



Snail Mail

We are coming to the end of another challenging garden year. After a vicious gale at the beginning of the season, lots of rain in the middle, it seems fitting that we are having more gales at the end of it. But being the true (crazy, hardy, lunatic, enthusiastic, resigned, glass-half-full, irrepressible— types (you can fill in your own word here), we will all have selective amnesia by next Spring which will allow us to resume with renewed vigor to do it all again in the hope that we will have that PERFECT season when it only rains at night, the slugs will develop an aversion to hostas and all the 'breezes' will be gentle ones.



By all accounts the November DGS meeting with Klaus Laitenberger as our speaker was a huge success. He is interesting and very knowledgeable - a winning combination. Keep that name in mind, it 'might' crop up at our Christmas quiz mentioned below.

Now then, to a more serious subject. Our Christmas Social is next Monday—no speakers, just fun and a very challenging quiz courtesy of John Sneddon. Y'all remember the last one dontcha.! So, come prepared and hold off on the mulled wine (be sure to bring designated driver along) until after the quiz.

Monthly Meetings

VENUE;	Salthill House, Mountcharles
TIME:	8 p.m. Plant sale and chit chat. 8:30 (PROMPT) Program begins,
December 5	Christmas Social
January 9	Martin Eves from EnviroGrind Ltd. "Composting, mulching, soil enriching".
February 6	Annual General Meeting
March 5	Hugh Mannix "Bees in the Garden"
April 2	to be advised
May 14	to be advised
June 11	to be advised
July/August	No meetings

***Please note!** We are always looking for ideas regarding interesting speakers and topics so if any member has suggestions with regard to speaker and/or topic, please let one of the committee know. Thnx.*

GARDEN SHEDS

I never realized what an emotive subject this is and how much thought needs to go into having the perfect shed for your wants. I came across a little article on the subject which gave me the idea to canvas among our own members and find out what would be their perfect shed. Let me tell you, we have some seriously “different” gardeners in our midst. They walk and talk just like the rest of us but it just proves that you cannot take people at face value. You have to dig deeper and asked them about sheds and stuff — and then the true persona is revealed.



So I asked the perfectly reasonable question: Please finish this sentence “My Perfect Potting/Garden Shed would contain these things” ; dear readers— these were the responses.!!!

From one of our esteemed former chairpersons:

My ideal..... An armchair to ease my aching muscles, A wood-burning stove to keep things cosy, A potting up bench at just the right height with a never-ending supply of Monty Don’s own home-made potting compost, A selection of terracotta pots, cleaned and sorted on shelves by size and imprinted “by appointment”, A little fridge with snacks and Sauvignon Blanc that appear by magic. (Joan Donleavy)



My ideal.....would have to double as an office cum potting shed. It will need to be well insulated, be in an exposed situation with a vista which is continually changing but battered by wind and rain so that the incumbent (me) will feel immensely cosy but possibly not very keen to face out-of-doors. (Charles Tindal)



My ideal..... will NOT contain a large pile of logs, three hens in a little hutch and three childrens bicycles. These leave little room for potting. (You can let your frustrations out with us Mary Nolan—that’s what we are here for. ed.)

My idealan automatic mister, a tea urn, an armchair, a large bin to compost all failures and Erin Boag ! (all right Charlie Garratt here she is, she’ll go well with the large bin, the tea urn and the...erm ...automatic mister)



Then FINALLY we’ve had our serious responses which is what I really wanted!!! (of course I did.) This one from Michael Classon —

My ideal..... Would be a dry shed, a rack to display seeds, a work bench at a reasonable height, a bin for compost, another for fertilizer, a sink with a cold water tap, abundant light and a space for the tools appropriate to potting shed, a radio, and a bottle wine. (v. good and very unfrivolous ed.) Followed immediately by another excellent piece from John Sneddon.

*My ideal..... 1) garden tools (spade, fork, rake and secateurs) 2) potting bench, 3) shelving for chemicals and fertilizer, 4) garden clothing and 5) drying timber. And yet one more excellent entry from the ‘serious gardeners’ group. This one from our esteemed chairperson Jack Maguire. A very detailed list (he is the chairperson after all! *My ideal..... 1) a set of good gardening tools (spade, grape, shovel, garden fork, hedge clippers, 2) a bench, 3) comfortable chair to relax, 4) heated propagator, 5) sharpening stones, 6) power tools, (strimmer, lawn mower and small chain saw), 7) small gas ring, 8) fridge, 9) radio.**

That covers it except for one more from Alicia Curran:



*I wish I had a potting shed,
Quite small, just for myself
I’d go in there
And think of plants
To put atop its shelf
I’d also think upon a chair
Not big
But very easy
In which to rest my weary self
The odd time I feel lazy
I’d also think upon a ‘fridge’,
Quite small would be just fine*

*For chilling seeds
And other needs
Perhaps a glass of wine?
A little wireless too,
Why not?
To while away an hour
I’ll drink my wine and rest myself
Whenever there’s a shower
Too quiet though, I hear you say
You’re right
I will not quarrel
I have a plan*

*A handsome man
A dream
A Colin Farrel.....*

P.s. upon proofreading this newsletter and coming across Charlie’s list, Ms Donleavy has amended hersshe now also wants a ‘mister’ for her potting shed — doesn’t have to be automated

News in brief:

- You will remember in my summer newsletter I wrote glowingly about EnviroGrind which is a composting facility near Pettigo. A small group of DGS members went along a few weeks ago to have a look and all came away impressed (initially thinking what's so great about a composting facility.) At any rate Martin Eves, the Director, will be our January speaker. Those of us who went all want to order some of this wonderful compost. I have contacted them and here are the prices. A one-ton bag costs €37. Along with this comes a €30 charge for delivery. However, a lorry holds 16 one-ton bags (they are those square huge bags which builders usually have for delivering gravel etc) and if we take a lorry load the total delivery charge is €240 which comes out to €14 per bag—for a total charge per one-ton bag of €51. (for those of you with trailers and willing to pick up one ton loose—the cost is €25 per ton) I am quite sure there will be enough takers for a full load. I will circulate a form on Monday for anyone wishing to avail themselves and then we can give the order to Mr. Eves when he comes in January.
- At the last committee meeting we have discussed our Garden Trip next May. Sounds like Jack has put in a lot of work and it will be a good trip as always. We will be visiting 8 gardens and staying at Lawlors Hotel, in Naas, Kildare. Initial costing for 3 nights B&B plus evening meal, with gardens included comes in at around €245 p.p.sharing. Jack will go into more detail at our next meeting and there will be preliminary sign up sheet for those interested.
- Please note that the hospitality roster will need to be set up for 2012. There will be a sheet circulating for members to sign up.
- The AGM is also fast approaching; most of the committee are willing to stand again. There might be a need to fill the hospitality and the plant sales slots. More on that at our January meeting.
- A new gardening book seems to be creating a bit of buzz. It's "The Living Garden" by Jane Powers, Gardening Correspondent for the Irish Times. If you need a stocking filler—this could be a good buy. I myself am looking for a book called "How to live without a garden hose" to give my hubby for Christmas—this after 'cleaning' the drive at full throttle with the hose and thereby 'tarmac-chip-blasting' my prize meconopsis which was wonderful and had 4 healthy blossoms this year and until the second before the hit by aforementioned blast, was looking thriving, verdant, healthy and happy!!!!

This is the wrong time of year to give advice on how to make comfrey liquid feed. I only include it here because the other day I wanted to use a medium-size plastic barrel which had a top on it, forgetting what was inside it - huge mistake. The stench was overpowering, to put it very mildly. About 5 months ago I put loads of comfrey leaves in said barrel, topped it up with water and was looking forward to the day when I could use this liquid gold, only to completely forget about it till last week. So for all of you who want to do this next year - 4 to 6 weeks of fermenting is recommended. Comfrey liquid is very high in potassium with reasonable levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. It's healthy, it's organic and it's free.

Congratulations to Charles and Rosemary Tindal who have moved into their new house in near proximity to Ballyloughan House—the former abode. They have a stunning view of the ocean from the new place and best of all they have the bones of a very interesting new garden to develop. Lots of old stone walls, flat stone area, a rise behind the house and of course the 'old' magnificent garden not far away. We will be looking forward to seeing the new garden as it de-



Sadly there will be no 2012 DGS Calendar forthcoming. I had the feeling that interest might have ebbed a bit by the fact that I had no inquiries from anyone to have their garden in any forthcoming calendar. If the interest is there next year we could consider doing it again.

One last thing - you might have noticed that there was no new directory this year. This was mainly because by June we still had many members who had not renewed their subscription. For 2012 we will attempt to remind members a bit earlier so that the final date of subscription renewal, for inclusion in the directory, will be March 31 and then we can bring out the new directory by end of April. 😊

Subscriptions: Fam €45 Single €25/year

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