

## RUSSBOROUGH TOUR

Welcome To Russborough. We hope you enjoy the tour.

Please note the following:

There is no photography allowed in the house.

Please ensure your mobile phones are on silent or switched off.

You are requested to use the protective carpeting which is provided throughout the house to preserve the floors.

There is a First Aider at reception with a first aid kit if anyone becomes unwell.

The fire assembly point is in the far car park.

Thank you for your cooperation.

### HISTORY OF RUSSBOROUGH

Russborough was built in 1741 by Joseph Leeson, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Milltown, the son of a wealthy brewer . Russborough took about 10 years to build. The architect, Richard Castle, promoted Palladian style architecture in 18<sup>th</sup> century Ireland. The house stayed in the Milltown family until the early 1900's. Sir Alfred and Lady Beit bought Russborough in 1952.

In 1976, Sir Alfred and Lady Beit established The Alfred Beit Foundation, and the house opened to the public in 1978.

### DINING ROOM

The table was made of Cuban mahogany in the 1930's. The plates were made in Paris in 1820. They are a hand painted set of 22.

The white porcelain in the centre of the table was made especially for Madame Dubarry in Sevres in 1780. Originally, there were over 2,000 pieces in this set.

The drinking glasses are Waterford crystal 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The chimney-piece is Italian marble. On the mantelpiece the two blue vases are 17<sup>th</sup> century Chinese. The clock is French.

On either side of the chimney-piece are 18<sup>th</sup> century English console tables attributed to William Kent.

The paintings are of Alfred Beit (Sir Alfred Beit's uncle) by Boldini and Alfred's mother, Mrs Laura Beit by Von Kalkreuth.

A pair of late Louis XIV tapestries show views of the gardens of a Palladian villa.

The carpet is from the Real Fabrica de Tapices in Madrid. The design reflects the design of the ceiling.

### FRONT HALL

The 'Lotto' rug is 16/17<sup>th</sup> century from West Anatolia in Turkey.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century French grandfather clock is by Jean Baptiste Baillon.

There are two paintings by Alessandro Magnasco, St. Augustine and the vision of the Christ Child and St. Francis preaching to the birds and fishes.

The large scagliola console table from Vallombrosa (near Florence) is by Don Pietro Belloni, dated 1750.

The gilt woodwork is modern.

On the table are a pair of Chinese candlesticks of the famille rose period.

The terracotta bust of a young woman is French, dated 1763.

At the north wall, the bronze busts of Sir Alfred and Lady Beit are by Florentine sculptor Antonio Berti, dated 1958.

The 'girandoles' mirrors are English.

The gilt bronze oval tables on bulrush supports are Louis XVI.

The chimney-piece is Kilkenny polished limestone.

The painting of an Indian Black Buck with pointers is by Jean-Baptiste Oudry, dated 1745.

The 2 stone busts are by Pajou. Beneath these are 18th century French chairs with reproduction Lyon silk.

The large bowl in front of the chimney-piece is Chinese of the famille rose period

The rectangular ceiling is not coved and is 20 feet high, the same height as the other ceilings.

The chandelier, by Perry of London is one of a pair, dated 1820.  
The lunettes over the doors contain 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian marble busts.

#### DRAWING ROOM

The curtains are made of Bauvais tapestry.

Between the windows is an 18<sup>th</sup> century mirror-chandelier from Co. Limerick.

The plasterwork cartouches were made especially to surround marine scenes by Joseph Vernet, commissioned by Joseph Leeson in 1749. The paintings represent morning, afternoon, evening and night. The George II console table displays 2 early Meissen vases, and a painting of Sir Alfred and Lady Beit by Derek Hill.

The stone statue of Mary Magdelene is early 16<sup>th</sup> century Burgundian.

Beside the chimney-piece is a Victorian table which was used to shield ladies' faces from the heat of the fire. The top is made of papier-mache and is decorated with mother of pearl.

To the left of the chimney-piece is a photograph of the Milltown family and staff at the front of the house, dated 1880.

Over the chimney-piece is the oldest clock in the house, Louis XV by Olin of Paris, decorated with Vernis Martin.

The carpet is from the Real Fabrica de Tapices in Madrid.

On the table is an early 20<sup>th</sup> century English silver and Copeland porcelain circa 1930. The design is 'The Little Fisherman'.

The commode is 18<sup>th</sup> English with panels showing musical instruments.

#### TAPESTRY ROOM

The ceiling in this room is barrel-vaulted with 30 sections, each section slightly different.

The Soho tapestry is dated 1720 by John Vanderbank. It shows various scenes with mogul characters.

The colours are from natural dyes.

The bed, with matching sofas and chairs, was made in 1794 by Wilsons of the Strand in London. It was part of a large order for Sir Richard Arkwright of Willersley Castle in Derbyshire.

The chimney-piece is by Thomas Carter of London depicting 'The Dog and the Bone' from Aesop's Fables.

To the right of the chimney-piece is an English Pembroke table. To the left is a French Empire period table decorated with onyx, malachite and lapis lazuli.

The paintings include:

Richard Bonington – Figures on the Beach, Andre Derain – Lady with flowery hat, Anthony Copley Fielding – Landscape, Louis-Gabriel Moreau – Landscape with ruined building, Frederick Watts – Landscape, Thomas Gainsborough – Landscape with edge of a wood, Thomas Gainsborough – Landscape with cattle and figures, David Rolt – Lady Beit, Edwin Landseer – Swan and Lake, Hubert Robert – Chinese pavillon at Tsaeko-Selo, Picasso Print – Abstract print signed by artist.

#### THE MUSIC ROOM

The ceiling is by the Lafranchini brothers, famous stuccodores from Ticino, the Italian speaking part of Switzerland.

The pianos, a Steinway and a Bluthner, are encased in inlaid rosewood.

On the pianos, the candelabras are Waterford crystal, dated 1810.

The rug is 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian, from the Caucasus. It comes from a part of the Karabagh production.

The 2 music stands are by Robert Lutyens, the son of the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Against the wall (between the windows) is a Louis XVI Serpent clock on an 18<sup>th</sup> century English cabinet.

The chimney-piece, by Thomas Carter of London, depicts Leda and the Swan. The 3 blue vases are Chinese, mounted in ormolu.

The wall covering is silk poplin by Elliots of Dublin.

Paintings include:

Duncan Grant – An Italian Church, De Chavannes – Marseille 1867, Walter Sickert – Christine at Bath, Edward McGuire – Sir Alfred and Lady Beit against Russborough, George Morland – Winter scene outside the Inn, Anthonie Palamedsz – Musical Party, Hendrik Steenwyck 11 – Interior of a church, Patrick Nasmyth – Ships offshore, David Roberts – Interior of a church, David Roberts – Crystal Palace,

Richard Wyndham – Wilton House, Salisbury, Emile Cagniert – A Parisian scene, Derek Hill – Two Musicians

#### SALOON

This is the main room in the house.

The ceiling is by the Lafranchini brothers, decorated with cherubs.

The chandelier is by Perry of London.

The Genoese velvet on the walls dates from 1870.

The floor is mahogany with a satinwood inlay in the centre.

The round table is French Empire period. The oval table is early 18<sup>th</sup> century Dutch with scorched shell inlay.

The sofas and chairs are Louis XVI, by French ebeniste Pluvinet, covered in Gobelins tapestry.

The small tables around the edge of the room are Louis XVI.

The chimney-piece is by Thomas Carter of London, depicting Androcles and the Lion in the centre, Homer on the left, Plato on the right.

On the mantelpiece, the candelabras are by Falconnet. The mirror is 18<sup>th</sup> century English.

At the foot of the chimney piece is an English bellows and on either side are bronze sea gods, Louis XV rococo style.

The clock and matching barometer on either side of the central window are by Boulle

The English Regency cabinets are decorated with Japanese lacquer, ebony and rosewood.

Paintings include:

After Joshua Reynolds – The Right Hon. Thomas Connolly, David Teniers 11 – Concert, Narcisse Diaz – Diana the Huntress, Attrib. Paulus Moreelse – Portrait of a woman, Giovanni Battista Pittoni – adoration of the Magi, Jacques de Lajoue – Library of Monsieur Bonnier, Jacques de Lajoue – Physics Laboratory of Monsieur Bonnier, Willem van de Velde – Ships in a Calm, Jan van Goyen – Stormy sea, Sadler – View of Dublin, Sadler – river Liffey from Kilmainham, J. Stark – Landscape, Jan Wijnants – Landscape with figures and sheep

#### LIBRARY

The ceiling is by the Lafranchini brothers.

The chandelier is 19<sup>th</sup> century Austrian.

There are two Brazilian rosewood tables, William IV.

The two globes, celestial and terrestrial, are 18<sup>th</sup> century English.

The book of Malton prints, by James Malton, shows all the important buildings in Dublin in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The writing desk is by Vile. Vile and Cobb were cabinet makers to George II and George III.

The carpet is from the Real Fabrica de Tapices in Madrid. It is decorated with oranges and salamanders, part of the Beit crest.

The ornaments on the mantelpiece are onyx and bluejohn. They are mounted in ormolu by Matthew Boulton of Birmingham.

Paintings include:

Antoine Vestier – Princess de Lamballe, Sir Gerald Kelly – Sir Alfred Beit, Sir John Lavery – Countess of Airlie, Derek Hill – Lady Beit on horseback.

#### STAIRCASE HALLWAY

The main staircase is made of San Domingo mahogany.

The plastework on the walls is by the students of the Lafranchini brothers. Heads of hounds hold up garlands of flowers which gather in number across the wall and up the stairs. At the top of the stairs, an open book in plasterwork shows the musical notes of a French tune 'The Early Horn'.

Paintings include:

Robin Ironside – The Saloon at night, Robin Ironside – The Front Hall.