



La Yerba Buena



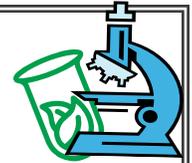
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY

NUMBER 282, September 2013

The San Antonio Herb Society is organized to bring together those who are interested in using, growing and promoting the general knowledge of herbs to the membership and the public at large.

Program Thursday, September 12, 2013

Diane Baines—Food Evangelist



Mark your calendars today—don't miss this program! Diane has spent the past 27 years in health-care and pharmaceutical industries, working as a clinician, a pharmaceutical sales rep, a clinical trial monitor and a clinical trial manager. She has also spent the past 15 years studying organic gardening and organic living. In the past 5 years she has added the study of Genetically Modified Organisms to her repertoire. Three years ago she took a class at the Institute of Responsible Technology to become a NON GMO speaker. Today Diane is a self proclaimed FOOD EVANGELIST who speaks to groups of all sizes about Genetically Modified Organisms and their negative impact on our health, food freedom, and how we can make a difference in the market with regard to our food choices. Diane resides in Seguin, TX with her husband of 17 years, two dogs and one cat.

A-M members bring a snack for the Hospitality Tables. Be sure to provide a name card (and recipe) for the dish you bring (or email it directly to the newsletter editor).

The San Antonio Garden Center is always a treat and is located on the corner of Funston and N. New Braunfels.

For more SAHS information, see our website at www.sanantonioherbs.org

2014 Herb Market, October 19

Mark your calendars now and plan to be a part of this great event. This year's annual Herb Market will be held at the Pearl



complex on east Grayson. SAHS needs your help to prepare samples, sell Resource Guides and other booklets and generally help out. This is OUR TIME TO SHINE and bring our love of herbs to the general public. Contact Leslie Bingham to volunteer; Contact Carol Hamling to help make our new herb mix to sell.



Coming in October

What Is A Special Interest Group (SIG)?

Did you know that the San Antonio Herb Society (SAHS) has Special Interest Groups (SIGs) made up of members interested in varied topics? The goal is to learn more about herbs within whatever theme the SIG has picked to feature. Our SIGs will each make brief presentations as the meetings program. We hope to give everyone ideas about creating NEW SIGs with an even wider variety of topics or themes. We also hope that the friendships begun in each group will last for many years to come. Bring your note pads and idea hats to the October meeting!

The current SIGs are: Aromatherapy, Craft, Culinary, Healthy Living, Mad Hatters, Weed & Gloat, *what's next?* *There've been rumors of another culinary SIG and maybe a beverage SIG to consist of ??? ...hmmm.*

Hospitality Table

Schedule:

Oct: N-Q

Nov: R-Z

Dec: Banquet

Jan: A-M

Members' Sale Tables

Contact any Board member at least 2 weeks in advance for a table.

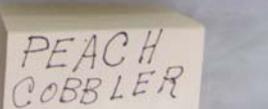
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Member Recipes

Thanks to *everyone* who shared their delicious dishes during our August meeting. Some of the goodies shared were:

- Red Velvet Cake
- Peach Cobbler
- Watermelon with Basil
- French Bread and Peach Jam
- Roasted Okra with Bragg's Aminos
- Veggies rolls with garlic sauce



roasted okra Bragg's



Elder, Herb of the Year, 2013

From our European cousins comes this story and folklore:

In earlier days, the Elder Tree was supposed to ward off evil influence and give protection from witches, a popular belief held in widely-distant countries. Lady Northcote says: 'The Russians believe that Elder-trees drive away evil spirits, and the Bohemians go to it with a spell to take away fever. The Sicilians think that sticks of its wood will kill serpents and drive away robbers, and the Serbs introduce a stick of Elder into their wedding ceremonies to bring good luck. In England it was thought that the Elder was never struck by lightning, and a twig of it tied into three or four knots and carried in the pocket was a charm against rheumatism. A cross made of Elder and fastened to cowhouses and stables was supposed to keep all evil from the animals.'

This is a Styrian tradition: The whole tree has a narcotic smell, and it is not considered wise to sleep under its shade. Perhaps the visions of fairyland were the result of the drugged sleep! No plant will grow under the shadow of it, being affected by its exhalations.

<http://botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/e/elder-04.html>

From the Almanac

September is the Full Corn Moon. This full Moon corresponds with the time of harvesting corn (in the northern states). It is also called the Barley Moon, because it is the time to harvest and thresh the ripened barley. This moon may be additionally known as the Harvest Moon when it is the full Moon that occurs closest to the autumnal equinox. It can occur in either September or October. It is bright enough to allow finishing all the harvest chores such as gathering in crops such as pumpkins, squash and wild rice ready for the winter.



DISCLAIMER: Information presented in this newsletter and at the SAHS meetings is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, or replace the advice of a health professional. Herbal formulas are given for reference purposes only. Use of any items mentioned in this newsletter are at the decision and discretion of the individual.

Newsletter Articles, photos, etc.

Deadline for all materials submitted for possible publishing is the Friday of the week following the general meeting.

2014 Herb of the Year

Plan now to submit your article, anecdote, photos, field trip report, gardening experience with **artemisia**s.

Notes on Recycling

from <http://www.sanantonio.gov/swmd/HHW.aspx>

Don't forget that you can recycle plastics other than just those milk jugs. Check out this short list:

- Grocery bags
- Retail bags (hard plastic and string handles removed)
- Paper towel and toilet paper plastic wrap
- Newspaper bags
- Dry-cleaning bags
- Bread bags
- Produce bags
- Furniture, electronic wrap
- Zip lock bags (with the zipper removed)

The folks at SAWS want you to know that old medicines can be safely discarded through their "MedDrop" program. Check their web page for dates & locations: <http://www.saws.org/meddropsa>

Over the Fence...

2013 Program Line-up



Sales & Events:

Sept: Garden Happy Hour (20th)

Oct: 10th, Special Interest Groups present ideas
Herb Market (10/19)

Garden Happy Hour (25th—4th Friday)

Nov: Melissa Guerra, of Melissa Guerra's Latin Kitchen
Market <https://www.melissaguerra.com/>)

Dec: Member 30th Anniversary Banquet

Like our programs? We NEED your ideas!

Know a great speaker for an interesting herbal topic? Contact **Leslie Bingham** or any Board member with your suggestions.

Next Board Meetings

September 30, 6:30 pm. Please contact one of the Board members to place an item on the agenda or for location or other details prior to the meeting day.

Help SAHS Publicity Get the Word Out!

Every month, SAHS provides **flyers** via email. You can print them and post them at stores in your area, stores that you would be frequenting anyway. Contact Grace Emery.

SA Botanical Garden Events

Summer-Fall exhibit, "Savage Gardens" until December 31. Come explore the "alien" world of plants with a meat-eating habit! Art includes giant plant sculptures, real sundews and pitcher plants, plus children's inter-actives make for a one-of-a-kind experience in the Conservatory.

Starlight Movies in the Garden: September 20 for "Gigi" & 27th for "Casablanca". Starts at 7:30pm, free; bring blankets & lawn chairs; light concessions available.

For info call 210-207-3250 or visit www.sabot.org

Garden Center Events

SAGC monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month and are free and open to the public. For more information call 210-824-9981 or check out their website at SanAntonioGardenCenter.org

Comal County Master Gardener program

Sept. 4, 6pm. Dr. Jerry Parsons. Dr. Parsons will present the topic "Six Months of Color in a Drought." Dr Parsons' presentation, which is scheduled for 6:00 at the GVTC Auditorium, is open to the public. Parsons is without a doubt one of the most popular public gardening speakers in the Lone Star State, sometimes deriding but always delighting gardeners with his enthusiastic combination of irreverent and educational humor.

Contact (830)964-4494 or 221-4316.

New Braunfels Library Monthly Garden Series

Free programs at the NB Library, 700 E. Common Street, New Braunfels. No preregistration. Contact: 830-964-4494

Gardening Volunteers of South Texas

Third Mondays @ San Antonio Garden Center
3310 N. New Braunfels (at Funston). Free and Open to the Public, donation is appreciated. Contact (210) 251-8101 or info@gardeningvolunteers.org.

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners

Thursday, September 19, 2013 at the AgriLife Building on 210 E. Live Oak in Seguin, TX. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm with the speaker, Kathleen Scott, "Hummingbird Hotspot." The meeting is free and open to the public. The regular business meeting at the end of the program. For further information visit our website at www.guadalupecountymastergardeners.org

PayPal and SAHS membership payments

Your dues can be paid online with our PayPal link on the SAHS website. Click on that logo on the SAHS website's home page.

Interested in Texas Native Plants?

Native Plant Society of Texas, San Antonio chapter meets 4th Tuesdays @6:30 pm over at Lion's Field on Broadway. Webpage: www.npsot.org/sanantonio

Essential Oils Class with Carol-lee Fisher

Essential Oils and Aromatherapy for Your Purse or Backpack with Carol-lee Fisher, SAHS past president.

Date: Saturday, Sept. 28, 9am – 12 noon. \$35 plus lab fee of \$25. SoL Center of the University Presbyterian Church on 300 Bushnell Ave; Register by Sept. 20.

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils extracted from aromatic plants, flowers and trees to restore, rejuvenate, and heal. This class will give hands-on guidance toward preventive self-care and the healing uses of essential oils -- the common remedies in your pantry and flowers growing in your garden. These oils store well so they may be prepared ahead and carried on a trip. Demonstrations will show you how to use three of the oils and one blend of oils, for many practical purposes. The healing oils provide relief for everything from soothing burns to overcoming mental fatigue and memory lapses. Carol-lee will supply oils for everyone to experience plus a purse-sized holder for the oils, with a card listing uses and applications. The session will close with a delicious treat homemade by Carol-lee.

Garden Happy Hour—our Second Year!

SAHS Members may open their gardens to visitors per a set schedule and on an RSVP basis. Visitors are welcome to bring snacks or BYOB; hosts supply basic serving necessities (small plates, cups, cutlery, napkins, etc.). Our schedule is either the third or fourth Friday, **6-8 pm**.

Visitors MUST provide RSVP in order to receive street address, gate codes or other pertinent access information.

Hosts & schedule are as follows:

September 20	Leslie Bingham
	rsvp 530-852-1702
	lesliegw@live.com
October 25	Jean & Sid Dukes
	rsvp 10days@earthlink.net
	210 566 4379
	RSVP by Oct. 20

We had a lovely group. The weather was warm, but there was shade in the back yard. We even had three very interesting guests from Afghanistan!

Robin's garden features a lot of recycled materials. Members were particularly interested in the square foot garden raised beds made with recycled wood/plastic planks. This decking material is guaranteed for 25 years, so the hope is that the garden will endure. There were not a lot of spectacular vegetables, as the small plants and seeds have just begun to be put out for the fall garden.

Hundreds of glass panels were discovered in the basement stored in wonderful wood crates when the house was purchased. Robin has created a glass garden for her herbs in the small space edging her driveway. All the dividers are made out of glass panels. This is the third experimental use of glass in the garden. As the glass interacts with the soil in the garden it becomes opalescent, creating an interesting effect. The wood crates are reused for shallow crops, such as lettuce.

The September Happy Hour will be on the 20th.

Submitted by Robyn Maymar

Minutes from August 08, 2013

General Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Emily Sauls - co-president. There were five visitors, two new members and forty-seven SAHS Members in attendance.

Many members had brought contributions to the share table. The Texas Tufa Girls had tufa containers with succulents on sale. The Texas Tufa Gals are having a hypertufa class on October 26th from 10am to 1 pm. (See separate article for info.)

Rick The Beekeeper also displayed his wares.

1. Publicity chair, Grace Emery, is seeking presenters/speakers to help support outside requests for herb speakers. If you know of a good program or a good presentation or you are interested in being on our list of speakers, please contact her (at 210-875-6919).



2. Mama T reported on the Garden Happy Hour in her garden this past July. It was enjoyed by all. She then introduced three Yemeni students from Lackland as her guests this evening. They are going to have another garden party and passed out invitations for that event. The three students will be doing the cooking. One of the guests, Abdullah, spoke to the group about an article he found in an American magazine about Yemen and an island off the coast where the Dragon Blood Tree grows.

3. Happy Hour this month is on the third Friday, August 23 at the home of Robin Maymar. E-mail her to RSVP (see separate article about Garden Happy Hour for details) Roads may be on detour, so be sure to RSVP for traffic updates.

4. Carol Hamling reported on the Herb and Spice Mix fundraising project for Herb Market in October. Six members met and decided on seasoning mixes we could sell. The next meeting will focus on packaging. It will be Aug. 29, 10 a.m., (Thurs). It will be again at the home of Carol Hamling.



Contact her to RSVP & for directions.

5. The Herb Market will be held Saturday, October 19 at The Pearl. A clipboard was passed around to sign up to volunteer. Dianne Lewis and Leslie Bingham will be co-chairs for the event. This is our major recruiting and fundraiser for the year, everyone enthusiastically volunteer! Plan to attend and spend money, too.

6. The San Antonio Garden Center is planning a luncheon on August 28. If you are interested in attending, contact the San Antonio Garden Center for details and to RSVP (210) 824-9981.

Leslie Bingham introduced our speaker, Melani Van Aken from Heron's Nest Herb Farm.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Robin Maymar, co-treasurer

Melani Van Aken from Heron's Nest Herb Farm

Her experience came first of all from her Cajun grandmother in Louisiana, who encouraged her to cook by her "make it look right" method. Gardening and Herbs have been in her background.

She moved to Austin where she met an insightful midwife who introduced to herb

culture and their use for both fragrance and therapy. She found she could use an herb and see a result. That began to resonate with her. She learned to use the local herbs that she could easily grow from here in Texas, rather than the ones from other places. She began growing her own herbs. At a turning point, she decided that this needed to be more than a local household plot garden, and she and her husband moved to a farm outside of Austin in Blanco County. Her first success and failure

was with lavender.

When looking for land she said she had shopped for creek, rock and trees, but it did not occur to her to "shop for soil" when you went to look at a farm. It had not occurred to her to bring a spade and test the soil as she looked at different farms for sale.

They grew herbs and lots of lavender. Cooks and chefs have come to the farm to gather herbs and invite her to come



to cooking demonstrations.

The Blanco Lavender festival was the jumping off point for the growth of her business. She spent a lot of time telling us about the dangers of a monoculture and cotton root rot or rhizoctonia, which is found in the soil of Blanco county. She discovered that crop rotation, use of cornmeal and growing rosemary alongside the lavender help counteract the root rot. She urged us to contact our county agent and to get soil tested so we know how to amend it. Ironically, during droughts, the rhizoctonia fungus increases.

Melani then told us how she uses lavender infusions for a wide variety of uses. Group classes are available at Heron's Nest Herb Farm as well as a variety of herbs.

To conclude her talk, Melani invited us to make an herbal spray using our choice of nine essential oils that combine happily together. She also had a variety of products from her farm for sale.

Submitted by Robin Maymar, co-treasurer





A little more hypertufa—see what you can do with this versatile material!

Texas Tufa Gals

A group of friends from the Herb Society came together to learn the secrets of producing hypertufa pots, troughs and garden ornaments. They had so much fun learning they wanted to share their expertise with fellow members (and, of course, friends...) and that was how the "Texas Tufa Gals" got started.



In this beginners class, you will learn how to make the basic hypertufa recipe and produce a pot or trough and a garden ornament to take home. Class size is limited so call early to register!

Class will be held Saturday, Oct. 26, 2013 – 10 am-1 pm.

Price - \$40 (materials included)

For more detailed information call Marilyn @ 210-606-2933,

or me at email lesliegw@live.com

submitted by Leslie Bingham

Brian's September To-Do List for The Garden

Compiled by MG Brian D. Townsend

"Time cools, time clarifies; no mood can be maintained quite unaltered through the course of hours."— Mark Twain



In Our Herb Garden:

The library at the Garden Center has an excellent horticultural collection and is available for use to any SAHS member. One of the best ways to water outdoor container plants is to set them in another container of water and let them absorb as much as possible or let water drip into the container for an hour or so until the soil is well saturated. Plant frost-tolerant herb transplants and seeds from now until mid-November. This may be the best time of the year to plant (or transplant) herbs! Include annuals from seeds (parsley, dill, cilantro, anise, chervil, chamomile, edible flowers and greens), annuals from transplants (parsley and chervil) and perennials from well-established transplants (chives, rosemary, sage, salad burnet and English thyme). Plant everlastings for spring harvesting - perennials such as bergamont, yarrow, puchellum and annuals such as statice, larkspur and strawflowers. Harvest basil and preserve by freezing as an oil paste.

Late Summer Odds-n-Ends

Fall is here! Equinox: the time when the sun crosses the equator, making night and day of equal length in all parts of the earth occurs this year on September 22, at 20:44 UTC (3:44 pm CDT).

The first wave of migrant hummingbirds should have arrived in San Antonio. Watch for Ruby-throats and Rufous hummingbirds in addition to the resident black chins. (Migrating hummingbirds will be busy at feeders and blooming firebush, salvia and firespike.) In the spring, most hummingbirds hurry through Texas toward breeding grounds farther north, but during their fall migration- which begins in July and ends in mid- October- they linger for days or weeks at a time. North American hummingbirds weight from 3 to 8 grams (about the weight of 2 to 4 dimes) and range in the length from 3 to 5 inches. Hummingbirds also eat insects and spiders. The female Ruby-throated Hummingbird usually lays 2 eggs, each about the size of a jellybean. Hummingbirds zip through the air at speeds of around 30 mph, and they reach velocities close to 40 mph when jetting to a feeder. Watch for Hummingbirds Festivals in Rockport-Fulton, and at Lake Jackson during the month of September.

Treasurer's Report,

June 2013 Corrections Pending

Submitted by Lenore Miranda, Treasurer

current treasurer's information available upon request

Report Not Available at press time.

'12 - '13 SAHS Board Officers & Members

Emily Sauls - Co-President

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Yvonne Baca - Co-President

830-537-4700 H; 210-313-8705; yvonne943@yahoo.com

Leslie Bingham - Vice President (Program Chair)

530 852-1702 C; 210 998-3898 H; lesliegw@live.net

Norm Hastings - Membership Chair

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Jane McDaniel - Chair, Hospitality

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Leslie Bingham - Co-chair, Hospitality

lesliegw@live.com

Margie Larkin - Co-Chair T-shirts, Cookbooks

Lynda Klein - Co-Chair T-shirts, Cookbooks

More Information Contacts

SAHS web page: www.sanantonioherbs.org

SIG-nificant Events

SIG leaders, keep us posted on your group's events.

Culinary SIG

For August, our Culinary SIG once again gathered in Norm and Loretta's spacious kitchen, the perfect place for putting together an annual favorite, pizza. Over chat about techniques and with busy hands, we rolled out pizza dough and spread on toppings. Norm's "kitchen sink" pizza featured marinara, feta, red onion, chunks of artichoke, olives, red pepper, garlic slices, mozzarella and lots of fresh basil, a completely winning combo. Another pizza had caramelized red onions and a vegan ricotta made of tofu that is a dead ringer for full-fat Italian ricotta. Another lovely pizza starred red sauce with a variety of garden herbs and artichokes. Madeline brought her Baking Illustrated, where we learned among other things the secret ingredient for excellent deep-dish pizza dough: mashed potatoes!

Dessert pizzas are amazing, and we had two to sample. A hot from the oven pizza topped with marmalade and blueberry goat cheese with lots of fresh Thai basil was a real taste treat. A cold dessert pizza made from cookie dough with praline nutella and fresh berries and pineapple was luscious. As usual, we out-did ourselves!

Next month, Linda is our hostess and part of our time was spent brainstorming ideas for the get-together. Tail-gating foods to kick off the start of fall? Trying a new restaurant, perhaps on the river with some bat-watching included? A crock-pot fest? Whatever Linda decides, a good time is guaranteed. Stay tuned!

Submitted by Jeanne Hackett

Healthy Living with Herbs SIG

August brought Carol-lee in to town and a nice report on her recent trip to the UK to visit the home & lab of Edward Bach, the founder of the Bach Flower remedies. She presented the short version of his life and times and how he came to his philosophies on healing with the remedies. Carol-lee also brought back fresh-from-the-farm quantities of the official remedies and allowed each of us to create a blend to take home. The flower remedies have acquired a broad following over the years with many, many people firmly in belief of their healing energies. Read up on the Bach products and see if they're right for you.

In September, we'll be at Leslie's talking about lovage.

Submitted by Joe-Beth Kirkpatrick

Herbal Crafts SIG

The craft SIG joined up with the Mad Hatters and had luncheon at the Jingu House adjacent to the recently restored Japanese Tea Gardens in Brackenridge Park. Food was good and we had a very merry hour.

<http://www.jinguhousesa.com/jinguhouse.htm>

If you're interested in joining us or if you have any questions, contact Leslie Bingham: lesliegw@live.com; 530-572-1702. or Adriened Hacker at hackla@aol.com or (210) 829-8433

Submitted by Jane McDaniel

Weed-n-Gloat SIG

Two intrepid weeders braved a hot July morning to maintain our beautiful herb section at the Botanical Gardens today. Robin Maymar arrived at 9 and met a visitor who wanted to know all about the garden.

He is interested in joining San Antonio Herb Society. Then another volunteer in the garden came by wanting to know about specific Indian herbs. She also indicated an interest in joining our group. Marilyn Nyhus, who had been volunteering in propagation greenhouse, joined Robin at quarter to ten.

The garden seemed to be in "Feast of Famine" mode. Some herbs had completely died out and were quickly removed. Oth-

ers had overflowed their borders. Weeding at the garden has to be the most fragrant of enjoyable tasks. The sun may be hot, but there is shade to move into. There are butterflies, wild birds and humming birds all around, as well as happy visitors and lots of supportive Botanical Garden employees, bringing around water and encouragement.

After filling three tubs with weed and compost contributions, we took a stroll over to the Carnivorous Plants exhibit. It was literally cool - very air conditioned - and a beautiful display.

Next Weed and Gloat will be held Monday August 26. We meet at 9 a.m. to avoid the heat. Pack your hat and gloves and join us then.

To learn more about herbs on site, please get in touch with me, Jane McDaniel, at email: janesirish@att.net or Leslie Bingham, at email: lesliegw@live.com.

Traveling this summer—Visiting Ireland

Jane McDaniel went to spend the summer on Achill Island and went visiting around the countryside in her spare time. Here's her story about a wonderful public garden.



Hidden away in the wilds of Connemara in Ireland's West is an oasis which every gardener should visit: Kylemore Abbey. Built in the 1800s by Mitchell Henry for his new wife, it is an imposing country house, built beside a lake, with extensive land around. What drew me there was the walled Victorian Garden, renowned beyond Co. Galway for its size and its plantings of pre-1900 plants. The history is an interesting one, too.

Henry, a London doctor and industrialist, took his new wife, Margaret, there in 1850 on their honeymoon and she fell in love with the raw beauty of Connemara's mountains, bogs, waterfalls and streams, and the myriad of wildflowers which carpeted the fields and bogs. Henry returned to Connemara and bought the 15,000-acre estate as a romantic gift for her. He built a mansion, re-routed the public road and dug into the mountainous bog nearby to construct an extensive walled garden, in keeping with the fashion of the time. This is what I came to see: 6 acres of kitchen garden, nuttery, herb garden, cut-flowers area, fernery, wild garden, woodland, formal flower garden, lime kiln, glasshouses, rockery, shrubs and the longest herbaceous border in the Republic of Ireland.

Winner of the Europa Nostra Award in 2011, the Garden was built on the south slope at the foot of Duchraugh mountain and was reputed to be "a regular sun trap". Facing south and with the protection of the mountain behind, this

was the warmest and brightest spot on the estate. The natural fall of the land, a gentle slope, and the underlying gravel allowed for drainage and one of Connemara's thousands of streams provided water. That stream divides the Garden in two: a formal pleasure garden with surrounding greenhouses - called glasshouses in Ireland - and a working garden which provided cut flowers, vegetables and herbs for the house. Along the stream is a woodland area, with ferns and willows and a rocky bed which makes the stream twist and turn as it rushes down the slope.

Flowers and plants that were introduced to Ireland before 1901 are exclusively used in the pleasure garden, where formal walks take one along beside exotic and native trees. Crowning the northern slope of the Garden were 21 glasshouses, which housed exotic fruits such as bananas, figs, melons and grapes. The glasshouses were heated by 3 boilers, one of which doubled as a limekiln, and a complex system of hot water pipes which extended 5000 feet, and which expelled the heat through decorative, round grates in the floors of the glasshouses. One could imagine the joy of walking there during cold Irish winters, with the wind whistling all around, and banana trees (plants?) growing in large pots in the warmth inside. Two of the glasshouses have been restored, one in which the original grapevine still bears fruit, and gardeners still grow seedlings in the low, glass-roofed "forcing" beds.

I saw 8 gardeners working there, weeding the beds with a hand-held tool which saved them from bending down, putting in seedlings and raking leaves along the herbaceous border. Herbaceous borders were generally planted along the middle, between kitchen and vegetable gardens, and allowed to grow to 6 ft, as the ladies and gentlemen "taking their leisure" along the walks were not supposed to see the lower-class gardeners working in the beds on either side. The herbaceous border was indeed a wonder to see - I was so bowled over by the stepped planting and the so obvious lack of weeds (!) that I forgot to make a list of the flowers growing there. Beyond the border, on either side, grow vegetables and bush fruits - black currants, gooseberries, and raspberries, and higher up, where the sun catches more of the land, are grown herbs not native to Ireland; thyme, basil, fennel and rosemary. One bed in the vegetable area was given over to clover, a natural fertilizer.

The Head Gardener, with whom I spoke as he lugged a hose from one bed to another, now lives in the nearby village, but in Henry's time, the Head Gardener lived in a roomy cottage - now fully restored - at the top of the garden. What a place to wake up to - the fruits of one's labors (and one's labors!) spread out below. Next door is the restored Gardner's *bothy*; a small house with kitchen and bedrooms, room for four, with an adjoining tool shed. And interesting, to recognize so many tools there on the wall, that we still use in our gardens.

Potash from the lime kiln was used a fertilizer on the gardens. Indeed, Henry was a pioneer not only of gardens, but harnessed water pressure from Lough Touthor on top of the mountain to produce electricity. He had the system installed in 4 months at a cost of 2,000 Engl. Sterling, and it ran at a cost of 10 Engl. Sterling per year compared with a 400-fold cost per year for gas, oil and candles which had been used for light, heat and power. That old hydro-electric operation, installed in 1893, 50 years before Ireland's first national hydro-electric plant on the Shannon River, is now undergoing renovations and it is planned that the estate will once again be powered by green energy

from the lake.

The Henrys had nine children and enjoyed a happy and carefree life at Kylemore, where Henry was constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve the running of the estate and the lot of the 125 Irish tenants, which, in the late 1800s, were still recovering from the devastating effects of the Great Famine of 1845-48 and a cholera epidemic. Following a long and troubled history with England, the tenants were concerned about their futures under an English landlord. Henry, however, provided employment for over 300 people and his existing tenants who wished to work earned the equivalent of their annual rent in just two months. Workers could earn 19-20 cents per day, which was considered a large amount at the time. One of the many, now seen as simple and obvious changes which Henry made to the tenant's lives was the installation of a window in their houses, allowing air as well as light into the cottages. There had been a tax on glass and many families could not afford to have windows - the term "daylight robbery" comes from this harsh tax.

Not content to be a gentleman farmer, Henry represented nearby Galway in the English House of Commons for 14 years and was a strong advocate of Irish Home Rule. He continued a reforestation plan to plant oaks on the land which he owned, a project which is still ongoing today.

There are numerous walks along tree-lined paths to the Walled Garden and the Oak Plantation, and also along the lake, with sturdy wooden chairs and a few picnic tables scattered about. Today a Benedictine order of nuns occupies the place and now make chocolate in one of the receiving rooms, where once the Henrys entertained neighbors and Edward VII, King of England.

I spent three hours at Kylemore, walking along the lake and through the woods and around the Walled Garden, asking questions of the gardeners and "checking out" the vegetables growing there, but I have not had all my questions answered and I need to go back. Next year.

You may want to know the rest of the story - Margaret died at age 47 during a family holiday in Egypt and Henry had her body brought back to Kylemore and interred in a mausoleum which he had built on the estate. Nearby, he had a beautiful mini-cathedral built in her honor. His fortune depleted, he sold the estate to the Duke of Manchester in 1903. He died penniless in England in 1910 and his ashes repose beside his beloved Margaret in the mausoleum, beside the lake.

Submitted by Jane McDaniel



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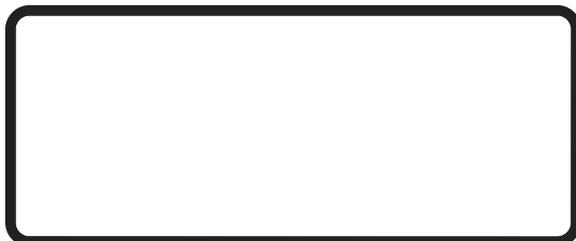
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