



Irish
Georgian
Society

Conserving Ireland's Architectural Heritage

LONDON CHAPTER EVENTS – SPRING 2015

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY PARTY & EVENTS REVIEW

THURSDAY 19 MARCH

Our Saint Patrick's Day Party and Annual Events Review will take place on Thursday 19 of March at Lettsom House. Our evening will commence with an update on the Society's work in Ireland and the first projects funded through the London Chapter sponsored Small Grants Scheme by Irish Georgian Foundation trustee and chairperson of the Membership and Events Committee, Rose Mary Craig. Former Irish Georgian Foundation director and London Chapter Committee member, Nick Sheaff will review the Chapter's previous year's events. Faboluous Feasts will then serve a two course buffet supper.

Our evening will start at 7pm with drinks served from 6.30 and tickets cost £45 per person. Lettsom House is located in Chandos Street, off Cavendish Square and a short walk from Oxford Circus Underground station. If you would like to attend, please send your completed application form & cheque with an email address or SAE to Colm Owens, Apartment 50, Kilner House, Clayton Street, London SE11 5SE. Full details will be sent to those attending closer to the event.

IGS TOUR OF GREAT LONDON HOUSES

FRIDAY 10 TO SUNDAY 12 APRIL

Irish IGS members will be staying at the Lansdowne Club from 10 to 12 April while visiting some of the major houses of London and tour leader, Rose Mary Craig has kindly invited members of the London Chapter to join them for either a single day or days of the tour or to dine with them on Saturday evening at the Lansdowne Club.

Friday 10 April - Meet 12.30pm at Chiswick House: Lord Burlington's great 18th century Palladian masterpiece. Lunch in Chiswick House Café. Coach to Kenwood House: Remodelled by Robert Adam for first Earl of Mansfield in 1760s. Bought in 1920s by first Earl of Iveagh whose outstanding collection of paintings are housed here. English Heritage has just completed a major interior refurbishment. Return on coach to London. The cost per person is £80 and includes entrance fees, lunch and coach.

Saturday 11 April - Depart Lansdowne Club at 9.30am for Strawberry Hill: Fantastic example of Georgian Gothic Revival architecture created by Horace Walpole in the 1740s. The Strawberry Hill Trust is well into a £9 million repair and restoration of the property. Lunch in Strawberry Hill Café followed by Marble Hill House: Elegant Palladian villa built for Henrietta Howard, mistress of King George II. Visit Ham House.: A 17th century creation of the Duke and Duchess of Lauderdale, this house survives with its 400 year old collection of paintings, furniture and textiles still in situ. Return to the Lansdowne Club. The cost per person is £90 and includes entrance fees, lunch and coach.

Sunday 12 April - Depart Lansdowne Club at 9.30am for Spencer House: Built for the first Earl Spencer in the 1750s as one of London's finest private houses. After a chequered history the house was restored in the 1980's under the stewardship of Lord Rothschild to its full 18th century splendour. Lunch in Syon House's cafe followed by house tour: Owned by the Dukes of Northumberland for over 400 years the house has spectacular Robert Adam interiors and a fine collection of furnishings, furniture and art collected by the Percy family over the centuries. Osterley House: Initially a Tudor house, the property was transformed by Robert Adam for the Child family in the 1760s into a Neo-classical palace. Return to London on tube from Osterley station. The cost per person is £90 and includes entrance fees, lunch and coach.

DINNER AT THE LANSDOWNE CLUB

SATURDAY 12 APRIL

London Chapters members are invited to join members from Ireland for dinner on Saturday 12 April at the Lansdowne Club. A 3 course dinner with coffee and wine costs £60 per person and members are asked to arrive at 7.30pm for dinner at 8pm. If you would like to attend any of the day tours or dinner please send your completed application form & cheque with an email address or SAE to Colm Owens, Apartment 50, Kilner House, Clayton Street, London SE11 5SE. Full details will be sent to those attending.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL TRIFORIUM TOUR

FRIDAY 24 APRIL

The building of St Paul's Cathedral was commenced by Royal Warrant of Charles II of 1675, and the main structure was completed in 1710. The triforium tour will provide fascinating insights into the genesis of this great building, and the mind of its architect Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723).

Our tour starts in the south-west corner, which dates from the final decade of the cathedral's construction when the west front and dome were under way. In the south-west tower, we will see the geometric stair of 1705, a remarkable artistic and technical feat with 88 treads of Portland stone rising in a spiral of 50 feet to the triforium. The tower and cylindrical space containing the spiral stair were completed before the stair was inserted, and each tread was shaped individually to bear on the edge of the one below. At triforium level, we will see artefacts from the mediaeval St Paul's, which was one of the largest gothic cathedrals in Europe before being damaged irreparably in the Great Fire of 1666.

We will next enter Wren's Library, a noble stone-vaulted chamber fitted in oak with a gallery carried on finely-carved brackets. The library of the old cathedral was almost completely destroyed in the Great Fire and the Commissioners for rebuilding St Paul's bought collections of books including rare bibles and liturgical texts. These were enriched in 1712 by a generous bequest of nearly two thousand volumes from Henry Compton, late Bishop of London. The library contains a copy of Edward Pierce's marble portrait bust of Wren of 1673, after the original in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

From the triforium, we will enjoy a spectacular view from the west end of the cathedral nave towards the Quire and High Altar. Our visit culminates with the Trophy Room and Wren's Great Model, one of the finest architectural models of the classical period. It presents in intricate detail Wren's proposal of 1673 for a domed central-space structure built to a 'Greek Cross' plan. This deeply-considered design reflects Bramante's and Sangallo's designs for St Peter's and also Roman antiquity, particularly the portico and dome of the Pantheon. Ultimately, Wren's central-space proposal was overruled due to liturgical requirements for a cruciform basilica plan, resulting in what Sir John Summerson has described as 'a directional building, consisting of a nave proceeding to a choir'.

The triforium tour is a guided visit lasting approximately one hour, and costs £30 per person. Please note we must climb 141 steps to the triforium level, and there is no lift access. We will meet at 1.30 pm at the main entrance in St Paul's west front, and the triforium tour starts at 2.00 pm. Following the tour, we will have tea in the coffee shop in the cathedral crypt. Here are located the tombs of Nelson and Wellington, and Sir Christopher Wren's tomb with its famous epitaph:

‘LECTOR, SI MONUMENTUM REQUIRIS, CIRCUMSPICE’

If you would like to attend, please send your completed application form & cheque with an email address or SAE to Nick Sheaff, 4 Framfield Road, Highbury Fields, London N5 1UU. Full details will be sent to those attending closer to the event.

YIG VISIT TO THE SOANE MUSEUM

SATURDAY 2 MAY

Our forthcoming YIG visit is to Sir John Soane's Museum, No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields for a tour of the museum and private viewing of original Robert Adam architectural drawings. While YIG events are usually reserved for members up to 40 years of age, we are happy to take a limited number of regular members on this tour should places be available.

The architect Sir John Soane's house, museum and library at No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields has been a public museum since the early-19th century and comprises Soane's collections and personal effects, acquired between the 1780s and his death in 1837. The atmospheric historic spaces are preserved as they were when Soane died and this expert tour offers fascinating insights into both Soane's life and collections. We will join the public guided tour on Saturday morning, conducted by Dr Frances Sands. Dr Frances Sands is Catalogue Editor of the Adam Drawings Project and is responsible for cataloguing the 8,000 drawings from the office of Robert and James Adam (which entered Soane's collection in 1833) for online publication. After the main tour, Sands has kindly offered us a private viewing of a selection of these drawings, namely those relating to Headfort (Co. Meath) and Syon House (West London).

Headfort was constructed in the 1760s to the designs of the architect George Semple (1700-1782). Between 1771 and 1775, Robert Adam (1728-1792) was commissioned to design a suite of rooms for the newly completed house. In 2008, to celebrate the IGS's 50th anniversary, the Society funded the restoration of the original decorative scheme of the 'Eating Parlor', the greatest of Robert Adam's rooms at Headfort. Syon House is the London home of the Duke of Northumberland. The house was built in the 16th century on the site of the Medieval Syon Abbey and came to the family of the present owners in 1594. In the 1760s, Robert Adam was commissioned to remodel this Tudor mansion.

Our tour costs £15 for YIG members and £25 for standard members and will include tea/coffee, a guided tour of the Museum and a private viewing of Adam drawings. We will meet for tea/coffee at 10.15AM before our visit to Soane's Museum at 11AM and we expect to finish around 1PM. If you would like to attend, please send your completed application form & cheque with an email address or SAE to Colm Owens, Apartment 50, Kilner House, Clayton Street SE11 5SE. Full details will be sent to those attending closer to the event.

SOUTHERN IRELAND WITH THE 20-GHOST CLUB

FRIDAY 15 to TUESDAY 19 MAY

John Redmill is again arranging the Annual Joint Tour of the two societies; this 36th tour will visit many of the wonderful country houses of Counties Waterford and Cork, in Southern Ireland, from 15th May to 19th May. This area has always been wealthy, being some of the best agricultural land of the whole country, and in the 18th and early 19th centuries many country houses were built along the banks of the river Blackwater, the 'Irish Rhine'. The 20-Ghost Club will, as always, be providing their magnificent pre-War Rolls Royce motor-cars for us.

We will visit both country houses that are not open to the public and a selection of publicly open properties that most members may not have visited before. The full programme is currently being organised but, of the great houses, we plan to see Tourin, Cappoquin, Castlemartyr, Fota, Curraghmore, Kilshannig, Riverstown and several others. We are also intending to visit at least one private collection of pre-War Rolls-Royces, and have a spectacular drive through the Knockmealdon Mountains. However, this itinerary is subject to change as details are finalised. The hospitality of the Irish is legendary, as will be remembered from the 2008 and 2014 tours of the Dublin area and of Northern Ireland, also organised by John Redmill.

The tour this year will be based at The Park Hotel, Dungarvan, on the Waterford coast; the hotel is on the edge of the town, with a secluded car park. The tour is slightly longer than normal in view of the extra journey there, so will start after breakfast on Friday 15 May and end after lunch on Tuesday 19 May. Participants are therefore to arrive on Thursday 14, and can take the opportunity to see Cork city, which we will not be visiting on the tour. A coach will collect from Cork city and Cork airport at a to-be-agreed time (perhaps about 8.00pm?) on Thursday evening, and bring participants to the Park Hotel. At the time of writing, there are very reasonably priced flights there from London and other UK airports on both Thursday 14, and returning on the afternoon / evening of Tuesday 19 May. Please do not book any flights until your place on the tour has been confirmed by us. The cost of travelling to and from Ireland is not included in the cost of the tour, and is the responsibility of members. The hotel is also happy to provide dinner and B&B on the night of Tuesday 19 May, should any members prefer to stay on after the tour and booking details will be confirmed with confirmation of your place.

The cost of the tour will be £635.00 per person sharing and will include B & B for the nights of Thursday 14, Friday 15, Saturday 16, Sunday 17 & Monday 18 May, lunch each day, dinner on Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Monday evenings, drinks at some meals, transport on one evening to avoid using the cars at night and house entrance fees. Single rooms are available at an additional supplement of £90.00 per person. If you wish to apply for a place on the tour, please complete the attached application form and return it to Janet Valentine, 1 Hobery Street, London SW10 0JD with a cheque and your email address or a SAE. We plan to allocate places during the week of 9 March so please return the form before then. We anticipate that many members will want to take part and places may be at a premium, so if the tour is oversubscribed, priority will be given first to those who were unable to come on last year's tour and a ballot may have to be held.

CHATEAUX OF NORTH NORMANDY

MONDAY 14 TO FRIDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Following his successful tours of houses in Belgium and Holland, Rob van Mesdag has arranged a special tour in France for us. The tour will be based in the medieval town of Bayeux and Rob is using a carefully developed connection with the local historic houses association to put together a fascinating tour of local chateaux and 'vieilles maisons', many of which are not generally open to the public.

It is easy to understand how in northern Normandie châteaux and manoirs have suffered. Invading Vikings and Normans have left their marks on people's houses, primitive though they were. Ambitious noblemen built great châteaux to impress their monarchs but later often neglected them. The French Revolution caused the severest havoc when owners fled and their properties were pillaged; only to be followed by the imposition of the Code Napoleon, forbidding privileges based on birth. During the Normandy landings many historic buildings were severely damaged. So it's little wonder that the manner in which properties have been restored vary considerably. While many châteaux and manoirs have been made into luxury hotels with modern furniture and swimming pools, our three-day tour will concentrate on those properties whose owners or carers have undertaken great trouble in recreating the architecture, furniture and gardens of previously untroubled times. The body representing private house owners, the equivalent of our Historic Houses Association, is the Vieilles Maisons Francaises and our 'Friends' from this organisation will show their houses and gardens to us.

On Monday 14 September after lunch members are invited to explore historic Bayeux, a charming small medieval town which was spared the damage endured by other Normandie towns at the time of the Embarquement. There is a Cathedral and a good fine arts museum as well as the famous tapestry. Our hotel is near the centre of the town but a tourist train circles the streets for those who do not want to walk. If there is enough interest, we will arrange a trip to the Battle of Normandy Museum outside the town. We will then all meet for a "Meet our Friends" dinner.

Over the next three days, our French friends have carefully selected a palette of properties belonging to VMF members which we will visit by coach. The current programme is as follows: west of Bayeux, in the Manche, we will be guided through the 18th century Château de Pont Rilly, severely damaged after the war and painstakingly restored over the last thirty years. Nearby, the 17th century Château de Sérigny, surrounded by a romantic 10ha park, in the same family since its construction, is under the loving care of Count and Countess de Pontac, who recently commemorated the Surrender of Cherbourg, also known as the Treaty of Servigny. In the town of Valognes, known as the "Versailles of Normandy", we will visit the Hôtel de Beaumont (meaning "hotel particulier", a princely town residence, not to be confused with a hotel) with the Countess des Courtils. On our way back to Bayeux, we will stop at Etienville, to tour the recently created gardens surrounding the medieval manoir and 17th century château.

South of Bayeux, in the “Pays d’Auge”, the Count Jacques de la Rochefoucauld, will explain how Château de Versainville was confiscated from his family during the war, with furniture and “objets d’art” sold, then turned into a holiday camp for industry workers, until he was able to recently recover it and begin restoration work. Nearby, we will be welcomed by the Count and Countess de Vendevre and their son Alexandre, at the Château de Vendevre, a lovely 18th century, beautifully furnished castle with fine historic gardens. On a quite different scale, Michael and Béatrice Hoare and her brother Antoine de Monts have restored a charming half timbered family home dating from the 16th century, Le manoir de Bais. Patrick Dumouset, the VMF regional delegate, will bring us to the Château du Jonquet, a quaint “château des champs” tastefully restored and furnished. Other châteaux on our current programme are, Balleroy (1630s, by Mansart, restored by the Forbes publishing family), Colombières (medieval and later, still in the family of Le Comte de Maupeou), Fontaine-Henry (ancestral home of the Marquis d’Oilliamson) and the prize winning “Jardins de Castillon” created by the gifted Colette Sainte Beuve.

Rooms have been booked in the Hôtellerie Monastique “La Joie saint Benoît”, once a monastery and now run by charming sisters of the Benedictine Order. Here we are spared the trappings of a modern hotel like a reception desk or bar but we will be allowed to bring our own wine at dinner and we are a short walk from numerous bars for those who cannot manage without their pre- (or post) prandial drink. Upon entering one “elevates” straight to comfortable and spotlessly clean bedrooms en suite on three floors and from there one descends across a grassy inner court to the former refectory for coffee, tea, meals, a chat or rest. A breakfast “garni” (more than just bread, tea or coffee) will be served. We plan one dinner at the Hôtellerie and two group dinners in some fine restaurants “en campagne.” On the other evening members will be free to eat out at one of Bayeux’s numerous restaurants or to book a meal in the Hôtellerie. A great benefit is the hôtellerie’s economic price, which enables us not to stint in other areas, and its location a short walk from Bayeux centre.

We are not including travel to and from the UK in the price of the tour. There are numerous ways of getting to Bayeux. On 14 September Flybe fly from Southend (Essex) at 07.45 for a one hour flight to Caen airport. Ryanair flies at 08.00 from London Stansted to Deauville. An IGS vehicle will await at the airport at which most members are arriving (Caen is much closer). In view of the early departures some members may wish to make their own way to Bayeux: the Caen and Deauville flights go no later on other days but other options are - afternoon flights from Stansted to Dinard, Eurostar to Paris and French Railways to Bayeux, London to Portsmouth, then Brittany Ferries with or without own car to Caen (afternoon or overnight sailings) then taxi, public transport, own car or car hire to the hôtellerie. On 18 September we will arrange transport for early departures from Caen airport (10.00 flights to Southend or Stansted. The tour costs £785 per person divided between deposit of £150 payable now (non-refundable once we have confirmed your participation) and the balance of £635 which will be payable by 31 July. The price includes 4 nights bed and breakfast; lunch on the first day, three daily excursions with lunches and entrance fees; three group dinners; various teas, coffees and drinks. There is no single supplement. We have no formal closing date for applications, though please apply as soon as possible so we can confirm the tour and enable members to book flights (note we expect the return flights to be popular because it is just before the start of the rugby world cup in the UK). Please do not make any travel arrangements until we have confirmed your participation. To apply for a place on this tour please complete the attached application form and send with your deposit to Rob van Mesdag, 6 Rigault Road, London SW6 4JL.

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY PARTY AND EVENTS REVIEW

Thursday 19 March

Please reserve place(s) at £45 each.

Name of member(s):

Name of guest(s):

Email/Telephone No.

Special dietary requirements:

I enclose a cheque payable to the IGS London Chapter Ltd. for £

Please return with your cheque and an email address or SAE to Colm Owens,
Apartment 50, Kilner House, Clayton Street, London SE11 5SE

IGS TOUR OF GREAT LONDON HOUSES

FRIDAY 10 TO SUNDAY 12 APRIL

Please reserve the following place(s):

Friday 10 April at £80 per person x

Saturday 11 April at £90 per person x

Sunday 12 April at £90 per person x

Dinner at the Lansdowne Club at £60 per person x

Name of member(s):

Name of guest(s):

Email/Telephone No.

Special dietary requirements:

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Apartment 50, Kilner House, Clayton Street, London SE11 5SE

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL TRIFORIUM TOUR

FRIDAY 24 APRIL

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Email/Telephone No.

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YIG VISIT TO THE SOANE MUSEUM

SATURDAY 2 MAY

Please reserve place(s) at £25 each.

Name of member(s):

Email/Telephone No.

I enclose a cheque payable to the IGS London Chapter Ltd. for £

Please return with your cheque and an email address or SAE to Colm Owens, Apartment 50, Kilner House, Clayton Street, London SE11 5SE

SOUTHERN IRELAND WITH THE 20-GHOST CLUB

FRIDAY 15 to TUESDAY 19 MAY

Please reserve place(s) at £635.00 per person sharing or £725.00 for a single room.

I/we would like a single / double / twin room (please circle as appropriate).

Name of member(s):

Email address:

Mobile No.

Special dietary Requirements:

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1 Hobury Street, London SW10 0JD

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Please return with your cheque and an email address or SAE to Rob van Mesdag,
6 Rigault Road, London SW6 4JL Tel: 0207 736 3011 mesdag@talktalk.net

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