



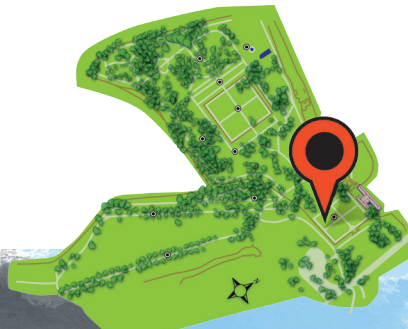
Woodstock Explorer Pack



Woodstock House and Winter Garden

Woodstock House was built in 1745 by the architect Francis Bindon. The house was built on the hill to capture views of the surrounding countryside and the River Nore in the valley below. The gardens around the house were developed mainly in the Victorian era one hundred years later and became famous as one of the greatest gardens in Ireland. The Tighe family lived here for many years until 1912. They entertained a lot and had lots of parties. In 1865 the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Woodstock which was a very important occasion for William and Lady Louisa Tighe. In 1920 during the 'Troubles' the house was taken over by the auxiliary police known as the 'Black and Tans' and was used as a jail to keep Irish Republicans imprisoned. Later it was used by the 'Free State' army and after that was occupied for a short time by Republicans until it was set fire to in 1922. The fire damaged the house badly and destroyed a lot of the contents inside.

The Winter Garden The Winter garden was designed and laid out by Scottish Gardener, Charles McDonald with very detailed patterns of planting which are now all gone. The Winter garden was designed so that the family could walk from the house straight out into an ornamental garden which would have been colourful even in Winter. The garden was made by moving 200,000 cubic tonnes of soil from the rockery area all of which was done by hand.



Did you know?

- The beds were surrounded by different coloured gravels to make the garden look more colourful throughout the year.

Woodstock House and Winter Garden

The Walled Garden and Fountain

The Walled Garden The Walled Garden was built in the middle of the 18th Century and was used to grow fruit and vegetables for cooking in the kitchen of the big house. The working part of the garden was hidden behind a very beautiful herbaceous border so the ladies could not see the servants at work when they went for a stroll during the day. A lot of gardener's worked in the walled garden and some of the garden boys even slept in little sheds behind the wall where the boilers and fireplaces were. At least they were warm! The boilers kept the glasshouses and walls of the garden warm and meant that lots of fruits could be grown. The gardeners once grew grapes, peaches and pineapples, all of which are very difficult to grow outdoors in Ireland because it gets so cold in the Winter. Outside lots of apples, cherries and pears were grown trained against the walls. The fruit trees you see here today are new trees which will get bigger in time and produce delicious fruit.

The Fountain The fountain you see today is a copy of the original fountain in Woodstock. The original fountain is thought to have been sold in the 1950's.



Did you know?

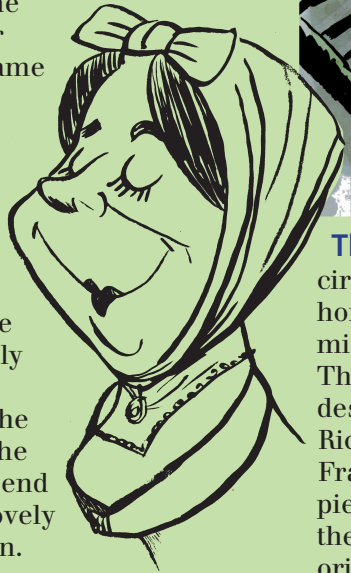
- The main path was designed to be the width of two ladies dresses so they could walk side by side. Ladies wore very wide dresses in the Victorian times!

The Walled Garden

The Turner Conservatory and The Flower Terraces

The Turner Conservatory The conservatory you see today is a copy of the original which stood in the same place until the 1940's when it was broken up and sold for scrap iron. The original conservatory was designed by the famous iron master Richard Turner who designed lots of glasshouses for big gardens and parks. He designed the glasshouses in the Botanic gardens in Dublin and Kew gardens in London. The conservatory would have been used for exotic plants including orange trees. The conservatory you see today was built by two brothers from New Ross called Seamus and David Power. It is nearly all cast iron and has curved glass on the roof.

The Flower Terraces The flower terraces were created in the early 1850's by Lady Louisa Tighe with the help of her gardener Pierce Butler who came to Woodstock before Charles McDonald. The garden beds were surrounded by box hedging in chain and diamond patterns. The beds would have been filled with lovely colourful flowers so when people sat in the conservatory or on the big seat at the other end they would have a lovely view of a long garden.



The Turner Chair This large semi-circular seat with griffin-like feet and honey suckle pattern is situated on the middle platform of the Flower Terrace. This chair is a copy of the original chair designed by the famous ironmaster Richard Turner. Fragments of the original chair were pieced together and along with old photos the new chair was made to look like the original chair.

Wildlife

- The Sparrowhawk is most common bird of prey in Ireland. It lives in all types of woodlands and nests in the Woodstock area.

Did you know?

- When an important person was staying in the house the gardeners would dig up the flowers in the circular beds and put new flowers of a different colour in overnight. This was done to impress the visitor!



Activity

- Guess how many circles are in the whole chair?
- How many children can sit on this chair at one time?



The Turner Conservatory and The Flower Terraces

Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum are located in Inistioge, Co.Kilkenny. Woodstock Gardens were once considered one of the greatest gardens of Ireland and are now being restored by Kilkenny County Council.

The existing gardens were designed mostly by Colonel William Tighe and his wife Lady Louisa Lennox between 1840 -1900.

A Scottish man, Charles McDonald was the head gardener in the 1800's and he is also responsible for a lot of the garden designs seen today.

Contact:
Parks Department,
Kilkenny County Council,
County Hall,
John Street,
Kilkenny.



Phone:
Kilkenny County Council, Parks Department 056 779 4373
John Delaney on 087 854 9785



The Monkey Puzzle Walk

The Monkey Puzzle Walk and the Noble Fir Walk

The Monkey Puzzle Walk The monkey puzzle walk was a very unusual feature when it was planted in the mid 1845. Monkey puzzles are from Chile and Argentina and were brought back to London as seed by a man called Lobb from Chelsea. Unusual trees were very sought after by wealthy families in the Victorian times as they were like trophies of their wealth and travels around the world. The monkey puzzles were planted in an avenue which could be seen from the Drawing Room window of the big house. Monkey puzzle trees got their name when a gardener in Cornwall was showing his specimen to friends and one remarked: *'It would puzzle a monkey to climb that.'* Monkey puzzles can be traced back to the *Mosozioc* era which started 250 million years ago. Far from deterring monkeys, the spiky leaves probably developed to try to fend off grazing dinosaurs. To some native peoples of Chile and Argentina, the tree is sacred and it is now listed in the Red Data Book which means it is endangered in its natural habitat.

You can eat the seeds of the Monkey Puzzle but make sure you know what the seed looks like before you try. They taste much nicer roasted than raw!



The Noble Fir Walk

The Noble Fir walk is approximately quarter of a mile long. The Noble Fir walk was the last great work of William F. Tighe which was planted the year he died in 1878.



Wildlife

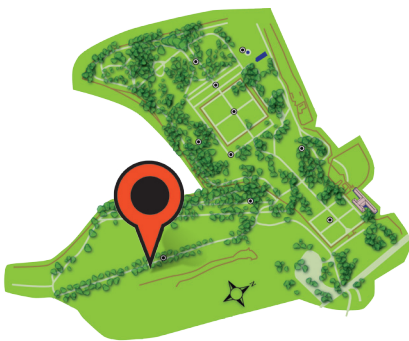
- The Jay is a very localized breeder in Ireland, usually breeding where oak trees are present. The Jay feeds on acorns and sweet chestnuts. The Irish Jay is usually very shy but they are easy to see in Woodstock.

Did you know?

- The Monkey Puzzle Walk was originally made up of 31 pairs of Monkey Puzzle trees. It was first planted in 1845. Since then some trees have died and 22 have been replanted to restore the walk way.
- The monkey puzzle was first brought to England from Chile in 1790. It is now protected in its native habitat.
- The avenue is the largest Monkey Puzzle avenue in Europe. It is 335m long and 2.5m wide.
- Noble Firs are now a favourite tree used for Christmas trees in people's homes.

Activity

- Walk the Noble Fir Walk and count how many young trees and how many old trees you see.



The Rockery, the Grotto and Dairy

The Rockery, the Grotto and Dairy



Rockery The Rockery only exists because the top soil was removed to provide soil for the winter garden. Over 50,000 loads of earth were removed from the Rockery to create the terraces of the Winter garden! It was planted with lots of tropical plants which would have been very unusual in Ireland at the time. Today the pond in the rockery is a home for lots of frogs and insects.

The Grotto and Dairy The small building surrounded by white rocks was probably an ornamental dairy when it was built in 1780. Dairying was very fashionable for ladies of the big house who acted out games and played at being dairy maids. They would have made cheese and butter here for use in the big house. The little fireplace was used for warming milk and cream.

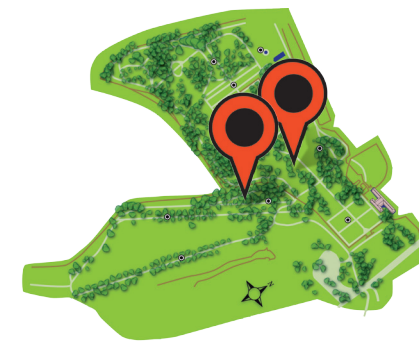


Did you know?

- The Rockery has a pond with small islands.
- All the rain which falls in the garden drains into the Rockery

Wildlife

- Pine Martins are Ireland's rarest wild animal. They are very shy. They are omnivores. An omnivore is an animal that eats meat and plants. They hunt at night and eat earthworms, bees, snails, small mammals including squirrels, eggs, nuts, crab apples etc. In old Irish poetry references to 'cats' are thought to mean Pine Martins as they have a slender body like cats.



The Dovecote

The Dovecote



The Dovecote The dovecote is a house for pigeons. There are 293 little nesting boxes built into the walls of the dovecote where 586 pigeons would have lived one time. The young pigeons were called *squeekers* and would have been eaten in the winter months. The building is one of the best of its kind in Ireland. A Spanish artist Saturio Alonso put a *Camera Obscura* in to the roof of the dovecote and on a clear day you can stand inside the building and see a reflection of people walking outside and trees moving in the wind. It works very well on a clear day.

Wildlife

There are 2 types of squirrels found in Woodstock- the Grey Squirrel and the Native Red Squirrel. The red squirrel has brownish /red fur. They eat almost everything such as bark, fruit, nuts and fungi. They are often hard to find because they spend a lot of time high up in coniferous trees. The numbers of red squirrels are decreasing in Ireland due to the competition with Grey squirrels for food as they eat similar food. The grey squirrel has grey fur and is native to America. They are bigger than the Irish red squirrel. Grey squirrels do not interbreed with red squirrels.

