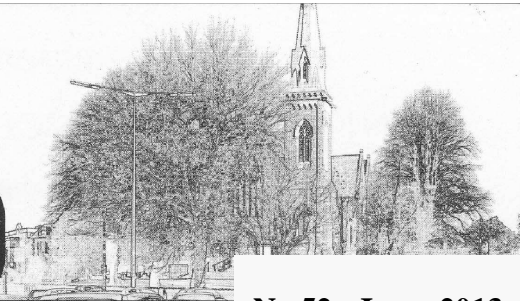


Rathgar Residents Association



Official Newsletter of the Rathgar Residents Association

No 52 June 2013



Some Notes and Comments

AGM of the Association

The AGM took place on the 12th April 2013. There was a good attendance of members.

Reports from the chairman, secretary, treasurer environment and planning officer were presented and a new committee was elected for the coming year.

The formal meeting was followed by members question time. Issues raised were -the lack of proper pedestrian facilities in Rathgar, the new property tax, planning issues and enforcement, the state of pavements after last Autumn's leaf fall and the continuing problem of dog fouling.

Annual Garden Competition

The judging of front gardens in the Rathgar area will be conducted in late June with the presentation of the Dixon cup for best garden taking place at the Rathgar Horticultural Society's annual show in early July

Design Manual for Urban Roads. This is the title of a new publication by the Departments of Transport and Environment. This is a welcome publication for local communities such as Rathgar and particularly the village itself. Over many years, local authority road engineers saw their role as keeping motor traffic moving at the expense of other road users. They corralled pedestrians behind barriers at major road junctions. Zebra crossings where pedestrians had absolute priority, were replaced by a push button green man, providing little time or comfort in crossing a busy road. What all this did, the manual says was to "transfer risk from the motorist to more vulnerable road users" It made way for roads and streets that "feel safe" for driving at speed but hazardous for walking or cycling because it induced a "false sense of safety" among drivers. The *Design Manual for Urban Roads* now puts cars at the bottom of the hierarchy of urban road users below pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

The Association trusts that Dublin City Council will now take these guidelines on board for all local communities in its area and particularly will address the major problem in Rathgar where pedestrians and cyclists play Russian roulette every day with their lives in using their own village streets.

A view from the Chairman

John McCarthy

It is that time of year when we should be out enjoying our gardens, our leafy suburbs, linear parks and river banks. However with very poor weather we are limited in what we can do. Having that said, we have to make the effort to get up and get on with living.

Spring this year, brought the Local Property Tax demands. Whilst we can argue the unfairness of it, this tax is here to stay. At a recent meeting in Rathmines, local TDs Lucinda Creighton, Ruairi Quinn and Kevin Humphries stated that 80% of the LPT will go into the coffers of the local council.

As local taxpayer, here is our cue to demand improvement to roads, foot paths and other services in our area. Also of great importance is the need to improve our drainage and sewerage system. In recent years and with increasing frequency, in times of heavy rain, we have witnessed extreme flooding resulting in severe property damage and a death. The Association with other local groups have demanded a full survey of the Rathmines/Pembroke sewerage scheme and the Swan River. Progress unfortunately has been slow. The area needs a proper system to avoid future disasters

2014 is the year of the next local elections, now is the time to question local councillors and potential candidates on what are their future plans for the area. Let me be so bold as to suggest two issues that they be asked to address.

1. Local councils can alter the current base rate of the LPT by 15%.
Councillors/candidates should commit themselves to ensure that it will be a downward direction.
2. The current City Development Plan allows for high rise and dense developments in all areas of Dublin. Why in a mature area like Rathgar do we need/want such developments?

A final thought, we are first and foremost a community, I urge all of you to do whatever you can to make this a pleasant and harmonious one. Please contact the Association with whatever issues you feel need to be addressed and we will do whatever we can to support you.

Having problems with your PC and don't want the hassle of bringing it into the repair shop to have it sorted out? Why not try a new on line service which can fix many of your problems remotely. Try rescueit.ie

The Walk and Talk programme of City walks continues.

Contact DCC 2222148 (between 9-5pm),
email at letswalkandtalk@dublincity.ie
Address:: Community Development Section, Dublin City Council, Block 4,
Floor 1, Dublin 8.
www.letswalkandtalk.ie

Historical Programme: Summer 2012 leader Pat Liddy

These walks took place in May

Ringsend to Irishtown - Banished outside the City Walls
Sandymount - A Step above Buttermilk
Ballsbridge - Tracks, Bridges and a River
Donnybrook - Convents, Communications and Commerce from the Earliest Times
The Dawn Chorus
Harold's Cross - From Times Past.

Still to come

Hinterland Of The Poddle

Saturday, 8th of June at 12 noon. Meet at the entrance to Eamonn Ceannt Park, Sundrive Road, Dublin 12

Take a gentle stroll in the Park as you hear about the influence of the forgotten River Poddle and discover some of the area's past heritage.

Cabra – Encompassing a Great History & Heritage

Tuesday, 11th June at 7pm. Meet outside Cabra Library, Navan Road, Dublin 7

Cabra absorbs or adjoins many historic sites, some of which will be explored on this walk.

Jonathan Swift - A Giant In a Then Literary Lilliput

Friday, 14th June at 4pm. Meet at the Bell Tower, Main Square, Trinity College, Dublin 2

Celebrate the tercentenary of Jonathan Swift becoming Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral with a tour taking in many places associated with this great man.

Crumlin - The Crooked Glen

Sunday, 7th July at 12 noon. Meet outside the Dublin City Council Area Office, St. Agnes Road, Crumlin Village, Dublin 12

Crumlin's historic associations go back thousands of years.

The Liberties - An Historic Circle Of Immigration & Emigration

Wednesday, 17th July at 2.30pm. Meet in the grounds of Christchurch Cathedral, The Liberties, once the industrial engine of Dublin, was famous for wool, poplin, brewing and distilling.

Ballybough - An Baile Bocht

Thursday, 18th July at 6pm. Meet outside Charleville Mall Library, Charleville Mall, North Strand, Dublin

“The Poor Town” is rich in stories and heritage.

Programme of City Walks. These continue through the year

Sunday 2 pm: A walk in the Phoenix Park, Parkgate St.

Monday: 11am A walk by the Royal Canal: Ashtown, Navan Road

Tuesday 2pm A walk along the Grand Canal: The Barge, Charlemont Street

Wednesday: 2pm A walk in Inchicore: Kilmmainham Gaol

Wednesday: 2pm A walk in the city: Kildare P, Kildare St.:Converse in Spanish

Thursday; 2pm: Sandymount Green: A stroll on Sandymount Strand

Friday 11am: Meeting House Sq. Temple bar: Converse ‘as Gaelige’

Friday 2pm; 2pm A walk in the city: Kildare Pl., Kildare St.:Converse ‘en Francais’

Trace your ancestors: Historical records available on line.
downsurvey.tcd.ie

A remarkable historical website has come on line in recent weeks. This is the online digital map of the 17th century Down Survey of Ireland. The Survey was conducted between 1656 and 1658 and was the first national land survey conducted anywhere in the world. It was conducted by William Petty in the aftermath of the defeat of Charles I and the Catholic Confederacy. Its purpose was to record in detail every townland, parish and barony, the acreage of each the type of land and the ownership

Irish Architectural Archive: The Institute of Architects 45 Merrion Square. Examine the archives for Rathgar interests. See how handsome the corner where the 108 now stands, looked like in 1910.

Rathfarnham Castle. Built in 1583 for Adam Loftus Bishop of Dublin, Lord Chancellor of Ireland and first provost of Trinity College. The castle has fine rococo ceilings depicting classical scenes by Angelica Kaufmann. The house is now in public ownership and its Berkley 18th and 19th century

collection of costumes and toys can be visited Tuesday to Sunday-admission free. It also has a wonderful children's playground.

Do you like a good yarn or do you tell a good yarn?

Then the Teachers Club, Parnell Square, hosts the Yarn Spinner's Club every Thursday.

Bealtaine Festival: Every May, Dublin City Council in conjunction with the city libraries put on a series of interesting events. This year, in Terenure Library, a series of lectures covered such topics as French boules, Sir Hugh Lane's row with Dublin Corporation in 1913 over the siting of a permanent home for his collection of Modern Art. Also in the library during May the Evergreen Art Group presented portraits on the theme of "Grow Happy". Look out for this in 2014 !

Garda Siochana Information leaflets. There is a series of useful information leaflets obtainable from your local garda station. They cover such topics as **Personal Safety and Security for the Older Person, Home Security Check List and Bicycles Security**

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From *Links of the past*: September 1990 MQ

Dogs' Dirt

Dogs frequently relieve themselves when they are taken for a walk (often the purpose of the exercise). But those of us who use the pavement (with or without dogs) are hampered, disgusted and discommoded by finding doggie excreta all over the place.

We know that the "Pooper Scooper" has taken on in Switzerland (that most civic minded of countries)-you bring your shovel and plastic bag and clean up after your pet-and in parts of the U.S. More recently we notice that Dun Laoghaire Corporation has put up bins along Dun Laoghaire Pier (East) to receive the off loadings of dogs and keep the promenade clean for two legged walkers.

When will Dublin Corporation start to think along these lines? And should we not ALL be bringing our dogs for a walk complete with our plastic bag and little scoop held in readiness for the Great Evacuation??

The Rose, the Queen of Flowers. Mary Forrest University College Dublin

Roses are one of the most popular summer flowering shrubs, climbers, hybrid tea or floribunda roses grace many gardens at this time of year.

Their popularity is not new. Illustrations of roses occur in the artefacts of the ancient Minoan, Greek and Persian civilisations and illustrate their long cultivation in gardens. Roses had a place in the formal enclosed garden of the medieval gardens and examples occur in illuminated prayer books or Book of Hours. Roses are seen in the 16th century paintings of orderly formal Persian and Turkish gardens. By contrast they also formed part of exuberant Dutch flower paintings of the early 17th century.

In medieval time in England, the Apothecary's Rose was used by herbalists to make rose water. In the Middle East, petals of the highly scented Damask Rose were distilled to create attar of roses, an ingredient of perfumes and cosmetics. The cultivation of roses for this purpose continues in Bulgaria and Turkey today.

Roses are native to Europe, the Middle East, China and North America and some 3500 species of wild roses have been identified but about 150 of these occur in gardens or have been used for the breeding of new varieties. While new roses were introduced over the centuries rose breeding developed significantly in the late 18th and early 19th century with the introduction of cultivated roses from China.

In late 18th century Empress Josephine wife of Napoleon favoured roses in her garden at Malmaison, near Paris and so began a fashion for roses in France which continued through the 19th century. Paintings of roses by her botanical artist Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759 – 1840) are now often seen on greeting cards and on table mats.

In Victorian times, a rose garden or 'rosarium' formed part of a series of gardens within a garden or park. The Iveagh Gardens, located to the rear of the National Concert Hall is one such example. Designed by Ninian Niven in 1865, the garden includes a rosarium, a formal rose garden with roses of the period which is enclosed by a trellis covered in climbing roses.

Two other rose gardens in Dublin deserve a mention. In the 1970's Dublin City Council in association with the Clontarf Horticultural Society established an extensive rose garden at St Annes, Clontarf. One rose named for St Anne's stands sentinel near the eastern entrance to the Garden.

.Your comments and views on *Link* are always appreciated.

St Anne's estate had been owned by the Ardilaun family and their Head Gardener, Andrew Campbell, noticed a pale pink spot on a 'Souvenir de la Malmaison' rose. He propagated the rose and named it 'Souvenir de Saint Anne'.

The second rose garden worth a visit forms part of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. The Rose Garden located by the river Tolka is filled with present day hybrid tea and floribunda roses. A much photographed rose in the Gardens is 'The Last Rose of Summer' made famous by Thomas Moore in his melody of that name.

Not all roses occur in gardens; two roses are native and occur in the wild in Ireland.

Burnet or Scotch Rose, *Rosa pimpinellifolia*, is a low growing shrub with single yellow roses followed by round black fruits known as hips or heps. This rose grows in coastal regions by the sea. Indeed these low growing shrubs with their thorny stems are often felt by bare feet before being seen by the eye. The other native rose the Dog Rose, *Rosa canina*, is a shrub of hedgerows and field boundaries and occurs throughout the country. The single pale pink flowers are succeeded by red rose hips, the basic ingredient of rose hip syrup.

No wonder the rose is considered the Queen of Flowers.

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Memories of Rathgar House

Ralph Walker reflected on his boyhood home on the occasion of its opening in 1973 as Oak House (now Orwell Nursing Home) for The Girls Friendly Society

.....As I enter these gates, "fond memory brings the light of other days",. I think of the house as we knew it in 1921, standing in some nine acres of fields, gardens and pleasure grounds, with an entrance at the turn into Rostrevor Road, where there was also situated a gate lodge then occupied by a man and his family for 2/6 per week. He was a carpenter by trade and part of his duty was to repair the cords in the huge windows and to lock the iron gates with a massive padlock and chain at 10 o'clock each night-Summer and Winter. This of course, necessitated for us boys some inconvenience, as we were not always ready to come home at 10 o'clock and, as an alternative means of entry we had to come down the road as far

as the entrance to Orwell Park climb on the grass bank, over a wall and into a V shaped holly tree which was conveniently situated, and drop from there down into a small avenue. But, when we arrived at the house if it was locked up-and it was always locked when my father went to bed and he usually retired early- we used to throw a handful of gravel up at my bedroom window which two of my brothers occupied with me, and whoever was on duty would come down and open the hall door and let us in.

Our predecessor here was, an old lady who had two carriages and a coachman, and you can imagine a Victoria carriage sweeping up a long winding avenue among large trees to the hall door where the old lady would dismount before the carriage would pass on through the arch way into the stable yard beyond

I well recall stone steps used for mounting horses in that yard and indeed, they might still be here.

The fruit and vegetable garden, some three acres of it, extended beyond the iron railings and down to a cedar tree which still stands at the end of the garden of what is now Mr Cunningham's house and, from there, the wall separating us from what is now High School, ran to the end of Rostrevor Terrace. On the south side we were bounded by the mill race in which we all learned to swim-alas, it is now dry.

What is now Rostrevor Road was a large field where we played football and where in fact for a time Old Wesley played their matches, and I can well recall the teams coming into the yard covered in mud to wash out of buckets of cold water before changing their clothes. What a change from the club houses of today.

It was from here that the entire family -my father, my mother and four of us boys would walk to and from Church twice on a Sunday, via Rathgar and Rathmines to Charleston Road. We boys would go again in the afternoon to the Boys Brigade bible class and I cannot remember ever having taken a tram.

It was here we learned to run and my father and other friends would time us as we ran around the lawn each evening for a mile or more.

It was from here that we watched the pigeons gather in the large beech tree in the centre of the lawn before dropping down into a large evergreen oak to roost for the night.

It was here we had our Kerry cow and donkey and, down at the back of the house was the dairy and washroom. In those days the clothes and bed linen were all washed by hand in huge tubs with washboards. There was no such thing at the time as washing machines.

In the back we also played handball against the back wall of the house, tennis and croquet on what was then the Tennis lawn in front of the house, rounders, rugby and cricket in the fields. When we wanted a change of occupation we would yoke the donkey to an old converted gun carriage and drive him around the avenues.

All that was a long time ago, but gradually the houses came; first the right hand side of what became Rostrevor Road, then the lawn became the left hand side, then the garden was cut down in size and Rostrevor Road was continued to make more houses and, finally, the houses on Orwell Road frontage were built, and so we moved, leaving here in the year 1934

I can still recall my mother's drawing room parties and the commotion which was created on one occasion when my mother had bought a very exclusive hat, only to find that one of her friends turned up in the same model.

On another occasion we boys, who were allowed sometimes to assist, landed a cake from a cake basket into a lady's lap. However she was very friendly old lady and no permanent harm was done.

I can well remember all the strawberries, apples, plums, cherries and grapes we got from the garden as well as all kinds of vegetables. I can still see my mother's beloved aspidistras standing in the porch of the house. She took great care of them. The maids carried them out, when the rain fell, to be watered by the Lord and then replaced them very carefully.

I have a thousand other memories, much too many to tell you now. We loved the house. It was a happy home and is full of memories for me.

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Schools in the area.:

The High School and its origins

The High School which is located at Danum on Zion Road began at 40 Harcourt Street(the High School) and at Adelaide Road/Earlsfort Terrace(The Diocesan Girls' School)



The High School was founded on October 1, 1870, by the Governors of The Erasmus Smith Schools, as a school to prepare boys for business and the professions. At that time, that great foundation was already two hundred years old and controlled four Grammar schools and over 150 primary schools. Established in the middle of the seventeenth century by Erasmus Smith to educate the children of his tenants and other poor scholars, the

foundation had an income of over £8,000 per annum by 1870, a considerable sum in those days.

The English or Intermediate section of the new school offered courses in English, Arithmetic, Book-keeping and Writing. In addition, a series of optional courses in Latin, Greek, Natural Sciences, French, German, advanced Mathematics and Drawing were available. The school year was divided into four terms which began in October, January, April and August. Each day began at 9.30 a.m. with prayers conducted by the headmaster and school ended at 3.00 p.m.

During break the boys were allowed to go into the pleasure grounds which adjoined the school and in January 1872 the Standing Committee agreed to allow them to walk on the grass, but ordered that the junior masters were to supervise the boys during lunch break!

The school always welcomed pupils from many religious persuasions and those of no religion. One of the more amusing accounts of the religious breakdown at the school was given by William Wilkins, Headmaster, in a letter to the Board in 1886, 209 Church of Ireland, 41 Presbyterians, 8 Plymouth Brethren, 5 Methodists, 3 'Separatists', 3 Baptists, 3 Jews, 2 Roman Catholics, 2 Moravians and 1 Congregationalist. He remarked that "the Presbyterian boys have always been the intellectual cream of the school". Today, the population of the school contains almost every religion, denomination, faith system and philosophy which exists in Ireland. Religious harmony has been a hallmark of the school since its foundation.

The High School moved from Harcourt Street to Danum, Rathgar in 1971 and amalgamated with The Diocesan School for Girls in 1974, thereby becoming co-educational. Danum was purchased from the Bewley family in 1955 and the years prior to the move saw the development of the playing fields and the planning of the new school.

The Diocesan School was the older of the two new partners, having been founded in 1849. Located the corner of Earlsfort Terrace and Adelaide Road it opened in April 1851 with the appointment of Mr Brennan schoolmaster at Lucan at a salary of £40 per year



It was decided to place the Schools in connection with the Church Education Society. This Society was formed in 1839 with "the

primary object of affording the children of the Church instruction in the Holy Scriptures and in the Catechism and other formularies of the Church, under the direction of Bishops and Parochial Clergy, and under the tuition of teachers who are members of the United Church of England and Ireland". Schools in connection with the Society were open to all children of the country, without distinction, but children of Roman Catholic or other dissenting parents were only required to learn the Holy Scriptures and not the Catechism. The Society established Model Schools to assist in training teachers, and promoted the formation of an efficient inspection of the schools assisted or maintained by it, in order to secure the highest order of secular education in its schools.

To begin with, the congregation of St. Matthias' Church had sole responsibility, for financing the School. To this end also, special sermons were occasionally preached. In 1872, the minutes record that £721.3s. 6d. was collected after the sermon preached by the Lord Bishop of Cashel. Later, in 1878, the School Committee agreed that a sermon should be preached each year in aid of the school funds. In February 1872, the Committee directed the schoolmaster to "collect one penny from every child attending the daily Schools unless from those who are excused from payment by the Clergy, and to account for the same weekly"

During the 1960s - the Committee of Management first considered the possibility of re-siting the school. The volumes of traffic and noise had increased. As the years passed, it appeared more necessary to locate the school where there would be more space, including playing-fields, around it and yet where it would be conveniently placed for the majority of pupils. Finally in 1974 the school amalgamated with The High School in Rathgar

W.B. Yeats remains the best known past pupil of High School. He entered the school in 1881. Yeats found the school rather different from the one he had attended in London: "Here....nobody gave any thought to decorum....on the other hand there was no bullying, and I had no thought that boys could work so hard. Cricket and football, the collecting of moths and butterflies, though not forbidden, were discouraged."

Yeats was mainly interested in natural history, but was weak at English literature. He had a difficulty with spelling but his contemporaries noted the quality of his essays. He received a prize in English in 1883 and seems to have begun writing poetry at about that time.

The High School now caters for more than 800 pupils

We are not Alone.

There are many public buildings and spaces around about Rathgar. By "public" I mean not only parks, libraries, Garda stations etc, but also places of worship, parish centres, shop forecourts etc.

The external walls of, and the spaces around, these buildings are opportunities for improving the quality of our lives. Left to their own devices they attract litter and shockingly low-rent graffiti artists. I think each of us, and the Government, has a duty of care to more than just our fellow man, but to all Ireland's residents, our native plants and animals and the in-betweens, the voiceless constituency, or at least if they do speak it is in a language we do not hear or understand.

"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" (Mathew 6:26) This is a famous quote from a parable of Jesus. Now, this can be looked on in a couple of ways, but I would suggest it means that if you are looking after nature you are doing God's work. Yet at a very literal level we have to square that quote with the fact that many of our familiar species of bird and insect are now declining in numbers. I am not keen on organised religion but I will gladly encourage groups of people who are used to working together to work to promote the safety and well being of our wildlife. I strongly believe that all public and private bodies should whenever possible incorporate wildlife promotion and protection into day to day practice. I love to think of Christ Church in Rathgar village or the Three Patrons on Rathgar Road or the Methodists on Brighton Road and the others, all bedecked with various wildlife-enhancing bits and pieces, bird boxes, bat boxes, butterfly banks, wildflower areas, habitat piles, a little dry stone wall or a hedgerow.

The really handy thing about the churches is that they have congregations, a rich source of knowledge, expertise and...volunteers.

The space in front of the Garda station or beside the library should not just be for parking cars, there is always room to cater for the needs of small creatures as they take up so little space. How cool would it be to have plants and nesting boxes, even a butterfly bank or a bee hive in that little Garda-garden across from the petrol station in the middle-of-the-road or bat boxes on the cop shop walls?

A serious decline in the numbers of many bird species is being documented every year by Bird Watch Ireland, and some recently common butterflies and bees are almost gone also. There is an opportunity to help remedy this

while also improving our own lives by turning our drab walls and open spaces into havens of life and vibrant symbols of respect for the entire community.

PS Has anyone seen a hedgehog around here recently?

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busheslane@yahoo.ie

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Environment Report Summer 2013

John McCarthy

On the environment front many of the same issues remain without resolution

Rathgar Village

We continue to put pressure on DCC and local councillors to have a pedestrian crossing in Rathgar Village from the corner of The 108 pub to The Deli.. All have been made very aware of the dangers to pedestrians at this junction. The Association will continue to put the case for a controlled crossing.

We would also like to see the general appearance of the village improved. There is far too much street clutter, unnecessary and ugly street furniture and an absence of quality signage and features. The Association will continue to pursue an improvement in the appearance of the village.

Water

Most households were left without water over the Easter bank holiday weekend. The City Council gave various reasons for this water shut down, all of which seemed inadequate. We will continue to seek an explanation and a commitment that this problem is at an end. The advent of water charges next year should focus minds on the adequacy of water supply.

Litter and dog fouling

The removal of litter bins from your streets has led to a deterioration in the state of the streets and footpaths and I urge you all to keep an eye on fly tipping in our lanes and report such incidents to the city council. Dog fouling remains a problem. .Can I encourage you to **politely** take issue with any dog owner whose dog you see fouling the pavement or parks.

Roads and Footpaths.

I am resident of Maxwell Road, the condition of which is a total embarrassment with potholes and uneven surface. Despite my many reports to the council the situation still remains the same. This is typical of

many of our streets and footpaths. Please highlight such issues to DCC and to the local councillors.

Those of you with access to a computer can make a report on the DCC website on such problems as leaking water mains, pot holes or broken foot paths. I urge you to familiarise yourself with this service, each complaint generates a job reference number which you can follow up at any time until resolved.

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Planning in Rathgar

June 2013

Philip O'Reilly

While the Celtic Tiger has not by any consideration been reborn, property appears to have stabilized and in some cases turned the corner and this has been reflected somewhat in an increase of planning activity in the area.

And while there have been no major developments, applications and submissions are on-going in the conversion back of houses in multiple units to single family homes with proposals for extensive extensions and related developments.

Proposals for developments at 14 Highfield Road (house extension) and 7 Leicester Ave (application for a security fence for the synagogue at that address) were commented on by the Association but did not lead to appeal. Likewise 75A Orwell Road, for the erection of an entrance sign was commented on to the Local Authority but was not appealed. However the owner, continues to have a previous illegal sign still in place at the gate in spite of that sign being refused.

The 10 years planning saga at the Orwell Nursing Home continues and recently saw a number of further applications, the latest of which has been appealed to An Bord Pleanala by the Association. Matters relating to the joining of two detached houses on Orwell Road with a flat roofed infill and to the lack of on-site car parking facilities were just two issues raised in the appeal.

Other matters on Rathgar Road and Garville Ave. have given rise to comments to the Local Authority where in all cases the observations of the Association were taken on board and permission either refused or modified.

We also submitted a supporting submission on an appeal taken by Brighton Sq. residents to An Bord Pleanala.

We have continued to pursue matters relating to planning enforcement with an increased measure of success.

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**Well worth a visit this summer: Kilmacurragh House
near Rathdrum, Co Wicklow**

Located in east County Wicklow, Kilmacurragh Botanic Gardens is the centrepiece of an 18th century estate that once covered over 5000 acres (2000 ha). Seat of the Acton family for three centuries (the late Charles Acton, music critic of the Irish Times was a member of the family), it is now an outpost of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. The milder climate, higher rainfall and deeper, acidic soils of this historic Wicklow garden, provide a counterpoint to the collections at Glasnevin. The association of Kilmacurragh with the National Botanic Gardens began in 1854, when Thomas Acton inherited the estate and greatly benefited from the advice and support of Dr. David Moore and his son Sir Frederick Moore, Curators of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin in Dublin. Kilmacurragh provided a more advantageous situation for growing plants from the Himalaya and the Southern Hemisphere and is today famous for its conifers and calcifuges.

In 1996, a 52 acre (21 ha) portion of the old demesne comprising the house, arboretum, entrance drive and woodlands officially became part of the National Botanic Gardens of Ireland. By then the house was in ruins due to a series of disastrous fires and the following ten years were spent rescuing valuable trees from a crippling tangle of cherry laurel, sycamore and *Rhododendron ponticum*.

On a recent visit, Robin Lane Fox gardening expert and critic for the Financial Times (also Fellow and Tutor in Ancient History at New College, Oxford.) wrote "I have just been to a semi lost garden which is in a different class to other gardens that have been recovered from the wilderness. It ranks as one of the most remarkable visits in my long life of visiting"

For a more detailed history of the estate and gardens see Botanicgardens.ie or better still pay it a visit.

Off the N11 between Wicklow town and Rathdrum. Guided tours from the car park daily 12noon and 3 PM

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