

# Phoenix Park 1662 – 2012 Programme



350TH  
ANNIVERSARY



## Phoenix Park 1662 – 2012

### Background

The Phoenix Park was the first of a number of public schemes of ‘unexampled grandure’ undertaken by King Charles II with the express intention of keeping up ‘the splendour of government’. James Butler, Duke of Ormond, who was the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, commenced the formation of the Phoenix deer park in 1662 and the Phoenix Park is officially mentioned in the King’s letter dated 1st December 1662. Earlier correspondence refers to His Majesty’s park, which was to be enclosed near Dublin for the breeding of deer and the maintenance of game.

*Shall Windsor Forest win immortal praise,  
Itself outlasting all its Poets’ Lays?  
And thou, O Phoenix Park! Remain so long  
Unknown to Fame, and unadorn’d in Song?*

*Phoenix Park by James Ward, 1724*

In 1747 the Earl of Chesterfield, having considerably improved the Park, opened it to the public. Even though the formation of Ireland’s only Royal Park commenced in 1662, its present landscape is inherited from designs and management decisions which were taken from 1800-1880. The Victorian People’s Flower Garden’s were designed during this period and were noted for their novel experimentation with floral displays. The Magazine Fort, built in 1734, still remains, along with the Francis Johnston’s buildings which were added in 1801.

*‘The Phoenix Park is justly regarded with pride by every citizen, and with astonishment and delight by every stranger. For extant and natural beauty it stands unequal’.*

*The Dublin Builder, 15 May 1861.*

Sport has long been associated with the park. Formed in 1830, the Phoenix Cricket Club is the oldest in Ireland and one of the oldest in the world, even older than Lord’s. The All Ireland Polo Club was founded in 1873 by Horace Rochfort of Clogrenane, and this makes it the oldest polo club in Europe. Hurling was first played in the Park in the 1770s but it was not until the 1880s that formal matches were organised.

The Phoenix Park was placed under the management of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland in 1860 and they have recently published the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan which will guide the management of the Phoenix Park for future generations. The Phoenix Park is an historic landscape of international importance and one of the largest designed landscapes in any European city.



## Special Events for 350th Anniversary



### Mad Hatter's Street Party

As part of the celebrations for 2012, Chesterfield Avenue will be opened at weekends from the Phoenix Roundabout to the Mountjoy Roundabout to pedestrians, cyclists, runners, toddlers etc only. To kick start this change, a **Mad Hatter's Street Party** will take place on Easter Saturday 7th April from 12 to 4pm, with a Mad Hatter's Tea Party, themed characters, organised kid's games and craft activities, Farmer's Market, Fit 4 life activities, music and lots more. Bring your own picnic if you like as

40 picnic tables will be placed in the middle of Chesterfield Ave for the Mad Hatter's Party.

### Historic Lecture

Author and journalist Senan Maloney will give a lecture to mark the 130th Anniversary of **The Phoenix Park Murders** which took place on the 6th May 1882 on Chesterfield Avenue. Mr & Mrs Dan Rooney, US Ambassador to Ireland have kindly agreed to the lecture taking place in Deerfield House, the former home of Lord Cavendish who was murdered. This evening lecture will commence with a performance by the Garda Band at 6pm on the 6th May and is a free ticketed event. Requests for tickets should be emailed to the phoenixparkvisitorcentre@opw.ie, where a draw will take place for tickets. The support of The Garda Historical Society and the US Embassy in organising this event is much appreciated.



### Phoenix Park BioBlitz

**National BioBlitz 2012** is taking place in the Phoenix Park on the 18th/19th May 2012. This 24 hour Biodiversity recording activity will cover the entire Park and a range of activities for the public and academics is being organised by the National Biodiversity Data Centre in association with the Office of Public Works.

### Walk & Be Strong Workshops

The Phoenix Park is a great resource for walking and these workshops aim to get adults out walking and enjoying physical activity. The Health Promotion Unit, HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster and Dublin City Sports Network have come together to provide the workshops.

For further information or to book please contact:

David Phelan, HSE Ph. 01 4632819 email: david.phelan@hse.ie

### National Conference

**The Northern Ireland Heritage Gardens Committee's** Annual Conference will celebrate the Phoenix Park and this year's conference theme is **Royal Parks & Gardens, 'Back to the Future'**. This weekend conference will take place from the 5th – 7th October in the Royal Hospital Kilmainham and booking details will be available from [www.nihgc.org](http://www.nihgc.org)

## Phoenix Park Visitor Centre and Ashtown Castle

A lively and entertaining exhibition on the history and wildlife of the Phoenix Park is on display in the Visitor Centre. Here the visitor can enjoy an historical interpretation of the Park from 3500BC to the present day and can also view an audio-visual on the history of the Park through the ages or on the history of Áras an Uachtaráin.



### Tours of Áras an Uachtaráin

- Tours on Saturdays only
- Leaving from the Visitor Centre
- Free guided tours every hour from 10.30am to 3.30pm
- Tickets issued on a first come first served basis on the day, no group bookings.
- Ph: 01 6770095 for confirmation before arrival.

**Full details of all these events and others are available on our website and through the contacts below:**

Phoenix Park Visitor Centre

Ph. 01-6770095

Email: phoenixparkvisitorcentre@opw.ie

Park Superintendent's office: 01-8205800

Email: superintendent.park@opw.ie

[www.phoenixpark.ie](http://www.phoenixpark.ie) and [www.opw.ie](http://www.opw.ie)



### The Phoenix Café

The Phoenix Park Café is within the courtyard of the Visitor Centre, serving delicious freshly made meals, coffee, tea and snacks.

Open daily

10.00am – 5.00pm Summer.

Ph 01 – 6770090



### Phoenix Park Bike Hire

Bikes of all types are available to hire from the Phoenix Park Bike Hire facility located at the Parkgate Street entrance to the Phoenix Park.

Open 7 days a week, weather depending.

To book a bike, telephone 086 – 2656258

[www.phoenixparkbikehire.com](http://www.phoenixparkbikehire.com)

## Exhibitions at the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre

An exciting programme of activities, lectures, exhibitions and special events are planned for the Phoenix Park to celebrate its 350th Anniversary.

### January

The Office of Public Works recently launched the **Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan** and this exhibition of illustrated maps from the Plan highlights the various strands that come together to make the Phoenix Park that we know and love today.

### February / March

**The Seamus Kearns Collection of old postcards** of the Phoenix Park, of which more than 100 will be on display, illustrate the Park's buildings and landscapes from the late 1800s to the early decades of the 1900s.

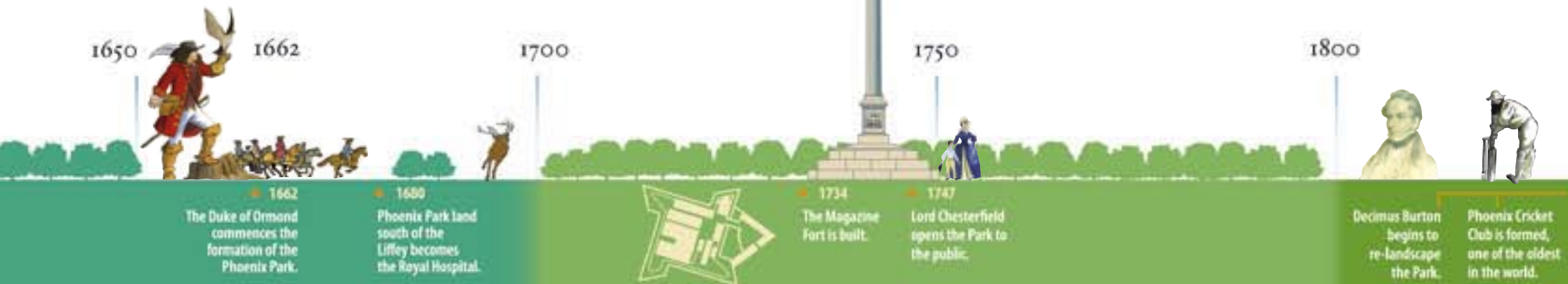
### April / Mid May

**Historical Maps.** For the first time ever, this collection of historical maps of the Phoenix Park, spanning over three hundred and fifty years, will be on view to the public. From Robert Girdler's map of 1650 we can begin to trace the changing landscape of the Park over the centuries. Be it, James Asser's drawing of the Park c1775 or Captain Brown's map of 1813 or the more recent Ordnance Survey maps of the 19th century, the exciting story of the Park is illustrated. The support of the Ordnance Survey Ireland is appreciated.



### Mid May / Mid June

**'the shadow of james joyce' Chapelizod & Environs.** This exhibition is a homage to James Joyce, whose last great masterpiece *Finnegans Wake* had its locale in Chapelizod and makes many references to the Phoenix Park. Contemporary Japanese photographer Motoko Fujita captures the spirit and body of this historic village on Dublin's fringes, and the enclosure of Phoenix Park that adjoins it.



### Mid June / July

2012 is the **80th Anniversary of the Eucharistic Congress** which was held in Dublin from 21-26th June 1932. The congress was hugely significant in terms of asserting the identity of the Irish Free State and was the largest public spectacle in the twentieth century. The high point of the Congress was a massive open air mass in the Phoenix Park.



### August

To coincide with **Heritage Week** an exciting exhibition of images taken by the public, of the Phoenix Park, both past and present will be exhibited. Please see details of the Photographic Competition on next page.

### September

**Motoring Through Time in the Phoenix Park.** Motor racing first took place in the Phoenix Park in 1903, when the Irish Gordon Bennett Race Speed Trials were held on the main straight of Chesterfield Avenue for both cars and motorbikes. This was followed in 1929 by the Irish International Grand Prix; the first of three Irish Phoenix Park Grands Prix. This interesting exhibition of video, photos and artefacts coincides with a vintage car display and a re-enactment of the sprints on Chesterfield Avenue of 1903.



### October

This exhibition of **line drawings** of buildings, views and artefacts of the Phoenix Park was undertaken by **Sheelagh Duff, Artist** and records the present day Phoenix Park.

### November/December

**James Butler, Duke of Ormond**, who was the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, commenced the formation of the Phoenix deer park in 1662 and the Phoenix Park is officially mentioned in the King's letter dated 1st December 1662. This exhibition on James Butler and his relationship with Ireland and the Phoenix Park culminates a year of celebrations honouring the 350th anniversary of the formation of the Park.

## Photographic Competition

Fancy yourself as a budding photographer? Well why not dust off your camera and take some pictures in the Phoenix Park? The pictures can be of anything; Nature Buildings, or animals, anywhere in the Park. Why not share your experience of the Park by uploading the photos, or, if you have some old photos of the Park in years gone by then you can also submit these to the competition by scanning them and submitting them. *Check [www.phoenixpark.ie](http://www.phoenixpark.ie) for full details in May 2012.*



## The Phoenix Park Autumn Lunchtime Lecture Series

A series of illustrated lectures will take place at the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre every Wednesday during the months of September and October at 1.15pm. Topics will include 'Is the Phoenix Park older than Newgrange?', 'The historical connection between Kilkenny Castle and the Park', 'The founding of 'The Nation' newspaper in the Park', 'The only city in Europe with a herd of wild Fallow Deer!', 'The History of the Metropolitan Police in the Park' and many more interesting topics with a diverse range of speakers. *Check [www.phoenixpark.ie](http://www.phoenixpark.ie) for full details in May 2012.*

## Primary School Competition

The Phoenix Park Visitor Centre is calling all primary schools to submit a project on the Park (be it on why I like the Park, Its Birds and Deer or a project on its majestic trees etc) and a judging panel will select entries from the following groups (Jr/Sr Infants, 1st/2nd, 3rd/4th and 5th/6th Class) with the winning projects displayed at the Visitor Centre for the schools and public. A schools' programme is also available at the Visitor Centre.

## Victorian Walled Kitchen Garden

Discover all about gardening in our two and half acre kitchen garden with the Gardeners on the 2nd Saturday of every month. From 10.30am – 12.30pm followed by a question and answers session. The gardens are open from 9.30am to 4.00pm daily.

## Bee Keeping Demonstrations

Bee Keeping Demonstrations will take place during May, July and August on the 2nd Saturday of the Month at 11.30am in the Walled Kitchen Garden.



## Events for Children



Discover  
Nature in the  
Phoenix Park



OPW Children's Summer Eco Camps 2012  
In association with Eco-Unesco  
Tuesdays 5-8 yrs. and Thursdays 9-12yrs

July 3rd & 5th

Trees & Flowers of the Park

July 10th & 12th

Kids' Recycling Ideas

July 17th & 19th

Deer & Animals of the Park

July 24th & 26th

Discover the Heritage of the Park

Price: €15 per day per child (Booking essential, places limited)

Hours: 10.00am – 3.00pm Booking & Contact Details: 01-6770095

## Primary School modules

The modules can be arranged at a time to suit school requirements on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays normally between 10am – 12 noon.

Module 1

Trees – what would we do without them?

Module 2

Discover the animals that live in the Park

Module 3

Step back in time with our Heritage module



## Children's Art Cart Workshops at Phoenix Park Visitor Centre

Children's Art Cart workshops are run every Sunday at the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre from 11.00am – 12.30pm. Children between 6 years and 10 years of age are welcome and must be supervised by an adult. Please see [www.phoenixpark.ie](http://www.phoenixpark.ie) for weekly themes. Please arrive early to avoid disappointment.

