NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Even though summer’s warm temperatures may still hang around for a while here in Georgia, summer seems to end with Labor Day Weekend. Even our cultural traditions reflect this perception. Remember when wearing ‘summer white’ was taboo after Labor Day? In actuality, the days are beginning to be a little shorter and Mother Nature starts to announce in small increments the unveiling of yet another of her beautiful seasons – the Fall Finale. In my four-seasons gardens, the ‘fall bloomers’ are starting to make their presence known. The wild Sweet Autumn Clematis (Clematis ternifolia) is now in full bloom – blanketing trees and shrubs and any other surface it can capture with snowy blooms that fill the air with an intoxicating fragrance. The buds on the Swamp Sunflower (Helianthus salicifolius) growing along a section of fence are almost ready to burst open as are those of the blue Asters (Aster oblongifolius) in another garden area. The hardy pink mums (Chrysanthemum ‘Sheffield Pink’) are already beginning their fall show. Even some trees and shrubs are showing the first hint of the vibrant colors that will soon embrace their limbs.

Garden Club and other activities are now getting back into full swing and are replacing the slower pace of summer. I do hope everyone had the opportunity this summer to relax a little and re-charge for another busy year. Maybe some of you were able to take a trip and experience first-hand some of the beautiful and inspiring gardens and landscapes found around the world.

Twenty-two lucky Georgia travelers were part of a group of sixty-six from the US that visited Ireland in June on a NGC sponsored tour. The trip was organized by Georgia’s very own Mary Ann Bryant so how could it be anything but awesome. The Fall 2014 Garden Gateways included an article by Dorothy Lee covering the nine-day trip. What an incredible itinerary! Thanks to Terry Waith and Jane Whiteman, this newsletter features additional information and pictures of some of the places the group visited.

Jane Hersey, Landscape Design Editor
It was a nearly impossible task to have to choose from the beautiful photos that Terry Waith and Jane Whiteman submitted for this publication – wish all of them could have been included. Thanks, Terry and Jane, for sharing them. Thanks, also, for sharing information that was presented during the tour and refresher.

Terry and Jane are Master Consultants for Landscape Design as well as for Gardening Studies, and Environmental Studies so they were able to refresh for all three schools during the NGC sponsored Ireland Tour. What a memorable way to update their credentials!

One of the first places the Ireland tour group visited was the garden of Helen Dillon. The following was taken from a brochure they received:

Helen Dillon is the undisputed queen of Irish gardening. Her acre of town garden in the elegant Ranelagh district of Dublin has become the most photographed garden in Ireland – seen both in magazines and in the many books she has written – and she is known for her relaxed, sometimes unorthodox style of gardening and her spirited views. In her view, gardening should be an entirely intuitive process. “Creative things happen when you’re not thinking about something; you’re just playing,” she says. “The best gardening happens when you’ve done all the things you intended to do, and you’re just walking about letting your mind run free.”

Her garden has gone through many changes over the decades. Helen’s most significant change, which sent murmurs of surprise rippling through the garden world, was to do away with the pristine lawn and color-themed borders that had been the central feature of the garden for so long, replacing them with a modern-looking canal surrounded by hard, cool limestone. The wide borders are still there, albeit now settled into a more relaxed state to contrast with the static lines of the canal, and at this time of year they are overflowing with plants that jostle together in pleasingly chaotic harmony.

Bold colors run in loose seams throughout the borders. In midsummer, base notes of purple and blue in the form of delphiniums, alliums, Astrantis ‘Hadspen Blood’ and sweet rocket, which Helen is using as an alternative to the Verbena bonariensis, are pepped up by intense orange daylilies and scarlet gems. One of Helen’s trademarks is her use of pots, which she employs as fillers, hidden away in the borders, as well as features in themselves – at the moment she has galvanized dustbins (trashcans). Putting pots into the border is especially useful for late summer, when instant color and height are needed to fill emergency gaps made by early summer plants dying back, and she is reluctant to use up a piece of border for flowers such as lilies that look good only for two or three weeks. She grows dahlias in pots, too, where they are more likely to resist the slugs.

Everywhere in the garden is the evidence that Helen is a collector as well as a designer. It is in the far reaches of the garden beyond the elegant canal and its borders that you find these interesting curiosities – the plants that Helen hasn’t been able to resist. Plants tower high above Helen as she weaves through the garden talking non-stop about her acquisitions. She is not sentimental about those that she finds no longer work for her. “Good gardening is a constant process of editing, and really what it boils down to is that it’s not what you put in, it’s what you take out.”
HELEN DILLON’S GARDEN
POWERSCOURT ESTATE, also visited by the group, is a majestic 1,000 acre estate located just south of Dublin. Powerscourt House, the 18th century manor house on the estate, is used for private events. Powerscourt Gardens were developed over 150 years by architects including Richard Cassel, Daniel Robertson and other landscape experts. There are several gardens including a Walled Garden, an Italian Garden and a Japanese Garden, as well as a romantic grotto. There is also a Pet Cemetery – the largest privately owned pet cemetery in Ireland. Tower Valley, another area on the estate, contains 250 varieties of trees that were planted over the last two centuries. The North American Conifers planted there in the 19th century were considered at the time to be ‘exotic’ plants. Tower Valley contains the Pepperpot Tower which was fashioned after the pepperpot from Lord Powerscourt dining table.

The Gardens were designed to be a part of the wider landscape, resulting in one of the most majestic views in Ireland.
The Manor House overlooking Lake Triton
The Grotto
Statuary on the Terrace
Pepperpot Tower in Tower Valley
The Rose Border
The Japanese Garden
The group also visited several other outstanding places (see Fall 2014 Garden Gateways) one of which was the 
**megalithic sites of Knowth and Newgrange.** These sites are designated as UNESCO Heritage Sites and 
contain Passage Tombs and Kerbstones. Knowth contains more than a third of the total number of megalithic 
art in all of Western Europe.
These photos of the entrance to the State Botanical Garden of Georgia at UGA were taken by Betty Davis (Augusta) during a recent visit to the Botanical Garden. We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful place in our state for enjoyment and learning. Not only can we visit and enjoy the horticulture and landscaping of the gardens, we can also obtain ideas for our own use. The plantings at the entrance are a great example of a combination of several different plants with similar requirements.
A Landscape Design School sponsored by National Garden Clubs, Inc., Laurel District, and the Marietta Council of Garden Clubs will begin with Course I being offered December 1-2, 2014 at the Marietta Garden Center. Course II has been scheduled for January 5-6 and will also be held at the Marietta Garden Center.

If you are a Landscape Consultant, Course I is your last chance to refresh in Georgia this year.

Although the four courses of the school do not have to be taken sequentially, Course I is an excellent starting point for prospective Landscape Design Consultants.

Registration forms for Course I will be available at the Fall District Meetings.

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Horticulture Editor: Gail Berthe, gail.berthe@gmail.com
Environment Editor: Judy Keenan, thekeenanfamily@comcast.com
Landscape Design Editor: Jane Hersey, jhersey@bellsouth.net