland. We'll catch our breath and wind down with dinner at the hotel.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14 — BELFAST (B, L)

Our amazing day begins with perhaps the finest garden in the National Trust: Mount Stewart. Lady Londonderry, wife of the seventh Marquess of Londonderry, designed the luxuriant gardens in the 1920s and added many features, including the Fountain Pool and the Shamrock, Sunk, Spanish, and Italian gardens. We'll take an exclusive tour of the house with the current owner before it opens to the public. Outside, we'll marvel at the octagonal Temple of the Winds, designed in the 1780s by James Stuart. It's a copy of the Tower of the Winds in Athens and a fine example of neoclassical architecture. We'll have the pleasure of touring the formal gardens with head gardener Neil Porteous, followed by private drinks and lunch in the Salon. We'll move on to Castle Ward, with 820 acres of landscaped gardens and a fortified tower house on the shore of Strangford Lough. Built in the 18th century, the house reflects a compromise between Bernard Ward, 1st Viscount Bangor, who preferred the Palladian style, and his wife, Lady Ann, who favored Strawberry Hill Gothic. As a result, the southwest front is classical, and the northeast facade is Gothic. We'll likely follow this with a brief visit to Guincho, a 12-acre private garden surrounding an unusual Portuguese-style house. The garden was planted by Mrs. Frazer Mackie from 1948 to 1979 with rare trees, plants, and shrubs. In the center of the garden, a huge lawn is surrounded by maples, magnolias, turquoise blue hydrangeas,

a huge stand of gunnera under a blue cedar, and specimen trees. Rhododendrons and camellias line a hosta walk, and another path is adorned with South African plants, including eight varieties of *Agapanthus* spp. and flowering *Beschorneria yuccoides*. The stream walk leads to a waterfall, and the area is populated with plants from around the world, including carpets of *Erythronium* spp. (North America), *Dicksonia antarctica* and *Dacrydium franklinii* (Australia), *Gevuina avellana* (Chile), and large-leaved rhododendrons. After this extraordinary sensory event, we will return to the hotel and dine independently tonight.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15 – BELFAST (B, L, D)

We'll travel (with luggage) to Belfast's Botanic Gardens, which became a public park in 1895. A notable feature is the Palm House conservatory, which consists of a cool wing and a tropical wing. It's one of the earliest examples of a curvilinear cast-iron glasshouse in the world. Among the surprises is a 400-year-old *Xanthorrhoea*. Our next stop is the Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, which spans about 130 acres and encompasses meadows, woodland, riverside fields, a walled garden, and a Japanese garden. Our main focus will be the rose gardens, which boast about 40,000 plants. We'll continue on to Hillsborough Castle, with its 96 acres of recently restored gardens featuring ornamental grounds, woodland, and waterways. This late Georgian mansion, dating from the 1770s, is the official residence in Northern Ireland of Her Majesty the Queen and other members of the British royal family when they visit the region. Then we'll move on to Glenarm Castle, which has been in the McDonnell family since it was first built in 1636. We'll lunch privately at the house before visiting the award-winning Walled Garden, one of Ireland's oldest. It is filled with flowers and plants to delight us. We'll return to the hotel before heading to dinner at a private house with a fine garden nearby.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16 — FERMANAGH (B, L, D)

We'll take our luggage with us on our way to our next accommodations in Fermanagh. First, we will visit Tempo Manor. The current house was built in 1863 in the Victorian-Jacobean style, and the charming garden was designed in the 1930s. Next, we'll enjoy lunch privately at Killyreagh and see a fine garden overlooking woodlands and situated in the midst of beautiful countryside. Afterward, we will visit Castle Coole. This majestic 18th-century home of the Earls of Belmore is a James Wyatt masterpiece and one of Ireland's best neoclassical

houses. Most of the furniture and contents date from before 1830. We'll continue to our accommodations at Belle Isle Castle, which belongs to the Abercorn family. This historic Irish landmark stretches over 470 acres and was built in the early 17th century. The floor-to-ceiling windows will give us a superb view of the garden, which was created in the 18th century. Tonight, we'll settle in with dinner at the hotel.

MONDAY, JUNE 17 — FERMANAGH (B, L, D)

"Hauntingly beautiful" are the words typically used to describe Glenveagh Castle, built between 1867 and 1873 on the shores of Lough Veagh. It was conceived of as a Victorian Camelot and romantic retreat where an idyllic lifestyle could be pursued by lovers of nature and art. Glenveagh is well-known today for its rich collection of trees and shrubs from the Southern Hemisphere, including species from Chile, Tasmania, and Madeira and a diverse rhododendron collection. The Castle Gardens are considered one of Ireland's horticultural masterpieces, and we'll see many rare plants unique to Irish gardens. The two major elements — the pleasure gardens and the walled garden — were constructed in the 1880s. We'll continue on to take lunch privately with the Duke of Abercorn at Barons Court, Ulster's finest home and the duke's private residence. The house was remodeled by John Soane in the 1790s and given a neoclassical interior in the early 19th century by William Vitruvius Morrison. The rooms are sumptuous, with outstanding plasterwork, fine French furniture, and an impressive collection of paintings. It's not normally open to the public, but the AHS has kindly been granted access. We'll return to Belle Isle, then enjoy drinks privately at nearby Crom Castle. It's set in rolling parkland in an archipelago of islands in tranquil Upper Lough Erne. Tonight, we will enjoy a light supper at the hotel.

TUESDAY, JUNE 18 — DUBLIN (B, L, D)

The day will begin when we leave with luggage for Headfort House. The building contains a magnificent suite of six state rooms designed by renowned Scottish neoclassical architect Robert Adam. We will pause to enjoy a picnic lunch packed by our friends at Belle Isle before continuing to our next stop: National Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin. Established in 1795, the gardens contain a collection of more than 20,000 plant and tree species but are best known for the exquisitely restored Victorian glasshouses. In fact, the Turner Curvilinear Range and the Great Palm House received the Europa Nostra award for excellence in conservation. Other features include Ireland's only tropical rainforest, rose and rock gardens, double herbaceous borders, and an organic fruit



and vegetable garden. Conservation plays an important role at the botanic gardens, and they are home to more than 300 endangered plant species from around the world, including six that are extinct in the wild. This evening, we'll return to Dublin and the Merrion Hotel. We will enjoy our final dinner together in a private room at Restaurant 21.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19

We will bid farewell to Ireland for our return flights to the United States.

While revisions of this itinerary are not anticipated, the AHS and its travel partners reserve the right to make changes, with or without notice, which may become necessary.

