



# CREATORS, IMPROVERS, AND CUSTODIANS OF THE KINGDOM'S PICTURESQUE

DESIGNED LANDSCAPES AND DEMESNES OF KERRY:  
THEIR HISTORY AND CONSERVATION

**Killarney House, Killarney | Friday 30th September 2022 | 10.30am - 4.00pm**

The landscape of Kerry is well known for its scenic qualities, not only for its extensive panoramic views, beautiful lakes and coastlines, mountains and rivers, but also for its planned landscapes. This seminar explores how the creators, improvers and custodians of Kerry's designed urban and rural landscapes created a contemporary cultural legacy.



## Robert O'Byrne

**IRELAND'S DESIGNED  
LANDSCAPES:  
A BIRD'S EYE VIEW**

The development of Ireland's gardens and demesnes only began towards the end of the 16th century and had an impact on different parts of the country at different dates thereafter. This talk will look at the evolution of the designed landscape right across the island, placing what occurred in Kerry - not least the 'discovery' of its inherent topographical merits - within a broader, nationwide context.

*Robert O'Byrne is a writer, historian and lecturer specialising in the fine and decorative arts. He is the author of more than a dozen books. A former Vice-President of the Irish Georgian Society and trustee of the Alfred Beit Foundation, he is currently a trustee of the Apollo Foundation. Robert has written an award-winning blog, The Irish Aesthete since 2012.*



*Muckross House, Co. Kerry - view from the terrace  
by Robert O'Byrne*



## Elizabeth Morgan

**CONSERVATION AND  
RECONSTRUCTION OF  
THE PLEASURE GROUNDS  
AND GARDENS OF  
KENMARE/KILLARNEY  
HOUSE IN THE KENMARE  
DEMESNE - A DESIGNED  
LANDSCAPE**

Extensive Pleasure Grounds & Gardens were laid out by the Browne family in the demesne landscape around a succession of family houses from the 1720's until the 1950's. Despite the loss of the main house, elements of its historic gardens survived. This talk explores the reconstruction of their character as part of the designed landscape cultural heritage, compatible with the restored Killarney House.

*Elizabeth Morgan is a Landscape Conservation Architect formerly with the OPW. A graduate of UCD School of Architecture she holds a Masters in Conservation of Historic Landscapes and Gardens from the University of York. She is president of ICOMOS Ireland's Cultural Landscapes National Scientific Committee and is also a member of ICOMOS/IFLA International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes.*



*Killarney House*



## Dr Finola O'Kane

LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
AND REVOLUTION IN  
IRELAND AND THE  
UNITED STATES 1688-1815

This paper explores the designed landscapes of England's Glorious Revolution of 1688, the American Revolution of 1776 and the Irish rebellion of 1798. As the eighteenth-century ideology of improvement was appropriately inflected across a variety of transatlantic and enslaved environments, new landscape designs were made. The paper will demonstrate where such eighteenth-century revolutionary landscapes occur in Ireland and indicate where the tradition of revolutionary space might be found in Kerry.

*Finola O'Kane is a landscape historian, architect, and Professor at the School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy, University College Dublin. She is the author of many books and has also published widely on eighteenth-century Dublin, Irish urban and suburban history and plantation landscapes. In 2017, she was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy.*

## Dr John Knightly

THE EVOLUTION OF A KERRY DEMESNE  
AND ESTATE VILLAGE' 1730-1830:  
KILCOLEMAN ABBEY, MILLTOWN

Demesnes remain contentious sites, dismissed as either colonial or elitist or both. What has been largely forgotten is the role of the demesne in the development and improvement of agriculture, botany, horticulture, silviculture and how they influenced urban development. The evolution of Kilcoleman Demesne, Milltown, offers an fascinating insight into this forgotten part of Kerry's history.

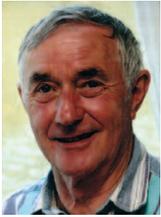
*Dr. John Knightly, a native of Kerry, is a historian whose area of expertise is the social world of the Kerry landed gentry of the 19th and 20th century and how they shaped the Kerry landscape. His PhD was on the 'Godfrey Family and Estate' and he has recently completed an extensive assessment of the Leeson Marshall Papers, one of the few Kerry country house collections to remain intact.*



*Benjamin Latrobe, Mount Vernon, 16 July 1796*



*Kilcoleman Demesne circa 1860 (private collection)*



## Cormac Foley

### HERITAGE TREE PLANTING IN KERRY ESTATES

Tree planting has formed a major component of our designed landscapes in Kerry. Historic trees began to appear in the great estates, parklands and gardens from the late 17th century when the many earlier wars and conflicts had subsided. There have been many more recent additions and not all survive today. Those that do contribute to the rich heritage of these landscapes.

*Cormac Foley holds a masters degree in Horticulture from UCD, and has undertaken several studies in Arboriculture & Tree Biology in Ireland and in UK. Now retired, he served as Parks Supt. with OPW and Dúchas from 1972 to 2012. During this period he had specific responsibility for Historic properties, parks, gardens and landscapes, in South-West Ireland.*



Trees for posterity



## Catherine FitzGerald

### A KERRY ARCADIA - GARINISH ISLAND, SNEEM

An illustrated talk on the island garden of Garinish, Sneem and its creator the 4th Earl of Dunraven with reference to his other Kerry garden at Derrynane cottage.

*Catherine FitzGerald is a landscape designer. After an English and Art History degree at Trinity College Dublin, Catherine trained in horticulture and then studied Garden Conservation in London. She has worked on many gardens in the UK and Ireland. Catherine lives between Glin Castle, (which she has re-opened as a private rental and small events business) and a small village near Bath - and gardens intensively in both.*



## John Hegarty

### SIGNIFICANCE IN IRISH TOWNS

This talk will outline the origin of architecture in Irish Towns and Cities with specific reference to Cork and Kerry showing examples of what can be achieved in the repair of Listowel Town in 2022.

*John Hegarty graduated in Architecture and Urban Design from the Mackintosh School of Architecture in Glasgow. He is a director at Fourem, a multidisciplinary practice whose projects are often concerned with new design in historic settings, the adaptation of existing buildings and the restoration of historic detail.*

**Funders: The Heritage Council, Creative Ireland & Kerry County Council**

**Partners: Irish Georgian Society and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
& National Parks and Wildlife Service**