



Open House 2021

Explore the historic parklands of both Cabinteely and Marlay houses on 17 October as part of Open House Dublin 2021. Join our guides as they take you on a loop walk through the formerly private parkland attached to these eighteenth-century houses. Learn about the different families who lived there and how they utilised and shaped the natural landscape to meet their needs. Both walks will take in many of the heritage features of the parks including walled gardens, gate lodges and other parkland features.

Enjoy an online reading of Grace Wilentz's new poems commissioned as part of the *Marlay House – Creative Responses* project.

Spaces limited. Book your place online at openhousedublin.com

Historic Parkland tours take place at Cabinteely and Marlay at 12pm and 1:30pm on 17 October.



The Big Houses of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

Exploring the history of local landed estates and taking a fresh look at the great houses of dlr

The Big House looms large in our shared cultural heritage in modern Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. The grandeur of these houses, built during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and often located at the heart of a large estate, was in complete contrast to the homes of ordinary Irish people at the time. The Big House formed the private domain for generations of the political, military and financial elites of Ireland and, while it was largely removed from the everyday experience of Irish people, it often stood at the centre of the local economy, providing employment for those living in the area. The world of the Big House became increasingly unsteady as Ireland tilted towards independence and the houses that survived the fires of the 1920s faced further change during the twentieth century as some were repurposed as homes for multiple families while others came under state and institutional ownership.

This leaflet highlights the events taking place between October and December 2021 to mark the publication of a new book and exhibition that explores the history, heritage and human stories associated with the Big House in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown leading up to, during, and after the military and political events of 1921; curated by David Gunning, dlr Historian in Residence, 2021. This is an initiative of the Decade of Centenaries, funded by the Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media.

Big House Book Club

The Big House features heavily in Irish literature and it has provided inspiration to some of our best-known authors from Maria Edgeworth to WB Yeats. The Big House Book Club will read, meet and discuss novels relating to the Big House in Ireland. Join David Gunning, dlr Historian in Residence, in the ballroom at Marlay to discuss the following:

The Last September by Elizabeth Bowen,
Tuesday, 26 October 2021, 7pm-8:30pm

Good Behaviour by Molly Keane,
Tuesday, 30 November 2021, 7pm-8:30pm

Register via Eventbrite, search for dlr Libraries to find the Big House Book Club or call (01)280 1147



Comhairle Contae County Council



An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

Publication and Exhibitions

A new publication will explore the history of The Big Houses of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, offering an insight into the lives of the residents of these grand homes and the people who made their living from working in the house or on the grounds. The collection of essays includes a closer look at the three Big Houses owned by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council at Cabinteely, Fernhill and Marlay. The publication will investigate the impact Big Houses had on the local landscape from the time they were built, how they fared during the revolutionary period when so many came under attack throughout Ireland, and how they were adapted and changed for use as convents, hospitals and schools during the twentieth century. The publication includes contributions from Dr Deirdre Raftery, Rob Goodbody and Peter Pearson.



Online Exhibition

An exhibition entitled *Cottages in Livery – The Gate Lodges of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown* will be available online from 15 November 2021. Located at the entrance to the Big House, the gate lodge played an important role in the management and security of an estate while also allowing wealthy owners to experiment with architectural form and style. In many cases, these little buildings are the only remaining evidence of the big houses that have since disappeared from the local landscape though many of these have also fallen into ruin or been removed for development and road widening.



Ghost Stories

A short and spooky children's publication, *Haunted Houses and Creepy Castles of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown* will be available in time for Halloween 2021. Read at your own risk!

Exhibition

A new exhibition based on the publication will be on display on Level 3 at dlr LexIcon from December 2021 - February 2022. The display will also feature artefacts from some of the big houses that have disappeared from the county, courtesy Peter Pearson collection.



(Courtesy Peter Cavanagh)

Online Talks

A series of free online talks will take place in November/ December as follows:
The Big House in Irish Art
The Burning of the Big House in Ireland
The Big Garden - from Private Demesne to Public Park

