

petunias amongst many others. A common feature of Victorian parks such as St. Stephen's Green are the herbaceous borders, found near the Leeson St gate, which are seen at their best from mid-summer.

The lake is one of the most prominent features of the park, complete with waterfall and island. Trees and other plantings around the lake have now matured, softening the lakes appearance, and there is little evidence now to indicate that the lake is man-made. The lake provides a habitat to many different waterfowl including mallard duck, swans and moorhens, and numerous species of birds and fish.

Other prominent features found in the park include; **The Bog Garden, Garden for the Blind**, which contains a variety of aromatic shrubs and herbs, with the labels in Braille, **The Children's Playground**, and **The Bandstand**.

#### Trees

There are over 750 trees found in the park. The perimeter of the green is heavily planted with trees to shelter the park from the noise and air pollution emanating from the city. London Plane is widely planted throughout the park, primarily because it is very tolerant of air pollution. Sycamores have a long tradition in the park having been the first trees planted in the park by the original lessees back in the 17th century. There is a formal walk planted with Lime trees on both sides of the path along the

northern boundary of the park. Other trees widely found in the park include, evergreen oak, birch, holly, weeping ash, hawthorn and laurel

#### Statues

St Stephen's Green contains fifteen commemorative statues or memorials, which are dotted throughout the park. A selection of the statues found in the park are mentioned here; included is the year in which the statue was erected

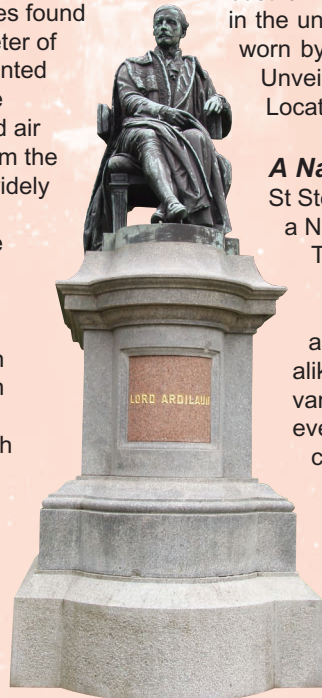
**Lord Ardilaun 1892**; dedicated to the man responsible for the current design of the park, adjacent to Grafton Street, is an impressive feature on the Green. The arch is dedicated to the men of the Royal Dublin Fusilier's who lost their lives in the Boer War in South Africa, 1899-1900

**Fusiliers Arch 1907**; The gateway arch located at the north west corner of the park, adjacent to Grafton Street, is an impressive feature on the Green. The arch is dedicated to the men of the Royal Dublin Fusilier's who lost their lives in the Boer War in South Africa, 1899-1900

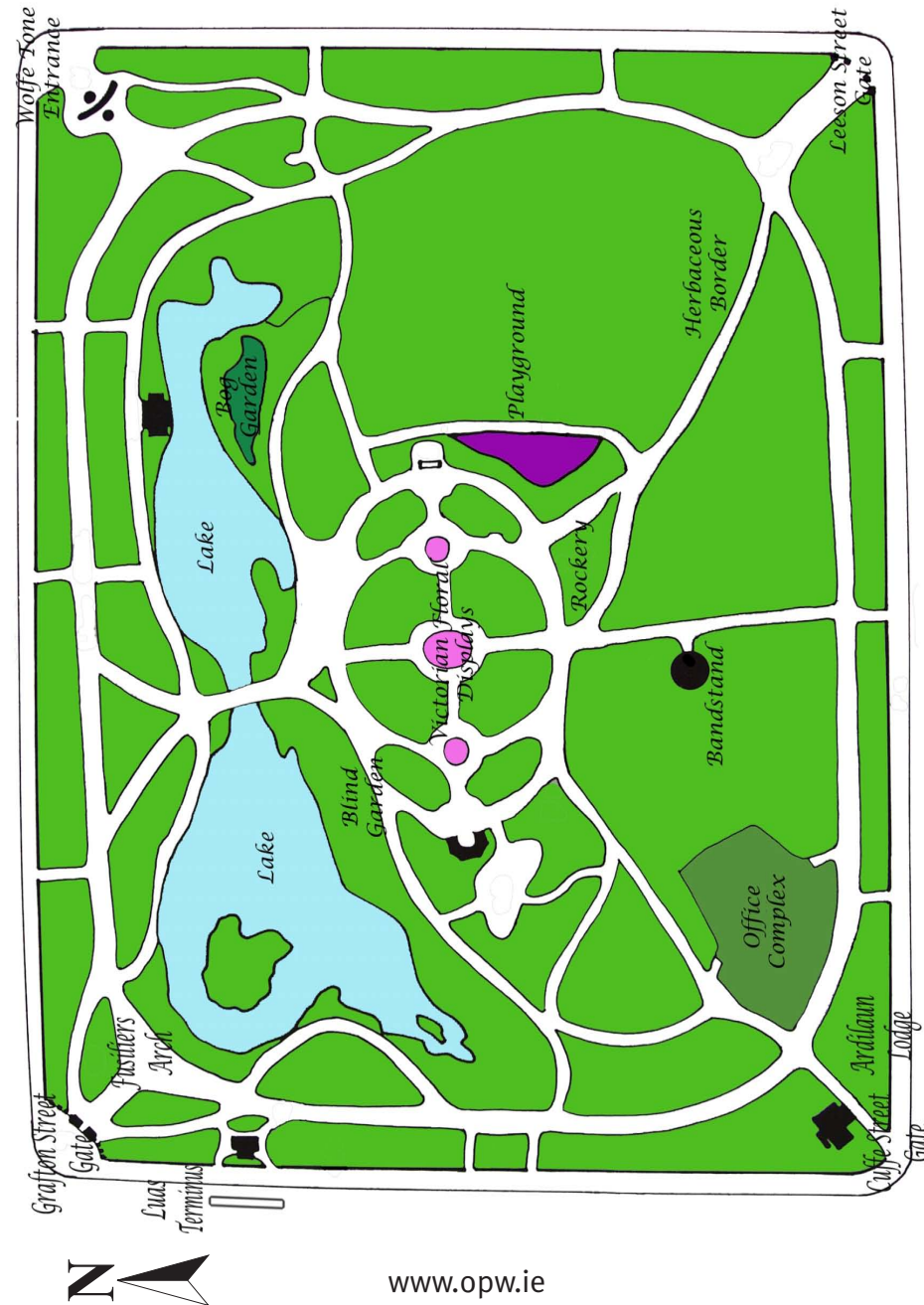
**Countess Markiewicz 1956**; A bronze bust of Countess Markiewicz depicted in the uniform of the Irish Citizen army, worn by her during the Easter Rising. Unveiled on Easter Monday 1956. Located in the centre of the park

#### A National Historic Park

St Stephen's Green was designated a National Historic Park in 1986. The Green attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, and is hugely popular amongst locals and tourists alike. The Green hosts a wide variety of educational and cultural events, both for adults and children throughout the year and won the Academy of Urbanism Award for Ireland in 2006, showing that the park remains a valuable resource to the city of Dublin.



## St, Stephen's Green Park



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## St. Stephen's Green



### Historic Parks & Gardens

### VISITOR'S GUIDE



ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN





## St. Stephen's Green Park A Victorian Masterpiece

St Stephen's Green is a 27 acre (11 hectare) Victorian park situated in Dublin City Centre, adjoining Grafton Street, Dublin's premier shopping area. The park provides a link between the fast pace of city life and the soothing, gentle relaxed elements of the countryside, enjoyed by city dweller and visitor alike..

### The Green Area of Saint Stephen

The name St Stephen's Green originates around the 13th century when a church called St Stephen's, with a leper hospital attached was situated in that area. Around this time the area was a marshy piece of common ground, which extended as far as the River Dodder and was used by the citizens of the city for grazing livestock.

In 1635 the City Assembly passed a law that stated

*"That no parcel of the Greenes or commons of the city shall henceforth be lett, but wholie kept for the use of the citizens and others to walke and take open aire, by this reason this cittie is at present groweing very populous"*

### Enclosing the Common

In 1663 the city assembly decided that the plot of ground could be used to generate income for the city and a central area of 27 acres was marked out which would define the park boundary, with the remaining ground being let out into ninety building lots. Rent generated was to be used to build walls and paving around the Green. Each tenant also had to plant six sycamore trees near the wall, in order to establish some privacy within the park. In 1670 the first paid gardeners were hired to tend to the park.

### The Centre of Fashionable Display

The Green became a particularly fashionable place during the 18th century, owing mainly to the opening of Grafton Street in 1708 and Dawson Street in 1723 and the construction of desirable properties in and around this area. The Beaux Walk situated along the northern perimeter of the park became a popular location for high society to promenade. Lewis's Dublin Guide of 1787 describes the Beaux Walk as being a scene of elegance and taste. Other walks found in the park included the French Walk found along the western perimeter of the park, and Monk's Walk and Leeson's Walk located along the eastern and southern boundaries of the park respectively.

### A Private Affair

However by the 19th century the condition of the park had deteriorated to such an extent that the perimeter wall was broken and many trees were to be found in bad condition around the park. In 1814 local commissioners representing the local householders were handed control of the park. They replaced the broken wall with ornate Victorian railings and set about planting more trees and shrubs in the park. New walks were also constructed to replace the formal paths previously found in the park. However with these improvements, the Green then became a private park accessible only to those who rented keys to the park from the Commission, despite the 1635 law which decreed that the park was available for use by all citizens. This move was widely resented by the public.



### Lord Ardilaun's Gift to the People

Sir Arthur Guinness, later known as Lord Ardilaun, grew up in Iveagh House located on St Stephen's Green, and came from a family well noted for its generosity to the Dublin public. In 1877 Sir Arthur offered to buy the Green from the commission and return it to the public. He paid off the park's debts and secured an Act which ensured that the park would be managed by the Commissioners of Public Works, now the OPW. Sir Arthur's next objective was to landscape the park which would provide an oasis of peace and tranquility in the city.

Sir Arthur took an active part in the design of the redeveloped park, and many of the features in the park are said to have been his suggestions. The main features of the redeveloped park included a 3 acre man-made lake complete with a waterfall, picturesquely arranged Pulham rockwork, and bridge. Formal flower beds, fountains, and the superintendent's lodge which was designed along with Swiss shelters. It is estimated the redevelopment of the park cost £20,000.

After three long years of construction work and without a formal ceremony the park reopened its gates on 27th of July 1880, to the delight of the public of Dublin. The Daily Express reported the next day that *"The picture is a truly delightful one and cannot fail to impress every visitor to the Green with the incalculable benefits which such an oasis must bestow on the city and its people"*

### 1916 The Easter Rising

On Easter Monday 1916 the Irish Citizen Army attempted to overthrow the governing British powers in Dublin, by taking control of strategically important sites around the city.

Rebels under the command of Michael Mallin and Countess Markiewicz seized control of St Stephen's Green. Trenches were dug around the perimeter of the park, and the glasshouse was used as a First Aid station. Evidence of the fighting can be found on the Fusiliers Arch at the north west entrance to the park, where bulletholes can still be seen to this day on the structure

### Landscape

The landscape of the park today largely resembles the Victorian design of the park commissioned by Lord Ardilaun in 1880. Found in the centre of the park is a formal area with a symmetrical pattern of paths and lawns, with the centrepiece being two granite fountains. Situated around the central area of the park are numerous Victorian flowerbeds filled throughout the growing season with colourful displays of bedding plants, including tulips, geraniums, wallflowers, and



Pic below: John J. Butler Head Gardener Stephens Green 1939-1943

