

Irish COUNTRY SPORTS and COUNTRY LIFE

Including The NEW IRISH GAME ANGLER magazine

ON SALE
to 23rd Nov 2015

Volume 14 Number 3 Autumn 2015 £3.00 / €5.00



Game On



Silver Pigeon I

The Silver Pigeon I is an outstanding Beretta offering excellent value for money. The tried and tested 680 series action and low maintenance, chrome lined, cold hammer forged Steelium barrels provide maximum durability. The Silver Pigeon I Field series is available in 12g, 20g, 28g and .410g. multi-choke. All 12g and 20g barrels have a 3" chamber and are superior steel proof tested.



Silver Pigeon I Deluxe

The Silver Pigeon I with a deluxe game scene engraving and upgraded wood. A Beretta, with a touch of class, at a fantastic price. Available in Field specification in 12g (28" and 30") or 20g (28", 30" and 32") with fixed choke and multi-choke options.



690 Field III

The latest over and under from Beretta. Built on the 690 action this perfectly balanced shotgun is beautifully engraved with a classic game scene. The Steelium barrels guarantee excellent patterns and smooth recoil. Furnished with high grade, oil finished walnut. Available in 12g (28" and 30") fixed and multi-choke.



Southern Ireland Atlantic Shooting & Fishing Graignecullen Tel 353 59917 9984 • Courtlough Shooting Grounds Ballbriggan Tel 353 1841 3098 • Duffy's Fishing and Shooting Galway Tel 353 9173 5044 Griffin Hawe Ltd Athy Tel 353 8626 16907 • J.L. Firearms Enniscorthy Tel 353 86 261 6907 • Hilltop Shooting Ranges Newton Mount Kennedy Tel 353 128 18025 Shooting Ground Knacknagoshel Tel 353 6846 116 • Lakeland Shooting Centre Mullingar Tel 353 4492 23127 • M.C. Graham Monaghan Tel 353 4771 453 • O'halloran's Corner House Drangan Tel 353 52915 2112 • The Sports Den Navan Tel 353 469 021130 • Wildhunter Athlone Tel 353 90647 0344 • William Connolly & Sons Goresbridge Tel 353 599 775800 **Northern Ireland** A.A. Monteith & Sons Omagh Tel 02880 758395 • C.F. Beattie Carrickfergus Tel 02893 353462 • Country Sports Newtownards Tel 02891 812585 • Country Sports & Tackle Antrim Tel 02894 467378 • Crawford Sports Maghera Tel 02879 642672 • Hollow Farm Shooting Ground Newtownards Tel 02866 332114 • Home Field & Stream Enniskillen Tel 02866 332114 • Norman Harpur Maguiresbridge Tel 02867 721395 • Tannoky Guns & Ammo Newry Tel 02838 318308 • T. Beattie Dungannon Tel 02887 725631 • The Bridge Guns & Tackle Strabane Tel 02871 880826

FOR FURTHER PRODUCT INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
YOUR LOCAL BERETTA DEALER OR VISIT WWW.GMK.CO.UK

www.beretta.com





Front Cover: : 'Pheasant slipping into cover' from a painting by John R. Moore.



Irish Game Angler cover:
Children were introduced to angling at the Shanes Castle Game Fair.

Contents

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|------------|---|
| 4 | Northern Comment | 80 | Hunting in Black & White -
by Frank Brophy |
| 5 | ROI Comment | 84 | The Pointers & Setters Champion
Stake 2015 - by David Hudson |
| 8 | Countryside News | 89 | Bird Hunting in The Dutch Randstad -
by Andrew Balcombe |
| 25 | All Ireland & International Success
at Shanes Castle Game Fair | 94 | The Teckel's Tale Part 2 -
by Steven McGonigal |
| 33 | Commitment Honoured -
The Countrysports Awards | 97 | Red Deer Hind Culling at Spike Camp
- by Dave McCullough |
| 35 | Birr's Spectacular Game Fair
Draws Thousands | 102 | Linda Mellor's Scottish Diary |
| 44 | Countrysports -
Making A Real Difference | 105 | Hunting Roundup - with Tom Fulton |
| 47 | Bills Mount, Umbrellas Collapse and
a Wee Shot - Country Chat
with Billy Lewis | 111 | The Irish Game Angler |
| 50 | Terrier, Lurcher and Whippet Show
Roundup - by Margaret McStay | 113 | The Irish Fly Fair & International
Angling Show - by Stevie Munn |
| 56 | The Irish Working Terrier Federation -
A Job Well Done says Derek Fanning | 116 | Clare River is A Hidden Gem -
by IFI's Kevin Crowley |
| 62 | Fifty Not Out for The Labrador
Retriever Club of NI - by Peter Smith | 121 | FISSTA's News & Views |
| 64 | Peter Smith Judges Outstanding
Gundogs in Belgium | 126 | Roamin' in the Gloaming as Sedges
Hatch - by Michael Martin |
| 68 | Art & Antiques - by Michael Drake | 130 | Clonbur, the Fly Fishing Capital of
Ireland - by Betty Hayes |
| 72 | The County Arms Hotel, Birr -
Why Not Join the Family! | 132 | Irish Mayfly Days - by Michael Martin |
| 76 | The Craft, or Fenland Witchcraft -
by Julian Schmechel | 136 | The Waiting's Over - Johnny
Woodlock's High Seas Angling |

Managing Editor: Albert Titterington, **ROI Editor:** Derek Fanning, **NI Editor:** Paul Pringle, **Associate Editor:** Irene Titterington **Sales and Marketing:** Paul Robinson
Publishers: (Editorial & Advertising) Country Lifestyle Exhibitions Ltd. Cranley Hill, 5b Woodgrange Road, Hollymount, Downpatrick BT30 8JE **Tel:** (028) (from ROI 048) 44839167
Email: countrysportsandcountrylife@btinternet.com a.j.titterington@btinternet.com **Web:** www.countrysportsandcountrylife.com
ROI Office: ROI Office: Derek Fanning, E: derekfanning123@gmail.com Tel: 05791 20003
Printed by W.&G.Baird **Distributed by** Easons (Dublin), E M Distribution Also Available by Subscription ISSN No. 1476-8240

The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or the publishers. Whilst every care is taken to ensure that information published is accurate and reliable, the publishers cannot be held responsible or accept liability for any errors or omissions in this publication. ALL RIGHTS ARE RESERVED. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written consent of the owner. No liability is accepted for the safe custody of unsolicited materials and manuscripts. Publication of accepted articles is not always guaranteed and the publishers will not be held liable for any manuscripts, photographs or other materials lost or damaged while in their possession, although every care will be taken. The editor reserves the right to amend any such articles as necessary.

Country Sports and Country Life Northern Comment

Doesn't time fly! It seems such a short time ago that we were gearing up for the first really big countryside event of the year at Shanes Castle, only to rush headlong into the Birr Castle Fair. I'm glad to report that both events were outstanding successes, which were graced with fine weather. Perhaps not the blazing sunshine of 'summer' that we might have wished but, given the wind, cloud and ever present drops of rain that we have had for months, we did pretty well.



This year I decided to concentrate on this magazine at Shanes and Birr, along with just a little filming with the maestro Harry Cook. It was very interesting to be the face of the magazine and to meet so many people over the two days of each fair. My wife Jill was an inspirational helper as well, and she was soon at home talking about magazine matters with the public. I was told by some 'friends' that while she was the charming face of Irish Country Sports and Country Life, I was....(at this point I shall stop for fear of bringing blushes to the cheeks of delicate readers)!

Anyway it was certainly time well spent, inspiring even, with a number of really useful ideas to consider for future editions.

I am really pleased to say that at Birr I had a useful conversation with a gamekeeper. But this was not just any gamekeeper, this was one of the only gamekeepers in Ireland involved in the running of a grouse moor. Despite the fact that both of us were heavily engaged at the Fair, there was time to listen briefly to some of his tales and learn something about this really unique undertaking.

Suffice to say, I hope to be able to bring his first article to our readers very soon to give an idea of what is involved in his work. Perhaps it will inspire more interest in Ireland's grouse and it could well be a first for the magazine.

Another writer in prospect — and how I wish that I could be bringing the first of his articles to this edition at the beginning of the shooting season — will be from a shooting instructor who was trained by one of the very best gunmakers shooting grounds in England. I will say no more other than he will be sharing some very interesting experiences and will be of immense practical interest to our shooting enthusiasts.

There will be more announcements about new contributors to Irish Country Sports & Country Life in due course and some very exciting ones at that! In the meantime, if you have a story to share why not get in touch by Emailing brief details and some photographs to the magazine to the address shown on the Contents page.

We were hugely pleased to see so many readers drop by the magazine stand. There was a major rush to grab out of print editions and unbelievably we were completely out of our entire stock of back numbers around midday on each Sunday. All I can say is, next year, if you need a back number, come along to the stand as early as possible. As they say in the shops — 'when they are gone, they're gone'!

I am glad to see that the lengthy hard work done by our representative organisations and the government over firearms licensing seems to have borne some fruit. Naturally, not

everything wished for was achieved, but it would appear a reasonable compromise was achieved on behalf of us all. Certainly, I know that there were long hours and 'interesting' meetings to endure and I think it fair to say that the whole process saw a very focused approach from those representing the shooting fraternity and one that will likely be a useful model for such engagements in fields yet to be addressed — especially if those tasked with representing us actually seek our views as they did in the latter

stages of the review. And of course, as such, there are likely to be lessons to be learned for future discussions with the powers that be. Our bodies can justifiably 'take a bow' - but keep the head down as well. This job done, but more hard work lies ahead I'm sure.

No one disagrees that Facebook is a phenomenon. But what is only becoming really apparent is the really huge number of people using it every day and who want to express their views on such a variety of subjects - country sports is one case in point.

Take the Great Game Fairs of Ireland pages for example. We have two presences, one for the Great Game Fairs of Ireland (a public page which you can like) and one for the Great Game Fairs of Ireland Group (which you can apply to join simply by asking).

Naturally, there is a strong focus on the Fairs, but one interesting development is the spreading number of topics — not just Great Game Fair related — which our members and others wish to share and comment on. Sometimes we have to curtail that a bit when contributors get too much off track, or bad manners or 'earthy language' creeps in - but it is interesting to see that many feel our pages are useful contact points for expressing their opinions on countrysports generally. No doubt they will continue to evolve so why not come on board!

We are at the beginning of yet another shooting season and as I look back over my own fishing year, despite the very best of intentions I failed yet again to be on the river as much as I would have wished. One reason was a nasty tumble I took damaging two tendons and an ankle. This has mended just in time for the shooting season, so I am looking forward to many happy days picking up on one of the best estates in Northern Ireland, along with a few days at a peg as well. Looking at my team of labradors Bailey, Bracken, Jodie and Bee the cocker, more grey hairs are evident around the muzzle of the bitches. Only Bee seems to have eternal youth as she still works at 100 mph and naturally Bailey, a male labrador and the youngest, is a bundle of energy.

But while my dogs may have grey hairs and slowing down a little, that did nothing to deter their eagerness to be chosen as 'opening day dog' to join me at silly o'clock on the first morning of the duck season. The only thing that was any different to last year was my recovery rate from rising at such an ungodly hour and tramping to our bit of a marsh by one of the rivers flowing into Lough Neagh. As my wife said while looking at me slumping over tea that first evening — 'if you were paid to go wildfowling you wouldn't do it!' She had a point you know.

Have a great season everyone!

Paul Pringle
Northern Editor

Country Sports and Country Life Rol Comment

For many fieldsports enthusiasts the summer can be a lean time in hunting terms, when they decide to follow other pursuits such as sailing or hillwalking and leave aside the pursuit of quarry until October or November. Countless others turn to fishing (that relaxing, philosophical pastime) and a few turn to mink hunting. Mink packs used to hunt the otter, but that is no longer permissible and therefore the American mink has become the quarry instead.



as being aggressive and being a pest. Mink can have an adverse effect on waterfowl and fish stocks and therefore they are not looked on favourably by many. They are not a protected species and may be killed or trapped by landowners. Thankfully, they haven't become the complete environmental disaster that many predicted but they are still not a very welcome addition to our fauna.

American mink can adapt to a number of habitats but it's most

This summer I once again joined that friendly group of people, the County Cork Mink Hunt, for days out following the rivers of Cork. The County Cork covers all rivers in west and north County Cork and south Kerry, the main ones being the Blackwater, Bandon, Flesk and Lee and their tributaries. Among the best centres are the towns of Macroom and Kanturk. The hunt was established in 1928 as a trencher-fed otter hunt and hunted otter until 1989. Since then it has hunted mink which is widespread in Ireland. A former Master, Eddie White, led a campaign to have the otter protected from trapping and shooting. This campaign was eventually successful under the 1976 Wildlife Act which only allowed the otter to be hunted by hounds under licence. Despite the otter being abundant in Ireland, Mr White, after a number of years, decided not to seek a licence to hunt otter.

The mink is a considerable pest and it provides just as much sport as the otter. It's a member of the same family as the badger, otter, stoat and pine marten. This family is called Mustelid and their characteristics include being short-legged, long-bodied and carnivorous. The mink is long and slender and has thick dark-brown fur. It also has partly webbed feet and spends a lot of time in the water. It's smaller than an otter but considerably bigger than a stoat. The males are, nose to tail, 50-60 centimetres long and weigh 0.9 to 1.3 kilos. The females weigh 0.5 to 0.8 kilos.

Not a very welcome addition to our fauna

The American mink was imported from North America to Ireland and it was bred, raised and killed on fur farms here. The animal was prized for its dense fur. Unfortunately, it did not stay in the fur farms, and whether through escaping or being set free, it spread out into the Irish countryside. The first known escape from a fur farm was in Tyrone in 1961. It had no problem adapting to the Irish environment and became a dominant species, establishing itself in the minds of many

commonly found in a water environment. They like slow-moving rivers and lakes with lots of vegetation. They are also found on the coast and beside canals. Mink are solitary and each adult has its own territory with a number of dens. Their diet is mostly fish such as perch and eels, crayfish where they are available, and waterfowl such as coot, mallard and moorhen. They are strong swimmers. They can dive for about ten-seconds which is shorter than an otter's dive. Other quarry includes rats, frogs and insects.

The Irish otter is the native species which is most directly in competition with the mink both for prey items and habitat preference, and their effects on the Irish otter are not yet fully known. The main causes of death for the American mink are from road traffic, water pollution and from wounds received by males during the mating season from other minks. Eradication of the American mink population in Ireland is now impossible due to its spread throughout the whole country. Some experts say that its introduction whilst increasing competition for food and habitat resources with the native otter species has not been overly damaging to native Irish biodiversity.

There was a dramatic story back in 2010 when people illegally released 5,000 mink from a fur farm near Ardara in Donegal. Groups such as Birdwatch Ireland were very concerned that this sudden influx of 5,000 creatures could have devastating consequences for wildlife in the area and particularly for already rare ground-nesting birds. Thankfully, people working around the clock managed to recapture a lot of the escapees and the Donegal environment escaped what might have been a bad moment.

At the time of writing, our summer this year has not been the recipient of any plaudits but when I joined the County Cork on Sunday July 19th it was a lovely day, warm and with endless sunshine. Several of the usual followers were missing because they were attending the Terrier and Lurcher show in Moate. The 30 of us who turned up pursued our quarry along a tributary of the Blackwater

River, several miles south of Macroom, not far from Béal na Bláth where Michael Collins met his end during the Civil War. Shortly before his death Collins wrote in his diary that the people of Cork were 'splendid'. This was my conclusion as well after a day out with the County Cork.

Leaving the river entailed a lot of thrashing through briars

These were a friendly, welcoming people with an affinity with the landscape and a love of watching hounds at work. I noticed that many of them were standing on the road and not getting their feet wet. I soon learned why, because the terrain was sometimes rugged and difficult, and after heavy rain the water was deep, rising as far as our waists. At one stage aggressive cattle made us leave the bank and drop into the water but soon afterwards we wanted to leave the river again because it had become so deep. At this point, leaving the river was difficult and entailed a lot of thrashing through briars and undergrowth and then a vertical climb up a 15 foot wall which felt like mountaineering and I only surmounted the obstacle because of thick roots growing out of the wall. Sometimes we jogged, sometimes we walked, sometimes we stood still, leaning on our sticks, looking at the sun-dappled water trying to spot the mink. For three hours the hounds were silent and then, beside one of the many old, attractive bridges spanning the tributary, they found, producing lovely music and sometimes staying with, sometimes losing the scent, for the next hour and a half until the huntsman decided to

call it a day and blew for home. I was glad when he did decide to head homewards because I'd expended a lot of energy following this periodically demanding landscape and was feeling tired. A couple of followers offered me tea and sandwiches, which tasted wonderful after all the exercise, and they then kindly agreed to drive in front of my car, showing me the way through the maze of Cork backroads back to the main road.

On returning home I searched through my library and pulled out the 1940 book 'Beagling and Otter Hunting' by Robert Colville, an imprint of that marvellous series 'The Sportsman's Library', a series which is still very relevant for the contemporary fieldsports enthusiast. Colville's book also bears a relevance for the contemporary pursuit of mink hunting, as there are many similarities between pursuing the mink and pursuing the otter. At the beginning of his section on otter hunting Colville states that 'hunting otters is one of the most difficult and tricky of all forms of hunting. There are even some hunting people who would maintain, after a lifetime of experience in various kinds of hunting, that there is more in hunting otters than in hunting foxes. However that may be, it is important to realise that there is more to it than simply putting hounds into a river and setting out for a pleasant country walk. I point this out at the risk of seeming to utter the obvious, because I have met many people who look on otter-hunting as a useful but rather easy way of passing the summer.'

Derek Fanning,
ROI Editor

Treat yourself or a friend to an ANNUAL Subscription to Ireland's most read hunting, shooting, fishing and country living magazine

Irish COUNTRY SPORTS and COUNTRY LIFE

And get a FREE TICKET to IRELAND'S PREMIER COUNTRYSPOrts EVENT – the IRISH GAME FAIR, Shanes Castle Antrim on the 25th & 26th June 2016.

Please enrol me as a subscriber to Countrysports and Country Life I enclose my cheque for £15 (€20)

Name (Block Capitals):

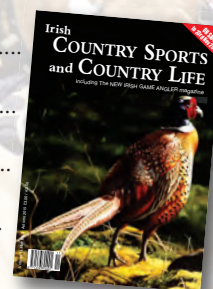
Address:

Telephone No:

Email address: Signature:

Subscription to start with : Vol No

Send To: Irish Countrysports and Country Life, Cranley Hill, 5b Woodgrange Road, Hollymount, Downpatrick BT30 8JE





PUT FLOGAS AT THE HEART OF YOUR HOME...

...AND GET 1,200 LITRES OF LPG FREE*

If you're thinking of converting your existing oil heating system to gas or building your own home, talk to us about our fantastic offer of 1,200 Litres of LPG for FREE* when you install a new Flogas Cosy Home heating system.

Flogas can supply everything you need for a cosy home including clean & efficient central heating, hot water, cooking, gas fires and gas tumble dryers too! And, by converting from oil to gas you'll have no more worries about oil theft and you could even find yourself eligible for an SEAI grant too (Only available in the Republic of Ireland).

Now that's an offer you're sure to warm to!

Flogas...clean, fast, efficient and flexible. The Flogas Solution.

FLOGAS

DROGHEDA

Tel: (041) 983 1041 Email: info@flogas.ie www.flogas.ie

BELFAST

Tel: (028) 9073 2611 Email: info@flogasni.com www.flogasni.com

* Terms & Conditions apply. See www.flogas.ie/t&c



Barbour Looks to the Autumn with its New Sporting and Countrywear Collections

As the days get shorter and the temperature gets cooler, all eyes turn towards the impending autumn weather and what better way to prepare than with the new Countrywear and Sporting collections from lifestyle brand Barbour.

For Autumn/Winter 2015, Barbour has created Countrywear collections full of chunky knits, smart shirts, waxes and quilts, as well as fully functional Sporting ranges for both men and women, perfect for outdoor country pursuits.

The new Barbour Men's Countrywear Collection features a selection of thick fleeces, knitted jumpers and classic cotton shirts in rich autumnal colour palettes of reds, oranges, navy's, greys and olives which are ideal for layering up against the winter chill. The layers are complimented by waxes, waterproof breathables, quilts and tweed jackets which are practical and stylish, ideal for taking part in country life or quietly observing it.

Barbour has continued their Women's Equestrian Collection for a second season, creating the perfect range for those who ride for pleasure, or merely enjoy a flutter on the point-to-point. Maroon, indigo and cream have been introduced across jackets, shirts and jumpers, as well as Tattersall and Ditsy Floral prints, unique to the collection and a lining to many of the jackets. Breeches, base layers and fleeced gilets are added to the range to make it practical for all weather, whilst tailored jackets and cotton shirts keep it smart and presentable.

Barbour's Sporting collection for Autumn/Winter 2015 is functional and fit for purpose with a combination of new products and established favourites across both Men's and Women's ranges. Waterproof jackets designed for all seasons take centre stage, with



Womens Classic Country - Bower Wax Jacket.

technical innovation and years of Barbour experience combined to create the most functional items possible with relaxed fits to enable easy movement. New layers have also been introduced, such as the Carlton Knit, with waterproof lining providing a serious alternative to outerwear early season which sits alongside classic check shirts to keep the collection definitively Barbour.

Barbour has also introduced into their Women's Sporting collection matching and very stylish jacket and breeks. The Dentsdale Jacket and Lemington Breeks are both 100% wool with a distinctive check pattern and relaxed fit to ensure warmth and movability. New jumpers and shirts in purples and beiges complete the collection and fit in to the warm and rich colours of the season.

The AW15 Countrywear and Sporting collection from Barbour is constructed with practicality and functionality in mind, without ever forgetting style – perfect for those who enjoy the countryside in all its autumnal beauty. Available from selected stockists from August 2015. For more information visit www.barbour.com



Mens Sporting - Carlton Knit.



Smyth Country Sports, 1 Park Street, Coleraine BT52 1BD N. Ireland
(+44) 02870343970

Homefield & Stream, 18 Church Street, Enniskillen BT74 7EJ N. Ireland
(+44) 02866322114

Courtclough Shooting Grounds, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin Ireland
(+353) 018413096

Sportsden, Trimgate Street, Navan, Co. Meath Ireland
(+353) 0469021130

Barbour®

www.barbour.com

[f /OfficialBarbour](#) [@Barbour](#) [@Barbour](#)

The new EL Family from SWAROVSKI OPTIK

Revolutionary optical performance, outstanding ergonomic design, perfect functionality.

These masterpieces have now been further enhanced following intensive development, resulting in the best EL Family ever, which is innovative and perfectly designed down to the smallest detail. The crystal-clear optics provided by SWAROVISION technology and the unique ergonomic design, including the EL wrap-around grip, are enhanced by the new, perfectly harmonised FieldPro package, which offers an unprecedented level of comfort during hunting.

Perfect long-range optics

When you go hunting, you need to be able to see everything. Even the smallest details are important to enable you to sight your target properly.

Perfect complement – the new FieldPro package

The new rotating strap connector with a cord adapts perfectly to any movement. The bayonet catch enables you to fit and switch the carrying strap and accessories very quickly and flexibly. With a simple turn of its practical quick catch button you can rapidly and silently adjust the carrying strap to the right length. The focusing wheel can also be used more easily, thanks to its softer, fully armoured, and more slip-resistant design. The diopter adjustment's new lock function ensures that your personal settings cannot be changed.

Brilliantly innovative – proven SWAROVISION technology

Thanks to field flattener lenses, HD optics, high-quality coatings, and perfect eye relief, SWAROVISION technology guarantees crystal-clear, colour-true images without any interfering colour fringing, in other words, a high-contrast, lifelike picture with razor-sharp contours.

Ergonomics and design: handy and elegant

The revamped design focuses on new aspects and improves

functionality in terms of everyday use.

EL 32 – Exceptionally light

The small EL 32 binoculars – available with an 8x and 10x magnification – fit perfectly in your hand and are the ideal choice where size and weight are important factors.

EL 42 – The impressive, multipurpose binoculars

EL 42 binoculars combine size, weight, and optical performance to give the perfect product, making them ideal for use in many different hunting scenarios.

EL 50 – The perfect explorer

EL 50 binoculars demonstrate all their advantages in terms of magnification and detail resolution especially when hunting over particularly long distances and at twilight.

The new EL Family will be available from September 2015 from specialist retailers and online at WWW.SWAROVSKIOPTIK.COM.



SWAROVSKI OPTIK digiscoping adapter now available for the iPhone 6

The popular SWAROVSKI OPTIK iPhone* adapter is now also available for the iPhone 6.

The PA-i6 adapter for iPhone is used to attach SWAROVSKI OPTIK spotting scopes and binoculars to the iPhone in a single motion to produce telephoto zoom lenses, thus making digiscoping accessible to

even more users. You can successfully take enchanting close-up shots that capture the moment forever in an instant, no matter whether you are observing wildlife and birds, out hunting, enjoying some free time, or on your travels.

The new SWAROVSKI OPTIK PA-i6 adapter for iPhone 6 now also makes the world of digiscoping

accessible to iPhone 6* owners, in a new design and in perfect harmony in terms of ergonomics and functionality. The assembly process for the PA-i6 is just as quick and easy as before – you attach the adapter to the relevant eyepiece cup. Suitable adapter rings are available for a wide variety of SWAROVSKI OPTIK spotting scopes and binoculars.

Flexible combination options

The adapter is compatible with the iPhone 6 and with the following binoculars and spotting scopes from SWAROVSKI OPTIK: CL Companion, EL family (32, 42, 50), new SLC family (42, 56), EL Range, ATX/STX, ATS/STS, and ATM/STM. All the iPhone's operating features are available while using the adapter and the specially designed strap ensures the iPhone is secure. (iPhone is a trademark of Apple Inc.)

The adapter from SWAROVSKI OPTIK is available from specialist retailers from July 2015, as well as at WWW.SWAROVSKIOPTIK.COM.



The new digiscoping adapter is now available for the iPhone 6

YOU CAN FIND OUR PRODUCTS
AT EXCLUSIVE SPECIALIST RETAILERS
AND ONLINE AT WWW.SWAROVSKIOPTIK.COM



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II
SWAROVSKI OPTIK
SUPPLIER OF BINOCULARS

THE NEW EL RANGE *THE PEAK OF PERFECTION*



Ahead of you: challenges in the form of long distances and steep terrain.
In your hand: the perfect combination of ergonomic design and
outstanding optics. The EL Range makes an impression with razor-sharp
images and precise angle and range measurement. Carefully designed
in every detail, these binoculars, combined with the new FieldPro package,
also set a new benchmark in terms of comfort and functionality.
When seconds are crucial – SWAROVSKI OPTIK.

SEE THE UNSEEN
WWW.SWAROVSKIOPTIK.COM



SWAROVSKI
OPTIK

Inland Fisheries Ireland Congratulates Irish Sea Angling Teams on Home Nations Double

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) offers its congratulations to the Irish Home Nations Boat and Shore Angling teams, representing the Irish Federation of Sea Anglers, who recently completed a historic double by winning the Home Nations Boat and Shore Championships.

The Boat Championships, which were fished out of Weymouth in England, pitted the best boat anglers from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland against each other. The Irish team consisted of Michael Patton, Shane Gilvarry, Dave Jolly, Dave McCormack, Liam Longmore, Martin Kennedy, and was led by manager Liam O'Callaghan. Trailing England by eight per cent after the first day, they all produced fine individual performances to win on the second day, relegating England into silver medal position by 36 per cent.

This year's win at the Boat Championships represents the second successive win for Ireland and IFI Fisheries Officer Michael Patton, based in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal, the only angler to feature on both winning

teams. Patton has represented Ireland on several occasions.

The Shore Championships were hosted by Ireland, and held in Co. Wexford. The winning Irish team, represented by Paul Coady, Harry McKee Jr., Aidan O'Halloran, Joe Carley and Alan Mulcahy, achieved five zone wins and a total of 31 points. The standout individual performances were by Harry McKee and Aidan O'Halloran, with two zone wins each to their credit. Wales finished in second place with 29 points, with England and Scotland in joint third on 20 points.

The Shore Championships also featured a strong performance from Ireland's ladies team, who scored 30 points, and were unlucky to lose out to a better-funded and more experienced England team, with 35 points. The ladies team of Nikki Foley, Linda Manton, Tracey Whelan, Jane Cantwell and Lisa Gormley deserve recognition also for their efforts.

Commenting on the championship wins, Dr Ciaran Byrne, CEO of Inland Fisheries Ireland, said "Winning the Home Nations double, and the

boat competition for a second successive year, is a fantastic achievement and I congratulate the Irish team on their historic wins.

"Following the Shore Angling World Championship win in 2010, this is further evidence of the high calibre of sea anglers we have in Ireland, and of the great work developing youth angling by the Irish Federation of Sea Anglers over the years. It is also testament to the high quality of sea angling available in Ireland, where these anglers honed their skills, and which will attract international anglers from all over the world in September, when Ireland hosts the World Boat Angling Championships in Bundoran, Co. Donegal. IFI is fully committed to supporting this major event, and we wish the Irish team the very best of luck and continued success."



Irish Shore Team Home Nations 2015

BREAKING NEWS

SPORTS COALITION welcomes plans for new firearms administration arrangements

The Minister for Justice & Equality, Frances Fitzgerald TD, published last Friday, September the 18th, a new S.I. governing the licensing of target handguns together with announcing planned new arrangements for the administration of the firearms licensing system generally. These announcements come in response to the controversial report and recommendations of the joint review carried out by the Department of Justice and An Garda Síochána this time last year and the response and campaign to that report by the Sports Coalition. Of significance is the fact that all of the arrangements which the Minister has announced were sought by the Sports Coalition in its numerous meetings, briefings and submissions. Suffice to say that all firearms currently licensed are safe and there are no proposals to ban anything. Of particular significance for game shooting people is the fact that the proposal to ban certain semi-automatic shotguns is dropped as are the proposals to give An Garda Síochána new powers to refuse firearms licence applications for any firearm based on calibre, appearance, proliferation etc.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to our colleagues in the Sports Coalition for their support and work over the past year. I also wish to thank the many thousands of individual shooting people who contributed actively to our campaign by lobbying their local public representatives. My appreciation also goes to those members of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice & Equality and particularly its Chairman, David Stanton T.D., for their measured consideration and contributions to resolving what had become a difficult and complicated issue. I also want to acknowledge the positive and

pragmatic approach adopted by Minister Fitzgerald in arriving at her decision. Her planned proposals will in time make a very positive contribution to removing the acrimonious and adversarial approach, which has characterised firearms licensing in this Country over the past ten years, while at the same time taking full account of public safety concerns. It therefore goes without saying that I and the Sports Coalition welcome and fully endorse the Ministers announcement. Lastly, I wish to pay tribute to William Egan, Solicitor, who has been a fearless defender of shooting sports for the past twenty years. His achievements are unrivalled anywhere in this area. He has provided free legal advice to the Sports Coalition since it was formed which has proved invaluable in our campaign. There are other individuals who are deserving of our gratitude and suffice to say I will be communicating that to those people personally in due course.

On a personal note, I am particularly proud to have been chosen by the sports shooting organisations in the Coalition to lead the campaign which has achieved this positive result. It is for me the culmination of more than 6 year's hard work which at times seemed hopeless and was punctuated in equal measure by highs and lows. It is my hope that shooting people can now settle down to concentrating on participation in their chosen sport and leave behind the need to engage in a constant battle to even renew a firearms certificate. I look forward to a more positive engagement with the DOJ and An Garda Síochána.

Desmond Crofton
National Director – NARGC
Spokesperson for the Sports Coalition

The All-New Volvo XC90



Bold yet understated, luxurious yet simple – the all-new XC90 is a new breed of SUV. Three engine options – the T8 Twin Engine Hybrid, T6 AWD and D5 AWD – bring you impressive power with unrivalled efficiency, meaning you'll be making an impact on everything but the environment. Plus, with intuitive in-car technologies including onboard Wi-Fi hotspot, and groundbreaking safety features, you'll be connected and protected every time you drive.

As standard on the XC90: Full Leather Interior, Full 7 Adult Seats, 9" Centre Console Touch Screen with Navigation, Active Bending Headlights LED.

Momentum D5 AWD:

BHP 225 | **BIK%** 27 | **CO₂** 149g/km

Greers of Antrim & Coleraine

028 9446 0066
www.volvocarsantrim.co.uk

S M W Belfast

Volvo Business Centre

028 9068 6000
www.volvocarsbelfast.co.uk

CO₂ data is preliminary. Please contact your dealer for latest information. P11D value for BIK purposes is the retail price plus delivery charge. BIK % shown for the 2015/16 tax year.

Danish Telemetry Expert visits Ireland's National Sea Trout Index Catchment

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) welcomed a recent visit from Dr Niels Jepsen, from the Danish Technical University's National Institute of Aquatic Resources, to the Erriff catchment.

Dr Jepsen, an international sea trout researcher who specialises in fish telemetry, visited the River Erriff fishery, which is situated on the Galway-Mayo border and functions as the National Sea trout Index catchment.

Commenting on the fishery's extensive fish monitoring facilities, Dr Jepsen said: "The Erriff system presents a world-class salmonid research facility and I am very enthusiastic about the potential for collaborative salmonid research between the Danish Technological University and IFI in the future."

The visit highlighted the sea trout research that has been on-going in the Erriff catchment since 1985 when the research fish trap and counting facilities were installed. Ongoing telemetry studies in the Erriff catchment and associated coastal waters aimed at investigating migration, distribution, habitat usage and survival of sea trout and salmon smolts in the marine environment on the west coast of Ireland were discussed in detail during the visit.

IFI's Head of Research, Dr Cathal Gallagher, welcomed Dr Jepsen's comments. He said: "Inland Fisheries Ireland is delighted with this important opportunity to share expertise in sea trout research and looks forward to undertaking collaborative salmonid research with DTU."

IFI's CEO, Dr Ciaran Byrne commented that the development of this international relationship is particularly timely given the increased focus IFI have placed on understanding sea trout ecology and biology in the



Viewing sea trout in one of the fish trapping facilities on the Erriff were (L-R): Dr Cathal Gallagher (IFI); Dr Niels Jepsen (DTU); Dr Paddy Gargan (IFI), Padraic O'Malley (IFI), Glen Wightman (IFI) and Dr Sam Shephard (IFI)

near shore environment. Sharing international expertise is essential when dealing with the complex and difficult issues facing sea trout, particularly in the context of IFI's national role in protecting and conserving this important but vulnerable migratory trout." For more information visit www.fisheriesireland.ie

Investigation underway into fish kill on River Clodiagh

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) is currently investigating a major fish kill which occurred on the River Clodiagh, a tributary of the Tullamore River, on Tuesday 18th August 2015. IFI responded immediately to reports of a pollution discharge to the river.

3,700 fish mortalities have been estimated so far over a five kilometre stretch of the river, with the majority of mortalities detected in the affected portion consisting predominantly of trout, along with other species such as salmon, lamprey, minnow and stone loach.

IFI is investigating the possibility that a

discharge of chemicals may have occurred from a specified location and is following a definite line of enquiry. Water and sludge samples have been taken with a view to a possible prosecution.

Inland Fisheries Ireland Director, Amanda Mooney, stated, "This pollution discharge has been a devastating blow to the River Clodiagh. The quantities of fish present would indicate that the river had recovered considerably in recent years from a previous eutrophication state, with excellent salmonid spawning and nursery habitat. We are asking the public to report any suspected discharge

into any river immediately to the IFI 24 hour confidential hotline 1890 34 74 24."

It is estimated that the river will take a considerable number of years to recover following this incident.

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) has a 24 hour confidential hotline number to enable members of the general public to report incidents - 1890 34 74 24 or 1890 FISH 24. This phone line is designed to encourage the reporting of incidents of illegal fishing, water pollution and invasive species.

For more information, visit www.fisheriesireland.ie

Keep your game or fish cool! Discover DRAWM Insulated Containers

Many visitors to the Shanes Castle Game Fair were interested in the DRAWM stand displaying plastic food containers. General Manager Kieran Ward commented: "We have been operating mainly in the UK and Ireland seafood industry since 2006. We are now supplying meat processors and the general food and drink market. We offer top quality and affordable plastic crates, ice-boxes and, of course, our full range of insulated containers."

Heavy duty Insulated containers

DRAWM Insulated Containers are durable food grade double walled containers. They are used by all food processors for storing and transporting product.. Sizes range from 70 ltr to 1000 ltrs.

Ice Boxes

Used by top quality caterers at food pavilions or marquees. They are a must-have item for camping, fishing, caravanning, boating, picnics, at the beach or just partying. If you just want something simple that will keep your food, drinks or other products cold without using electricity, your



Insulated containers used for harvesting salmon.

best bet is to get an ice box. Sizes range from 16ltr to the 80ltr wheeled cooler.

Contact: W: www.drawm.com ; E: sales@drawm.com; T: 07789884465

NEW SUBARU 4 YOU NOW OPEN IN DUNGANNON



Our new dealership has arrived in Dungannon, offering a full range of services, from the sale of new and used Subaru vehicles, to servicing, MOT, repairs and parts. Come and see a large range of Subaru cars and demonstrators, as well as an extensive selection of used cars. We pride ourselves on providing a friendly, professional service and look forward to welcoming you to our showroom.

Subaru XV 2.0i SE

Exploring off the beaten track. Handling the roughest rural terrain. Compact when you need it for winding country tracks, but hugely spacious inside, to take whoever and whatever you care to bring.

- 17" aluminium alloy wheels
- Rear Vision camera system
- Bluetooth® compatible hands free system
- 6 speakers
- Front seat heaters
- 60/40 split folding seats

5 YEAR WARRANTY†

FROM **£21,995**



Representative example

Model	Cash Price	Deposit	Subaru Deposit Contribution	Total Amount of Credit	Purchase Fee (included in payments)	Acceptance Fee (included in payments)	48 Monthly Payments	Final Payment	Total Amount Payable	Duration of Agreement	Interest Rate (fixed)	Representative APR
Subaru XV	£21,995.00	£3,957.00	£500	£17,538.00	£169.00	£179.00	£299.00	£6,604.00	£25,413.00	49 months	6.1%	7.0%



Subaru Forester 2.0D X

- Subaru Vehicle dynamics
- 60/40 split folding seats
- Roof rails and spoiler
- Multi-function display
- Hill start assist
- Cruise control

5 YEAR WARRANTY†

FROM **£24,995**



Subaru Outback 2.0D SX

- 17" aluminium alloy wheels
- Power sliding glass sunroof and sunshade
- Bluetooth (r) compatible hands free system
- Rear vision camera system
- 60/40 split folding reclining seats

5 YEAR WARRANTY†

FROM **£29,995**



To book a Subaru Test Drive contact your local dealer today.

Gormley Motors

Gormley Motors, 17/25 Ballygawley Road,
Dungannon, BT70 1TY

Telephone: 08433 932741

Mon-Fri 8:30am - 5:30pm | Sat 9:00am - 12:30pm | Closed Sunday

MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Official fuel figures for the Subaru Forester 2.0D X, Subaru XV 2.0i SE and Subaru Outback 2.0D SX in mpg (l/100km): Urban 32.8 - 40.1. Extra Urban 51.4 - 57.6. Combined 47.8 - 49.6. Official CO2 emissions from 155 - 150 (g/km). For model specific figures please contact your nearest dealership or visit www.subaru.co.uk



Price shown is for the XV 2.0i SE Manual, manufacturer's on the road price £21,995.00. On the road price includes VAT, delivery, number plates, 12 months road fund licence and first registration fee. Finance available subject to status to persons aged 18 and over. Indemnities may be required. The final payment is payable one month after the final monthly payment. Excludes motability, fleet and BASC Members Affinity Scheme sales. Available at participating dealers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offers. Offers may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Subaru Finance is a trading style of International Motors Finance Limited, registered office at Charterhall House, Charterhall Drive, Chester, Cheshire, CH88 3AN. We may receive commission or other benefits for introducing you to Subaru Finance. All models shown are for illustrative purposes only. Offer ends 30th September 2014. †For built-in peace of mind, every vehicle marketed by Subaru (UK) Ltd, excluding WRX STI, is covered by a 5 Year/100,000 mile (whichever comes sooner) Limited Warranty. www.subaru.co.uk



GREAT RANGE OF FIREARMS

 **Rizzini®**

 **Benelli**

 **BERETTA**

 **BROWNING**

 **Bettinsoli**

Perazzi

MIROKU



VIEW ONLINE

WEBSITE UPDATED DAILY
WWW.MCCLOYS.COM



Wear the fabric of the countryside

SHOP ONLINE

WWW.MCCLOY'S.COM

Successful Finish to the Game Fair Season at Birr Castle

Countryside Alliance Ireland rounded off the summer season with a wonderful weekend at the Irish Game and Country Fair at Birr Castle over the last weekend of August. The weather was kind to the large crowd that attended the fair both on Saturday and Sunday.



Lyall Plant & Barry O'Connell on the extremely busy stand at Birr Castle Game Fair

The CAI marquee had an interesting and informative selection of guests for the two days. The Irish Fly Fishing and Game Shooting Museum displayed many of their rare and intriguing collectables, including some lovely examples of different species of grouse.

On hand to answer any questions were the Irish Red Grouse Association, who are devoted to improving habitat and increasing the population of red grouse in Ireland. The Association has been very successful so far and is continuing to grow, both by numbers and popularity.



Walter Phelan of the Irish Fly Fishing and Game Shooting Museum with Jim Fitzharris, Michael Dunne & Tom Kavanagh

CAI recently received the new Game to Eat booklets which concentrate on grouse recipes and we were delighted to be able to provide some to the Association for their stand. The recipes sound

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND

Love the countryside

delicious, as always and can be viewed on the Game to Eat website (www.gametoeat.co.uk) or by contacting the CAI office.

This year was the first time we have had Tom Kavanagh, a renowned stick maker, and Michael Dunne, a member of the UK Guild of Taxidermists, both with impressive displays. It's always lovely to be able to meet new people and chat with fellow country sports enthusiasts and it was a very enjoyable experience having Tom and Michael in the CAI marquee.

The Wild Deer Association of Ireland again had an impressive display of mounted deer heads at the fair. These creatures truly are magnificent and the Association always draws a large crowd to their display.



John & Jack Fearn with Michael Dunne were just some of the huge numbers at Birr

It was encouraging to see such a large attendance on both days of the fair and Lyall Plant, CAI Chief Executive, commented: "We were pleased to be able to once again exhibit at the Irish Game and Country Fair at Birr. There was a friendly and fun atmosphere which made the weekend enjoyable for exhibitors, competitors and spectators alike."

"CAI had a hugely successful weekend and I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome some of the many new members that joined us over the two days and thank those that renewed their membership. We appreciate every bit of support the organisation receives and will continue to do our utmost to assist our members and defend their rural way of life."

Tim Bonner announced as new Chief Executive of the Countryside Alliance

Sir Barney White-Spunner has recently stepped down as The Countryside Alliance Executive Chairman. The Board has appointed Director of Campaigns, Tim Bonner, to take charge as Chief Executive from September onwards.

Sir Barney has spent three and a half years at the head of Britain's largest rural campaigning organisation and Countryside Alliance chairman, Lord Mancroft, commented, "Barney has brought much needed stability to the organisation and wrestled with some of the most intractable issues facing the British countryside. He has also started restructuring us so that we are fit to face the challenges of campaigning in the digital 21st century world. We are hugely grateful for his efforts."

"The Board was able to appoint an exceptional internal candidate in Tim Bonner who will provide continuity whilst pushing forward the evolution of the Alliance and its campaigns."

Commenting on his new appointment, Tim Bonner said: "This is a huge honour, but most of all a huge responsibility. I am constantly aware of the hundreds of thousands of Countryside Alliance members and supporters who rely on us to give them a voice. The Alliance will always focus on the core political and campaigning work it does best, but must also change to face new challenges."

On behalf of our Board and members, Countryside Alliance Ireland would like to wish Tim the very best in his new role and we look forward to working with him in benefiting the rural communities throughout the UK and Ireland.

Countryside Alliance Ireland also wish to convey thanks to Sir Barney White-Spunner for the dedication and commitment he has shown during his time with the Countryside Alliance and wish him every success in the future.

Be Vigilant This Hunting Season

The season is well and truly underway and CAI is again advising of the need for hunts to be vigilant this hunting season. Hunting is under constant and detailed scrutiny and last year in particular those who oppose our rural way of life increased their presence at hunting meets across Ireland.

The anti brigade have upped their game and it is our belief that they intend to use private investigators to infiltrate hunt meets in order to source any material at all that they may use in their attempt to thwart our hunting activities and bring this rural activity into disrepute.

CAI's Chief Executive reiterated the need for hunts to ensure they do not become complacent about the future of hunting and to conduct their activities to the highest standards and beyond reproach. We would also like to reinforce the need to be vigilant and to report any suspicious or unlawful activity by antis to the relevant authorities.

WDAI/BDS NI Cross Border Shooting Competition

The Northern Ireland branch of the British Deer Society and the Wild Deer Association of Ireland recently held a cross border shooting competition between the two organisations.

The event was for advanced deer stalkers and the shoot took place at the well known deer estate, Baronscourt, Newownstewart, Co Tyrone on Saturday 15th August 2015.



Greg Kane & Damien Hannigan at Baronscourt

The shoot was only open to members of the organisations and was based on advanced deer-stalking field experience. The format was two shots at 150m, three shots at 100m, two shots at 75m timed and two shots at 50m timed (timed shots were to replicate a follow-up shot).



Osmond Gurgan, Greg Kane, Damien Hannigan & Joe Murphy with some handsome silverware.

There was a great turn out with 32 shooters attending and great support from the spectators. The BDS NI were great hosts and provided all attendees with a delicious BBQ and a lot of fun. There was also a team competition, which brought out the competitive spirit in everyone!

Mount Falcon Host Casting for Recovery Charity Lunch

Casting for Recovery UK and Ireland are benefiting from an 'Elegant Ladies Lunch' on Wednesday 7th October 2015.

Mount Falcon in Ballina are kindly hosting the lunch on behalf of the charity, which provides support, fun and fly fishing for ladies who have or have had breast cancer. The afternoon includes a pink champagne reception, served from 12 noon, a two course lunch (by Mount Falcon's award winning Head Chef Daniel Willimont), a fashion show by Kalora and a fundraising raffle with fantastic prizes!

Tickets are priced at €30 per person and can be purchased from the hotel reception in Mount Falcon or by calling +353 (0) 96 74472

Firefly Newtownards - exclusive discount for CAI members!

Countryside Alliance Ireland is pleased to announce an exclusive 15% discount for CAI members on all footwear, clothing and accessories purchased from Firefly Newtownards.

Firefly, a registered firearms dealer in Newtownards, offers a vast range of products from a wide range of suppliers and manufacturers.

Countryside Alliance Ireland are delighted to introduce this new benefit to our members.. Simply show your valid CAI membership card at the time of purchase to obtain your discount.

Barrowan Gundogs North West Success

Ian Rowan of Barrowan Gundogs had great success at the May weekend of Spaniel Tests and demonstrations organised by the West of Ireland Spaniel Club. Ian thanked the West of Ireland Spaniel Club and paid special thanks to Keith Corley and his family.



Christy Murphy, Ian Rowan (centre) and Keith Corley.

Shooting NI Photographic Competition

We were delighted to co-operate with John Wray of the Shooting NI Facebook group to stage a photographic competition for the group's members in four categories.

Jim Shannon MP presented the winners with their prizes at the Irish Game Fair at Shanes Castle In June.

The Winners were :

Competition One Winner : Paul McGlone - Red Labrador, Runner Up: Seamus Smith - Cocker Spaniel.

Competition Two Winner: Alan Cochrane - Grumpy Bird, Runner Up: Clayton Harkin - Highland Peekaboo.

Competition Three Winner : Andrea Cowan - Working the Game Cart, Runner Up: Alan Kitson - End of a Dig.

Competition Four Winner: Michael Conway - Misty Morning, Runner Up: Brendan Jordan - Quackers.

Overall Winner of the Agent74 €200 voucher is Michael Conway



The winning photographers pictured at Shanes Castle Game Fair with John Wray, Shooting NI (centre)



Working the Game Cart by Andrea Cowan.



Misty Morning - Overall Winner - by Michael Conway



Quackers by Brendan Jordan



Albert Titterton with Jim Shannon MP who presented the awards.



(Above) Cocker Spaniel by Seamus Smith
(Left) Highland Peekaboo by Clayton Harkin
(Right) End of Dig by Alan Kitson



Grumpy Bird by Alan Cochrane



Red Labrador by Paul McGlone

Mourne Terrier & Lurcher Show Charity Success

Kieran Young of the Mourne Lurcher Club has sent us details of the draw which helped the last Mourne show raise much needed funds for charity. Kieran said: "The total this year of over £1054 brought the money which we have raised to just over £11000 in the past six years, all of which went to local charity. This year's chosen charity was PIPS and we also bought and donated sleeping bags and survival bags to the homeless appeal."

PIPS Newry and Mourne thanked The Mourne Lurcher Club for their most generous donation of which had been raised from proceeds and donations at their Annual Show and also donated Ricky Hatton Memorabilia to Raffle.

Kieran added that this fund raising success would not have been reached without the support of the people who attend, help and support the Mourne Lurcher Show.



Joanne Young presenting Laura McGuigan PIPS Newry & Mourne with the cheque.

Minister McHugh Launches Wheelchair Accessible Boat in Donegal



The new wheelchair accessible boat is a wonderful addition for angling in Donegal

The Clodha Wheelyboat, a wheelchair accessible flat deck boat, was launched by Minister of State for Natural Resources (Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources), Joe McHugh TD, at Rooskey Lough, Co Donegal.

The Clodha is the first boat of its kind in the Northwest and has been funded by Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) and Rural Recreation Funds. It is operated by the Creeslough and District Anglers and was sourced from the Wheelyboat Trust, a registered charity in England. The boat provides wheelchair users with hassle-free and independent 'roll-on, roll off' access on board via an external ramp and a hydraulic platform. The deck is open and level throughout, and wheelchair using anglers can sit at the bow, the stern or the helm of the boat.

Speaking at the launch, Minister McHugh said: "The Clodha Wheelyboat is a wonderful addition to the angling infrastructure in Donegal. This area has some of the most beautiful angling in Ireland and is today becoming even more accessible by providing disabled people with the opportunity and freedom to enjoy angling here."

"I encourage anglers of all abilities to come to Rooskey Lough to try this boat and, of course the fishing. I congratulate the Creeslough and District Angling Club who have worked on this ambitious initiative which will support economic development and jobs here in Donegal."

The Creeslough and District Anglers have been at the forefront of developing angling tourism in Donegal through the provision and organisation of angling to locals and tourists alike. This development project has seen the resurfacing of the access road leading to Rooskey Lough; the provision of a boat shed; the installation of disabled chemical toilets; provision of an ESB connection; and disabled angler access along with the new specialist angling boat.

TOP GAMEKEEPER LEAVES FOR FRANCE

On the 22nd of April over 40 of Steven Baird's friends met at the Ross Park Hotel near Kells for a farewell party before he departed for France two days later.

Steven started work as a gamekeeper on the Cleggan Shoot on March 200 when it was just a family shoot, but within a few years it had developed into a much bigger operation with redleg partridges being successfully introduced to the higher ground.

During Steven's 14 years as gamekeeper at Cleggan Shoot all birds were brought in as day-olds and he excelled at rearing these birds. Soon into his career Cleggan Shoot was awarded "Irish Shoot Of The Year" by the "Irish Country Sports & Country Life" magazine and this gave him a great boost. The shoot continued to grow and is now a large commercial enterprise having about 70 days shooting.

Steven is now off to France to face a new challenge as gamekeeper on a sporting estate. The estate consists of 700 acres of mixed farmland and woodland and is located in the Burgundy Region. There will be driven partridge, pheasants, snipe and duck and also red deer and wild boar stalking with shooting clients coming from all over Europe and America. Steven's new employer is Coen Stork, Chateau De Villette and the area is very well known for its great food and wine. The Chateau itself is a small hotel and can provide accommodation, and there is also a self-catering cottage.

To get a taster of this beautiful estate and see what lies in store for Steven visit www.chateaudelillette.eu and I think you will be impressed.

Steven's friends wish him all the very best in his new career.



Keeper Steven Baird (front row second from the left) is pictured with his friends from Cleggan Shoot before leaving for France.



21 CORN MARKET, NEWRY, CO DOWN TEL. 028 3026 6099 / 077 251 67478



Clothing
&
Footwear



Firearms &
Ammunition



Archery Equipment
&
Accessories

Plus a large range of
**Airsoft Guns and Accessories, Optics,
Hunting and Stalking Equipment**

Call into our shop in Newry or Phone (028) 30266099
to discover our full range of stock

Elite Guns in association with **LM Refinishing & 308**

Precision had a major stand in Gunmakers Row
at the **Irish Game Fair**, Shanes Castle, Antrim in June

We thank customers old and new who visited the stand and
cordially invite you to visit us at our shop to see an even
larger range of rifles and shotguns; sporting clothing;
shooting accessories; hunting & skinning knives;
binoculars, scopes and optics; superb range of airsoft
weapons; dog training equipment plus the specialist
stocking & rifle services of:

LM Refinishing www.facebook.com/Lmrefinishing
Tel: 07738 389 957 &

308 PRECISION www.facebook.com/308Precision
<http://308precision.co.uk> sales@308precision.co.uk
Tel: +44 (0)7801 844 335

OPTILABS – PRESCRIPTION SPORTS EYEWEAR SPECIALISTS



Prices from
£169.95
for frames and
prescription
polarised
lenses

your passion | in high definition

With over 50 years optical experience, Optilabs are the prescription sports eyewear specialists,
precision-making all lenses in their own in-house UK laboratory. They offer a full range of prescription
glasses including bifocal and varifocal options – plus non-prescription eyewear of course too!
For information on all Optilabs' fishing and shooting eyewear, visit www.optilabs.com or call on 020 8686 5708.




Optilabs

Ulster Reform Club Annual Clay Pigeon Shoot in association with Cunningham Coates Stockbrokers



Convenor of the House, Sports & Social Committee, Miss Louise Smylie, URC President, Mr Arthur Henderson, Wylie Cup Winner, and URC Member Mr David Agnew.



URC Member and previous Wylie Cup winner Bert Carlisle with guests.

On Tuesday 23rd June, a beautiful Summer's day, 21 Ulster Reform Club Members and 22 Guests registered at Foymore Lodge Country Pursuits, Portadown to participate in the Club's annual clay pigeon shoot and barbeque. Everyone enjoyed the day and there was a fair amount of healthy competition. Great progress was made by the Novices who have spoken highly of the professionalism of the tuition received.

22 Guns battled it out for the perpetual Wylie Cup trophy with 21 novices competing for the Top Novice prize. The outcome was as follows:

Top Novice – Frank Shields

Top Team – URC Member and previous Wylie Cup winner – Bert Carlisle with guests John Greenaway and Eric Carlisle

Top Guest – Jason Fears

Top Gun & this year's Wylie Cup winner – URC Member - David Agnew

Many congratulations to our winners and thanks to all who took part and to Cunningham Coates Stockbrokers for sponsoring this, now well established Club Event. We are also indebted to Irish Country Sports and Country Life magazine, The Great Game Fairs of Ireland and Countryside Alliance Ireland for their continued support of this event.

These photographs only tell some of the story!



URC Member Mr Peter Rainey of Cunningham Coates, Member, Miss Louise Smylie and other participants.

The 2nd International Sea Trout Symposium will take place in Dundalk, Ireland from 20th– 22nd October 2015

This major event will build on the success of the 1st International Symposium on the 'Biology, Conservation & Management of Sea Trout' held in Cardiff, Wales in 2004. Its overall objective will be to: Promote the application of the latest science to the better management of sea trout stocks and their associated fisheries.

The Symposium will consider developments since the previous symposium, highlight the implications of the strategic gaps in our knowledge that currently limit our ability to manage the resource effectively and review priorities for future investigation. There has been



a lot of interest in this important symposium due in some part to the excellent programme developed over the past number of months.

IFI's Head of Research, Dr Cathal Gallagher, commented: "This is a great opportunity for all those interested in the ecology, management and conservation of sea trout to interact with the leading international scientists, managers

and policy makers working in this area. It is hoped that the outputs from this important symposium will help to drive Ireland's policy for the future management of our sea trout populations."

IFI's CEO, Dr. Ciaran Byrne said: "This symposium gives us

an important opportunity to review the progress in improving our understanding of biology, ecology, genetics and behaviour of sea trout since the 1st International Sea Trout Symposium, held in Cardiff, Wales in July 2004 and to identify knowledge gaps required to support the future management of this important species."

SHANES CASTLE - SIMPLY THE BEST – and a real all Ireland and international success

It was simply a sell out at Shanes Castle this year!



If you came along to the Irish Game Fair and Fine Food Festival in June you would have been among the record crowds who came early and stayed late to enjoy the family fun in that glorious country estate.

The spectacularly popular Irish Game Fair and Fine Food Festival at Shanes Castle has always been acknowledged as the leader and this time the word had certainly got round that 2015 was going to be a vintage year.

With the media full of announcements about what to expect at Shanes, along with Frank Mitchell's radio show which ran all morning on the Friday before the Fair, it seemed like the whole country had caught 'Game Fair Fever!'

This year there were international acts, international Gundogs, international competitions, and an international crowd meant that many were already referring to it as the 'International' Irish Game Fair at Shanes Castle!

Naturally, being the Great Game Fairs event meant value for money for the public and this year was no exception. Ticket offers were everywhere, with fishing licences, on the air waves, Facebook, wherever you looked there was an opportunity to get some tickets to the show at some fantastic prices.

Special competitions for free tickets and more

Did I mention Facebook? Now, there was the place to even get something for nothing! Anyone visiting the Great Game Fairs page, or better still, becoming a member of the Great Game Fairs Group could keep up with the latest developments before the fair, and join in the many competitions to win all sorts of prizes from country gear to family tickets. And remember that was even before the Fair began in earnest at Shanes.

Well that was the build up - what about the Irish Game Fair and Fine Food Festival itself? To date that has indicated a huge level of satisfaction from the public with 92 per cent saying that it was simply the best fair or countryside event they had been to. What was it like for families? Here too we had an amazingly positive response with over 90 per cent indicating total satisfaction. I won't bore you with any more statistics but the rest confirmed that the record crowds had indeed not been disappointed.

While most of the people at Shanes had come from Northern Ireland and the Republic, there were a large number visitors from outside the country as well, some coming specially to sample the game fair delights that they had heard

about but had never before had the opportunity to sample it for themselves.

A view from the USA

This is what Lisa Cunningham, who was just one of the US /Canadian visitors to our Irish Game Fair had to say: "We travelled from the United States to experience the Great Game Fairs of Ireland on the grounds of our ancestor's estate at Shane's Castle. What a wonderful time we had!"

Especially enjoyed watching Cole Mathews, the Mini Guru. Explored the ruins of the castle and the living history demonstrations. I even tasted the delicious fried eels at the fine food tent. Thank you all for your hospitality! We are proud to be descendants of John Falls O'Neill!"



Fair Director Albert Titterington welcomes his 'Facebook friends' Lisa, Melinda and Jennifer to the Fair.

Director Albert Titterington said: "I was delighted to personally meet and greet Lisa, her aunt Melinda Oliver from California and her cousin Jennifer Wetzel from Seattle Washington. They had travelled independently to Shanes, while another large US group was there as part of the O'Neill Summer School. And we were delighted that the Mayor Councillor Thomas Hogg and Lord O'Neill were there to

personally welcome our overseas visitors, including the head of the O'Neill clan, Hugo O'Neill from Portugal.

I also met Canadian, French and a number of visitors from Scotland and indeed all over the UK and in line with our objective to make Shanes Castle a truly all Ireland event—fairly massive numbers from the ROI including 32 members of the Mc Grath family from County Carlow who came to roar their dog home in the Master Mc Grath Challenge.



Fair Director Albert Titterington was delighted to welcome a very special member of the McGrath family to the Fair.

The Fair at Shanes Castle is a wonderful opportunity to introduce newcomers to country sports.

While many swooped on all areas of the Fair, hundreds of children and young people flocked to the Angling Village to see what the volunteers from AGPAI and other conservation bodies had to offer and it was here that many boys and girls caught the angling bug.

They were able to chat with the experts, be shown how to



The McGrath family from Carlow cheered on their dog to success in the Master McGrath.

tie their own fly and learn how to cast a fly rod before making their way to the wonderful put and take fishery to put their new skills into practice. Did they have a bit of luck or was it all about the one that got away? They certainly caught fish and one young girl in particular was so taken by the whole thing she wanted to know could she stay there all day! Now that's what I call catching them young.

There was an added incentive too, for lucky anglers were able to take their catch to celebrity chef Emmett McCourt, fresh from winning a World Gourmand Award for his book, to see for themselves how to prepare and cook it, so they were actually shown first hand what is really meant by 'the food cycle.'



Emmett in action

But back to the public at Shanes and we asked them a very interesting question: 'What does the Irish Game Fair and Fine Food Festival at Shanes mean to you?' Popular answers can be summarised as: 'fabulous family fun,' 'best range of trade stands,' 'entertainment all day long,' 'talking to the experts,' taking part in the competitions,' 'brilliant gundog displays,' to 'best prizes.'

One answer really was interesting and it kept being repeated over and over again. It was: 'It's a family tradition and we simply wouldn't miss it.' Mind you, shooting enthusiasts were equally as candid: "It sets me up for the new season and I can't wait for that as well," just about summed it up for many. You can see a video of the Shanes Castle Fair at <https://vimeo.com/134331002>

Shanes Castle Fair 2015 went 'International'

The Shanes Castle Game Fair proved to be the No1 'must see' country sports event by far this year and as Fair Director Albert Titterington explained there was a special ingredient this year:

"We always deliver great country sports and countryside events in beautiful traditional settings and this year the Shanes Fair had extra special international ingredients, so much so that we even had visitors from the US and Canada. We wished to differentiate our fairs from other more parochial events in Ireland by taking them to a new international level.

Of course we feel that other similar more localized events do have a role to play and not just as one wag stated 'As a warm up act for the really great Game Fairs of Ireland!'

"Our unique three Arenas, international acts and international competitions including the largest ever international gundog event staged in Northern Ireland; international clay pigeon shooting hosting the first ever Irish qualifiers for the White Gold Challenge (to send six Irish shooters to the grand final in England) and of course the culmination of our FEEDWELL Five Nations Whippet Championships and RED MILLS Master Mc Grath lurcher racing challenge which had 32 qualifying events throughout Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales and overall the biggest truly international class prize fund in Irish Game Fair history were key components of the Fair's success.

"Add the 'creme' of country exhibitors and you have the ultimate in Game Fair entertainment. The 'biggest fair in the country' just became our 'International' Irish Game Fair."

"We had a brand new focus on activities for young people, to give them a taste of the pleasure to be had in country pursuits. Our new Northern Ireland Angling Show ran inside the fair and people of all ages had the chance to learn fly tying and casting, then go to the fair's special put and take fishery to catch their very first trout. Youngsters could then bring their catch to one of our celebrity chefs in the FLOGAS Fine Food kitchen to see how best to prepare and cook it. It was a great way to hook new converts to the sport.

"We had the best ever range of competitions, the biggest prize fund, a huge tented village of trade stands with a real country lifestyle theme and three action packed arenas. The Main Arena; the 'Countrysports in Action' arena where the public could interact with the stars of the show and then there was the Living History arena, set in the midst of the re-enactors' Living History Village, with a timeline from the Vikings to the Normans, in the lee of the ancient Shanes Castle. We even had a Viking longboat for youngsters to clamber over and explore. And following the success of our Battle of Ballynahinch re-enactment in 2014 we had a Battle of Antrim encampment and re-enactment at the fair and it is hoped to develop this further in 2016."

The jousting display by the Knights of the North saw thrilling action. The Main Arena buzzed all day long along with star displays of gundogs, muzzleloading, horses and hounds, falconry, long netting, ways of the old poachers, pipe bands and so much more as our aim was to try to entertain all ages and interests.

Shanes also catered for the public's fascination with fine

Some of the **Feedwell**[®] sponsored winners at the Great Game Fairs of Ireland

Local company FEEDWELL have been terrific supporters of the Great Game Fairs of Ireland competitions and championships.

In 2015 at Shanes Castle, FEEDWELL sponsored The INTERNATIONAL RETRIEVER TEAM and all of the RETRIEVER TESTS; The FIVE NATIONS INTERNATIONAL WHIPPET Championships; The ALL IRELAND Terrier, Lurcher and Whippet Racing Championships and THE NIGFSS Open Dog Show; and at Birr Castle they sponsored the ROI Terrier, Lurcher and Whippet Racing Championships.



Jamie Clegg presents the youngest handler with his prize.



Prize winners in the international team event.



Does a picture tell a story - two wolfhounds took matters into their own paws at Birr!



Judges organisers and winners of the Feedwell Tests on Saturday at Shanes Castle.



Five Nation Whippet Championship winners, judges and sponsors.



Fair Director presents John Barr Snr with his award.



Jamie and Jeff always available to give advice on good economical feeding.



Fair Director Albert Titterington presents David Beattie with a special prize.

Feedwell®

The Choice of Champions such as

Tim Crothers – Birdrowe
(www.birdrowegundogs.com)

Damian Newman – Maighmor
(www.maighmorgundogs.com)



Tim has won the IKC Spaniel Championships twice; 3rd twice and 4th three times; 2nd in the British Championship twice and many diplomas; and has been a member of the CLA team and won Top Spaniel many times.

Damian has won the IKC Retriever Championship twice, won and been placed in trials with cockers and springers and has been a member of the winning CLA team

Manufactured and Sold throughout Ireland



Feedwell Animal Foods Limited

The Old Mill, Castlewellan, Co. Down BT31 9NH

Tel. 028 4377 8765 Fax. 028 4377 1420

e-mail: info@feedwell.com www.feedwell.com



feedwell1962



Exciting jousting action from the Knights of the North from the borders of Scotland.

food, especially locally sourced produce and we had the best ever Fine Food Festival - the largest ever seen at any Irish Game or Country Fair with some really exciting top notch game and fish cookery demonstrations.

Shanes Castle Game Fair 2016

But even if you missed out on Shanes Castle Game Fair this time, you can rest assured the organisers are already burning the midnight oil to make it an even more memorable event in 2016.

So why not keep up with the latest news and views by liking our Great Game Fairs of Ireland page on Facebook or better still, joining the Great Game Fairs of Ireland Group to find the latest developments, special offers and to enter our FREE competitions for fabulous prizes. And of course get all this and more in each edition of Irish Country Sports & Country Life magazine.

The success of the fairs is always tempered by a note of sadness as we remember the great country sports men and women who have contributed to them over the 37 years of the fairs' illustrious history. This year our press breakfast and awards ceremony was the poorer for the absence of Lindsay Carlisle, 'stickmaker to the Great Game Fairs of Ireland' who sadly passed away before the fair.

Lindsay's death has drawn tributes from the country sports fraternity across Ireland and beyond. Friends and colleagues at the Great Game Fairs of Ireland spoke of Lindsay as a gentleman with a rich knowledge and love of Irish rural traditions, always ready to share his enthusiasm and experiences with others. Harry Cook produced a very moving video tribute of Lindsay that was taken to his friends throughout the world by being published on Facebook <https://vimeo.com/129954363>

Lindsay was one of the first craftsmen in Ireland to reintroduce and reinvigorate the old rural art of stickmaking, passing on his knowledge by taking classes in this heritage-rich aspect of woodworking, and crafting specially commissioned sticks for many VIPs including Dr Ian Paisley, Peter Robinson, Martin McGuinness and Brian Cowan. He was, for many years Official Stickmaker To The Great Game

Fairs of Ireland, showcasing his art at the annual Irish Game Fair at Shanes Castle and at the Irish Game & Country Fair at Birr Castle, County Offaly.

Great Game Fair Director Albert Titterington said, "Lindsay was one of the most well known figures at our annual fairs and his work drew admiration from all who saw it. He had a wonderful eye for detail and a unique capacity to bring the life of the living wood into his work. It was a privilege to own a Lindsay Carlisle stick, but a much greater privilege to be counted amongst the friends of the craftsman behind the art. Lindsay's relaxed and easy charm, his solid values and his stock of great country stories made him popular wherever he went. He will be sorely missed when the huntin' shootin' fishin' fraternity from Ireland, the UK and beyond congregate at Ireland's largest country heritage gathering.."

With his long-time friend, Tom Cavanagh, Lindsay judged the first Irish Stickmaking Championships, sponsored and hosted by The Great Game Fairs of Ireland at the Irish Game & Country Fair at Birr Castle. Those Championships are now an annual event, attracting the cream of craftsmen from across the UK and Ireland. In 2016 a Game Fair stick making championship will be launched at Shanes Castle for the Lindsay Carlisle Memorial Trophy.



Lindsay (left) is pictured some months ago, receiving a special award from the Great Game Fairs of Ireland in recognition of his outstanding contribution to rural heritage, presented by Chief Steward, Tom Fulton.





SHANES CASTLE BACKDROP FOR MAJOR COMMITMENT AWARDS

TOP BROWNLOW AWARD FOR COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE

The prestigious William Brownlow Award for promoting and defending country sports and the rural way of life was been awarded to Countryside Alliance.

The presentation was made jointly to the organisation's Executive Chairman Sir Barney White-Spunner, the UK-based Countryside Alliance and its sister body, Countryside Alliance Ireland. This was the first time that the Brownlow Award was shared by an individual as well as an organisation.

The Award is made in memory of the late, acclaimed countryman Major William Brownlow, who was a passionate advocate of country pursuits and traditional country sports and is only ever presented for outstanding work in these areas.

Making the presentation, Irish Country Sports & Country Life's Paul Pringle, praised the Countryside Alliance for its work for country sports across Ireland and the UK, and in particular highlighted the sterling leadership shown by its Executive Chairman Sir Barney White-Spunner.

He said: "Countryside Alliance is the passionate and informed voice of the countryside, principled and proactive in its fight to support the country way of life. From making positive, insightful contributions to the debate on topics such as firearms licensing, to the repeal of current hunting legislation and even the extension of rural broadband, the organisation invariably has its 'finger on the pulse.'"

This was particularly evident in Sir Barney's role on the Lead Advisory Group, set up to advise government on risks from the use of lead ammunition. Sir Barney took a principled stance, refusing to accept a final report to government that bore no resemblance to discussions had by the group and the

evidence laid before it. Sir Barney indicated that there was simply no evidence to support any ban on lead ammunition in the UK despite what the report might say. This Award is a fitting tribute to the hard work done by him, the Countryside Alliance and Countryside Alliance Ireland."

Sir Barney was also presented with an original water colour painting by Pauric Costello.

SPORTS COALITION HONOURED AS A FORCE FOR GOOD

The huge success of a country sports organisation established just last year was recognised at Shanes Castle.

The Sports Coalition is a new ROI umbrella organisation for a range of representative associations for country sports, shooting and angling interests, giving them a strong and united lobbying voice on shared issues of concern.

Des Crofton, Director of the National Association of Regional Game Councils and spokesman for The Sports Coalition, accepted the award from Albert Titterington, who praised the commitment, energy and efficacy of the new body.

He said: "Within a year The Sports Coalition has become a force to be reckoned with; a passionate, much respected and effective advocate of country sports and traditions, prepared and well capable of defending rights in the courts. Through its hugely informative web site, it has already engaged with more than a hundred thousand people and that figure rises daily. This is an organisation which is very much 'on our side' and all of us who love country sports and wish to protect those rural traditions can look to The Sports Coalition for information, guidance and, indeed, inspiration. The organisation is a worthy winner of the

Great Game Fairs of Ireland & Irish Country Sports & Country Life Commitment Award."

CARRICKMORE ANGLER HONOURED

The hard work and commitment of Carrickmore angler Mark Tierney have also been recognised.

Mark has been an outspoken and insightful champion of angling conservation through his work with No Salmon Netting opposing salmon netting in Irish waters. Tribute was paid to the success of that campaign and also to Mark's potent combination of angling expertise and passion.

Albert Titterington said: "Mark has been a tireless ambassador for angling, working not only to protect our salmon stock, but also to introduce the sport of angling to young people. His innovative approach at the annual Game Fair and Fine Food Festival has encouraged many children and teenagers to have a go and, under Mark's friendly direction, the Put & Take Lake there has become one of our most popular attractions. I have no doubt that many of those encouraged to 'try their hand' at angling for the first time at the Shanes Castle Fairs will continue to enjoy what is, famously, the most popular participation sport in the UK and Ireland and, as Mark demonstrates, an interest in angling can be the foundation for a deep-rooted appreciation of our countryside."

It was a day of awards for Mark who also received complementary fishing from Maine Rivers Trust and the surprise gift of a crafted fly-tying vice from Paul Smith and his colleagues on the NSN team.

BESSBROOK COUNTRYMAN HONOURED

Willie Edgar was also honoured with the Great Game Fairs of Ireland Lifetime

Achievement Award and there were tributes to a man who is recognised as one of Ireland's best known and most highly respected Gundog trainers.

Albert Titterington said: "Willie is nothing short of a legend in gundog circles, having competed at the highest level, earning a list of accolades which includes winning the national 'Top Dog' competition four times and clinching runner up another four times!

"It is a joy to watch him work with his Gundogs and to witness the incredible empathy and trust he establishes with them. Willie makes an art form out of the training regime and his expertise and experience also make him a superb judge within the sport. I have had a passion for training Gundogs since I was a child, but each time I talk with Willie, I learn from him ... and I see just how much more there is to learn.

"Willie's incredible career and his unstinting commitment to building national and international Gundog competitions within The Great Game Fairs of Ireland at Shanes Castle in Antrim and at Birr Castle in County Offaly make him a most worthy recipient of this award.

PORTADOWN COUNTRYMAN HONOURED

Tom Barry was also one of the award winners and conferring the Lifetime Achievement Award, Albert Titterington paid tribute to one of the country's best known and most highly regarded 'doggie men'.

He said: "For too many years Terriers, Whippets and Lurchers were the under-appreciated 'Cinderellas' of the sporting dog world, but Tom has redressed that balance. He has championed the attributes of these wonderful breeds and interest in them is now at an all-time high.

"Under Tom's direction and influence, Terrier, Lurcher and Whippet competition within The Great Game Fairs of Ireland at Shanes Castle in Antrim and the qualifying events for our international championships have blossomed as never before.

The number of entries has



Congratulations all round for leading Countryside and Countrysports Award Winners

dramatically increased; the quality has risen and – perhaps most tellingly – audience enthusiasm has grown enormously. The prize pot has also grown and our Five Nations Championships and Master McGrath Challenge now attract considerable international interest.

"Tom has created Ireland's premier working dog event for The Great Game Fairs of Ireland and we are indebted to him for his hard work, enthusiasm, commitment – and success. His track record makes him a most worthy recipient of this award, but still more praiseworthy is his capacity to inspire others with his enthusiasm and love for these once-forgotten breeds."

RURAL ROOTS EARN ACCOLADES

Two men from the North West were also honoured, when celebrity chef Emmett McCourt and John Wray, the force behind the highly successful Shoot-NI internet forum, each earned Great Game Fairs of Ireland Lifetime Achievement Awards for the passion shown by each for different aspects of rural heritage and country lifestyles.

Albert Titterington said: "In their own very different ways these champions of country living illustrate contemporary appreciation of our longstanding rural heritage. John Wray is using the internet

to provide a robust forum for all of us with an interest in the sport of shooting, while Emmett is helping modern audiences to rediscover our culinary traditions, reinterpreting them for modern use.

"In his capacity as Official Chef to our Fairs, Emmett McCourt has helped us to grow and develop ambitious fine food and drink offerings within the Great Game Fairs at Shanes Castle in Antrim at Birr Castle in County Offaly. He loves to share his knowledge and appreciation of great local produce and is a wonderful global ambassador for our food producers. His modern take on traditional recipes and culinary processes is inspiring new generations of country-loving cooks. He is most deserving of this award – which will join a burgeoning collection of local, national and international accolades!

"Full credit, too, to John Wray, for energising sporting debate with a new, technological approach! Like almost every sector, the country sports fraternity increasingly turns to the web and John's forum is both answering existing demand and creating new appetite. Already the forum has 4,000+ members and it is growing day by day, with John's adept moderating establishing a robust, spirited but fair showcase for news and views. We are delighted to recognise his success with this award."

BRILLIANT BIRR CASTLE GAME FAIR BRINGS THOUSANDS TO COUNTRY LIFESTYLE AND COUNTRY SPORTS SPECTACLE

(Photos by Harry Cook)



Arena crowds

The Directors of the Birr Castle Fair were delighted that thousands of country sports enthusiasts and their families made Birr Castle Game Fair their No1 destination on Saturday and Sunday 29th & 30th August.

In fact similarly to the international attendance at Shanes Castle the Birr Fair welcomed many people from as far away as the United States and Europe as well as huge numbers from all parts of the island of Ireland and the UK.

Despite a weather forecast that seemed to promise somewhat damp conditions, there was only a brief shower on the Saturday while the rest of the event was warm and very bright — the sun even made an appearance on both days which was an added bonus as well to the delightfully warm days.

Albert Titterington said: “We had great number on both days with Sunday as usual being a hugely important day for families to come along and enjoy what was on offer. Enthusiasts were well catered for as well as families of all ages with something for everyone to see and do. The range and variety of the huge number of stand holders meant that shooters, anglers, clay shots, archery buffs, hunting enthusiasts and dog enthusiasts were really spoilt for choice not to mention the sporting art, fine food and so much more on offer. And all stands had at least one special bargain and many had several!

“Naturally, the day long Main Arena programme sponsored by the NARGC Compensation Fund meant that people of all

ages had something special to enjoy as they took time out from all the other attractions including the Fine Food Festival that offered so much for foodies to see and try as well as learning the special tricks of the trade from world acclaimed chief Emmet McCourt fresh from winning the coveted World Gourmand award for the Best Food travel Book in the world!

“I am delighted to report that in spite of some adverse weather reports the Irish Game & Country Fair at Birr posted another huge success meaning that the two Great Game Fairs of Ireland once again proved to be the greatest promotional platforms for the promotion and defence of country sports in Ireland. This year we had an increased number of trade stands covering all aspects of country life, including six gun dealers with guns from €400 to €70,000. In addition there were a large number of stands offering a huge range of clothing, tackle and accessories and virtually all with some real bargains. If you were there to purchase gear then the saving on any purchase would have certainly covered the modest admission charge.”

Turning to the Great Game Fairs of Ireland brand, Albert Titterington said: “There is a particular strength in our Great Game Fairs of Ireland brand, in that we deliver strong economic benefits for the host areas. As well we encourage local traders to get involved, and really maximise the potential benefit that the huge game fair audience brings with it. It is important to note that the public which come to the Birr Game Fair and to its sister event at Shanes Castle is not only from Ireland as a whole but from Europe and farther afield. This can only be of immense

importance to tourism. Already Mid Ireland Tourism has confirmed that there was no accommodation to be had within a 30 to 40 mile radius of Birr Castle as everything had been fully booked well in advance of the fair."

Added Albert: "We were also particularly pleased to welcome special VIPS to Birr Game Fair, including the Italian Ambassador along with the The Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys, TD, as guests of the National Association of Regional Game Councils (NARGC) to perform the official opening ceremony."



Game fair Director Albert Titterington, and Tom O'Donnell and Des Crofton NARGC welcome to the Game Fair the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys, TD, as guests of the National Association of Regional Game Councils (NARGC) to Birr Game Fair, to perform the official opening ceremony.



Well known gun dealer and proprietor of Casale 2000 Ltd Francesco Morelli (left) shares a joke with Game Fair Director Albert Titterington and the Italian Ambassador (centre right) and Lord Rosse.

The sporting organisations had superbly interesting stands with the huge NARGC marquee being crowded throughout opening hours of the fair while the CAI marquee in its new location was a 'must see' stop for sportsmen and women. Both organisations sponsored events at the fair – NARGC the arena and clay shooting and CAI the Stickmaking Championships and some of the top terrier & lurcher prizes.

And Albert highlighted just some of the events which had kept the public enthralled: "Gundogs are always very popular and this year in the RED MILLS arena we had some tremendous competition in the International category with the

home team of the Republic of Ireland emerging as worthy winners - not only that but the outstandingly competitive spaniel section saw a record 38 dogs in contention."

In fact all competitions had record entries including the Irish Stickmaking Championships, the clay pigeon shooting which had three guns to be won plus many special class prizes for NARGC members and the terrier, lurcher and whippet events also drew fantastic entries possibly because they were the last chance to qualify for the prestigious RED MILLS Five Nations International Terrier & Lurcher Championships taking place in the main arena at the close of the fair.

Salmon & Woodcock Pavilion

The Salmon and Woodcock Pavilion had a good range of stands from fisheries, to sporting, artists and taxidermists and also major information stands from FISSTA (The Federation of Salmon & Sea Trout Anglers) and Inland Fisheries Ireland. Tuition in fly tying and casting was available through APGAI Ireland instructors including Glenda Powell, Arthur Greenwood and Peter O'Reilly.

Fine Food

The Fine Food festival at Birr had a fantastic mix of artisan food and drinks from all over Ireland and the UK. Centre stage was the Flogas Kitchen presided over by chef Emmett McCourt who demonstrated some fabulous rabbit, venison, game and fish dishes and also signed copies of his World No 1 Travel Cookery book Feast or Famine. Once again Peter Gott from Silfield Farm with his famous game and wild boar pies was the stand that most people simply couldn't pass without a nibble or a purchase.

AND something completely new for Birr Castle and The Game Fair – Ulster Scots Music by Chanter

This year the Living history village at Birr not only resounded from the sound of Viking war cries and the clash of sword and lance on shield of medieval jousting but also the haunting music of Ulster Scots group Chanter.



The Ulster Scots Group Chanter

This is part of an outreach programme by the Ulster Scots Agency to create a better understanding of the Ulster Scots history and culture throughout Ireland

Chanter was set up to play Scots, Irish, Ulster, Americana and new music. It takes its name from the tune making part of the bagpipes and the Ulster dialect word for singer.

The group was led by Mike Gaston on Guitar, vocals and Bodhran. Mike moved to Co Down from Aberdeenshire more than forty years ago, bringing with him a collection of Scots songs and a battered £5 guitar. He's developed his repertoire and "fettled a puckle sangs o his ain" since then. Mike has opened for Dougie McLean and for Tommy Sands. He has also introduced many international singer songwriting stars to Belfast audiences at the Belfast Nashville Songwriters Festival.

The finale of the fair is always the RED MILLS Five Nations Terrier & Lurcher Championships. Qualifiers for these two events take place throughout Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales throughout the year and the judging system is designed in order to cater for all types of dogs. Three judges in each event independently scrutinize and mark each dog out of 10 for four criteria : Condition; movements; fit for purpose and confirmation. As they can award more than one dog 10 points in any category and each of the dogs involved has championship status at one or more shows this leads to some tight results which are ultimately compiled by our Arena Director and Chief Steward. Normally Fair Director Albert Titterington checks the results and announces the winners but this year the pre announcement check was not made and after a perusal of the results it was found that three lurchers were almost 'too close to split' and it was decided there would be a joint award for the Lurcher Championship with Kirsty Harpur's Skylar joining Stuart Reid's Demo as joint champions with Peter Cummins Harry a very close Res Champion. Well done Kirsty on having a great day with Skylar being ROI Ch Lurcher; Winning the overall Game Fair Championships and then winning the Five Nations.



Five Nations RED MILLS Lurcher Champion Stuart Reid with Demo (Joint with Kirsty Harpur with Skylar) Reserve Champion Peter Cummins with Harry.

(photo: Deidre McCoy)



A red letter day for Kirsty Harpur with Skylar.

(photo Billy Harpur)



RED MILLS Five Nations Terrier Champion Ray Lawson John Hendricks with Young Sid.

(photo: Deidre McCoy)

While results of the Five Nations were being compiled Fair Director Albert Titterington and Kieran Young presented Margaret and John Mc Stay with the Colette Gannon Memorial Award for sportsmanship. As Albert said he couldn't think of two more sporting people or a better way to close another successful Great Game Fair of Ireland.



Kieran Young presents the Colette Gannon Memorial Award for Sportsmanship to Margaret & John McStay.

Closing another great fair Albert said "We usually see huge numbers of the public over two days of the Fair, and hundreds of exhibitors, organisers, acts etc stay for as long as a week in the area. If you add in the extra clamour from the public and rise in numbers this year, the extra footfall and spend for the local economy was substantial.

"The Birr Castle Game Fair is simply a magnet for locals and tourists alike, many of whom come especially from Europe and the US and we are grateful to Failte Ireland for their support."



Crowds thronged the aisles.



Fair Director presents John Lutton with the John McClelland Memorial Trophy as Stick Making Champion.



Philip Lawton's daughter Naomi present the Philip Lawton Memorial Shield for stick making.



Two gurus for the price of one! Cole and Keith Mathews.



The Keeper meets his nemesis the Victorian Poacher once again at Birr.



A great falconry display by John Carmichael of the NI School of Falconry.



The Castle at Birr was a fantastic backdrop for a jousting tournament.



Derek O'Byrne White and his Cochise team are always a popular attraction.



The HAI made a presentation to Game Fair Director David Wilkinson in appreciation of his work for hunting in Ireland.



Ferrets are popular with young and old.



Ian McConnell takes us back to the age of the flintlock.



Vikings, first came to Birr in 810 Ad, they were back complete with long ship.



Spectacular jousting action from the Knights of the North.



The Grallagh Harriers put on a very smart hound display.



The clay pigeon shoot was a huge success with record entries.



Another well filled aisle.

Some of the **Connolly's RED MILLS** SINCE 1908 sponsored winners at the Great Game Fairs of Ireland

Leading Irish equestrian and dog food manufacturers REDMILLS are major sponsors of international competitions and championships at the Great Game Fairs.

In 2015 at Shanes Castle, RED MILLS sponsored The Country sports in Action Arena; The INTERNATIONAL SPANIEL TEAM and all of the SPANIEL TESTS; The OVERALL GUNDOG AWARD; The Master Mc Grath INTERNATIONAL Lurcher Racing Challenge and the CARRIAGE DRIVING display. At Birr Castle REDMILLS are the SPONSORS of the INTERNATIONAL RETRIEVER and SPANIEL events on both days; THE OVERALL GUNDOG AWARD; The FIVE NATIONS INTERNATIONAL Lurcher Championships; The FIVE NATIONS INTERNATIONAL Terrier Championships and the CARRIAGE DRIVING display.



RED MILLS sponsored the Master McGrath International Lurcher Challenge at Shanes Castle



RED MILLS International Spaniel Winners at Shanes Castle.

Connolly's
RED MILLS
SINCE 1908

engage

PREMIUM COUNTRY DOG FOOD



STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME

www.engagedogfood.com

 /EngageDogFood



Buy online at www.TheGunstore.ie

THE
Gunstore.ie

AT Connolly's
RED MILLS
SINCE 1908



RED MILLS International Retriever Winners at Birr.



RED MILLS Spaniel Test Winners at Shanes Castle.



The RED MILLS top Gundog at Shanes Castle.



Top Overall RED MILLS Gundog was handled by Vicki Stanley from Wales.



The RED MILLS team are happy to discuss the best feeding regimes.



RED MILLS sponsored the Carriage Driving Championships.



Beechview Kennel Runs

www.kennelruns.com

Tel: (028) 29540183 Mob: 07887746511

**Pens Delivered & Erected Free
within N. Ireland**



ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED



Tel: 028 2954 0183 Mobile: 07887 746 511

Email: brian@kennelruns.com

www.kennelruns.com

9 Lisheegan Lane, Ballymoney BT53 7JZ

NOW STOCKING



Countrysports - making a real difference

The Irish Lurcher, Terrier, and Whippet Club Macmillan Charity Dog Show

What an event! The show exceeded all our expectations, when Mickey Quinn with the Irish Lurcher, Terrier and Whippet Club held a Charity Dog Show and Race day at Annaghmore Race Track in aid of the Macmillan Cancer Nurses.

This was the brainchild of Mickey

Quinn, along with his son Michael, Margaret McStay, Tom Barry, and Dessie Mackin, along and their brilliant team of helpers Maurice McDowell, Patsy McCoy and Nigel Quinn.

Because of the support from the good canine folk of Ireland and of course

Clive Richardson who allowed us to use Annaghmore Race track, combined with the hard work of Mickey and his team, the Macmillan Cancer Nurses received a cheque on the day for £1,200.

Huge congratulations to all concerned!



Some of the winners pictured at the show.



Cheque - Making the presentation in aid of Macmillan Cancer Nurses.

Willowbreeze Fly Fishing Club 'catch cash' for Heartbeat Trust

Willowbreeze Fly Fishing Club in Larne raised £730 for the Children's Heartbeat Trust on Sat 27th June at Raloo Fishery. The Club would like to thank all those who donated prizes, the Great Game Fairs of Ireland and DCAL for there continued support and Raloo Fishery for their kind hospitality in helping us run this event.



Another big boost for Macmillan Cancer Support



The All Ireland Lurcher, Terrier & Whippet Club, Charity Dog Show & Race Day on Sunday 31st May raised over £1200 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Well done everybody!

CANINE CLUB CASH FOR RANDALSTOWN BOY'S MOBILITY TRICYCLE

The Combined Canine Club of Ireland's dog show and raceday in July saw a large crowd of dog handlers and their families brave monsoon conditions to raise money for young Ronan Elliott from Randalstown who suffers from Cerebral Palsy.

The event was supported by a number of sponsors including Feedwell Dog Food (from Castlewellan); dog food distributor Martin Lavery from Randalstown and the Great Game Fairs of Ireland team.

Announcing their sponsorship of cash prizes for all the events, the award of qualifying events for the Game Fair of Birr and a donation to the fund, Irene Titterington, Game Fair Director said: "As I worked for several years with special needs children and their parents I personally was very happy to take the lead in our organisation's involvement with this project and I hope we can help further with the fund raising activities planned to give this very special boy the best start in life."

The group of lurcher and terrier enthusiasts held the event near Ballynahinch on ground kindly provided free of charge by the landowners, and were able to present all of the proceeds of £800 to help purchase a mobility tricycle for Ronan. (UPDATE We understand that the amount raised now stands at a staggering £2000! And the equipment is on order.

Ronan's mother Rachael who had

travelled from their Randalstown home to join in the fun, was delighted with the kindness which had been shown: "It has been amazing to see how so many people have given up their time to organise this event for Ronan. The money raised will help greatly in purchasing a mobility tricycle which will make such a difference in his life. Words cannot express how grateful we are for the generosity of so many doggie folk who have rallied to Ronan's cause. He has had a great time today, meeting so many people and of course their dogs and is really looking forward now to getting the tricycle."

Six year old Ronan was born with Cerebral Palsy which makes it difficult to do physical things like other children.

Rachael explains: "Ronan's arms and



It's thumbs up for Ronan! Ronan Elliott is pictured at the Combined Canine Clubs Raceday with his Mum Rachael, Irene Titterington (Great Game Fairs of Ireland) and in front are his Dad Alan and Maurice McDowell (Combined Canine Clubs)

legs are stiff and sometimes his legs cross over, making it difficult to walk, crawl, stand and move from his wheelchair. Ronan's trunk is weak, so it's difficult for him to sit and balance. The adapted tricycle will make a huge difference to his life."

Combined Canine Club present Forest Lodge with GAME FAIR memento

Over several years the Game Fair Directors in association with Linda and Sammy Bowers and the staff of Forest Lodge have facilitated the visit of a number of children from the school to the fair. Because of Linda and Sammy's interest in whippets these children are treated like the VIPs they are by the organisers of the Terrier, Whippet & Lurcher events with a number of special treats and awards. This year Tom and Leanne Barry arranged for a special photograph to be taken which will hang in Forest Lodge and remind them of the excellent day out they had at the fair at Shanes Castle.



Newtowncrommelin Charity Working Test

Richard Johnston writes that Blackiston-Houston Estates and the Labrador Retriever Club of NI teamed up on the 6th of June to run a charity working test in aid of the Alzheimer's Society NI. The test was organised by Derek Anderson, the gamekeeper at Alnarichard, Joe Morrison and myself and was a resounding success.

Blackiston-Houston Estates and the Labrador Retriever Club of NI teamed up on the 6th of June to run a charity working test in aid of the Alzheimer's Society NI. The test was organised by Derek Anderson, the gamekeeper at Alnarichard, Joe Morrison and myself and was a resounding success.

The grand sum of £1,000 was raised for the Alzheimer's Society. Competitors enjoyed a challenging working test across heather moorland and forestry and everyone enjoyed the generous hospitality of the catering team and the Skerries Inn.

The rugged terrain at Altnarichard allowed the judges to set up tests that challenged the dogs in many ways. The tested steadiness, heelwork, marking, handling and most of all, game finding (or dummy finding in this case!) abilities. These were well thought-out exercises that tested both the dog and handlers abilities.

Derek Anderson, Blackiston-Houston Estates and the LRCNI would like to thank all of those who helped on the day, who donated prizes and gave up their time to judge. There were a great many who helped and we would like to express our sincere thanks for their support.

A fantastic day was had by all and we will look forward to next year!



Presentation of a Cheque for £1000 to the Alzheimer's Society of NI L-R: Gamekeeper and organiser, Derek Anderson, Joe Morrison, John Wittchell, Richard Johnston, Desie Henry from Scottish Woodlands and the Alzheimer's Society NI.



Unclassified test award winners L-R Eddie Finn, Billy Lundy, Michael McKee, Richard Johnston, Stephen McKelvey, Peter Grant, Jonathan Walsh and Nigel Carville. 1st. Richard Johnston with "Breeze home to Shimnavale", 2nd. Billy Lundy with "Drumgoose Warlord", 3rd. Peter Grant with "Bonnetybush Alexander", 4th Johnathan Walsh with "Tullycurran Teal".



Novice test award winners L-R Eddie Finn, Richard Johnston, Michael McKee, Robert Neeson, Stephen McKelvey, Nigel Carville and Tommy McMinn. 1st. Robert Neeson with "Ballee Bella", 2nd. Tommy McMinn with "Apollobay razzmatazz", 3rd. Richard Johnston with "Breeze home to Shimnavale".



Open test award winners and Judges Nigel Carville, Michael McKee and Eddie Finn L-R John Barr Jnr, Richard Johnston, Eddie Finn, Michael McKee, Tadhg Kelly, Billy Lundy, Desie Henry, John Wittchell and Nigel Carville. 1st. Lundy with Int Ftch "The Newcam Boss", 2nd. Richard Johnston with Ir Ftch "Shimnavale Excalibur", 3rd. John Barr with it Ftch "Willowmount Regal Rose", 4th. Tadhg Kelly with FTW "Carrickview Holly".



Special prizes L-R Eddie Finn, Richard Johnston, Michael McKee, Stephen McKelvey, Derek Anderson, Peter Grant and Nigel Carville. Top scoring Countryside Alliance member – Peter Grant with "Bonnetybush Alexander", Top scoring BASC member - Richard Johnston with Ir Ftch "Shimnavale Excalibur".

COUNTRY CHAT

What's in a name as vet bills mount, umbrellas collapse and a shot proves less than classical.

The month of May 2015 will long be remembered for being a very expensive month for me. No sooner had I my wee purse opened to please an eager hand, than another hand shot out in my direction. By the time I reached the start of June I was literally scared to go out the door.

Standing outside the Europa Hotel in Belfast one day, struggling with my umbrella, a young man approached me: "I'm sorry to harass you mate," said he, "but I'm homeless and sleeping on the street, would you have a pound or two?" "The way things are going son," says I, "I'll soon be joining you." At that, he stubbed out a full length cigarette on the wall beside me, smiled and walked off. A couple of seconds later, my Tesco umbrella emblazoned with 'every little helps' collapsed, enclosing my head within. I knew the feeling!

I am forever telling those who will listen, mainly doggy owners, in a well-rehearsed and worn-out dog training spiel, that it is a good thing to encourage their pet to empty its food dish in a

matter of minutes. "With a dog that is trained to empty its food dish, you have your first red light, when things aren't right, if one day it doesn't touch its food," I would tell them, be it in person or on the phone. In fact, I have used that phrase so often, that the two kids in the early days would stand behind me making faces and mouthing the words.

I have a team of eight that I am very pleased with, but none of them are more precious to me than eight-year-old Tia the Hungarian Vizsla. Not only is she a good companion, but she is also an excellent all-rounder in the field. So, when 'she' walked away from her food, there wasn't just a red light on, it was a flashing red light!

I knew if I took her to the vets too soon, it would do a 'guessing act' with her on antibiotics and me down £50. But I couldn't take a chance with her obvious ill-health and against my better judgement I took her to the vets. They did put her on antibiotics and told me if she didn't improve to bring her back and they would do a blood test. And charged me £49. 87p.

The next time, when I lifted her unto the table at the surgery she was leaking fluid from her uterus. "When was she last in season?" "Back in March" I replied. "She has an infection in her womb and would need to be operated on straight away," the vet said. Tia was kept in overnight.

The next day they told me she couldn't go home because she was too ill, her body temperature was too low and they needed to keep her warm and on the drip. So she spent another night at the vets. On the third day when I phoned, the nurse told me she had improved a little, but her body temperature was still too low, they had her in a heated room wrapped in blankets and still on the drip and they would be a lot happier if she would take a little food.

The 'killer' is aftercare

Now then, born under the Aries birth sign, the sign of the ram, speaking out and ploughing in, is a burden I have to bear. Says I: "I am more than grateful for what you all have done for her and for looking after her so well, I'll be in just before lunch time to pick her up and take her home." It didn't work. I have discovered to my cost over the years that although veterinary consultation and medicine can be expensive, the real 'killer' is the after care. However, a week later and £500 lighter, Tia was back to her usual self, the only thing that curtailed my elation, was the cost of it all. But without doubt, Tia is a precious commodity in the Lewis kennels.

I remember back in 2013 on a moor in Perthshire, shooting walked-up grouse over the pointers, the two Germans and Tia the Vizsla. It was a productive morning for me, with two brace already in the bag, and each of the pointers playing a part at some stage throughout the morning.



The patient in her sick bed.

Sometime after lunch the three pointers had another find then, as so often is the case, they had to fan out in order to find where the grouse had moved.

Ceara the oldest German, moved off ever so slowly and a few minutes later froze solid on point, young Heidi at just under two years old played safe and backed Ceara. Tia ignored them both. I followed slowly behind her with the 20bore at the ready, and glancing back over my shoulder to the keeper I could see he was freaking out, gesturing frantically at Ceara. A good seventy yards away and in the opposite direction to the keeper and the two Germans, a covey of eight grouse lifted out of the heather, just in front of Tia and myself and I got a cracking left and right. That's Tia, time after time she will take you to wherever the game is, ignore her and you will definitely be made to look foolish.

Tia hit the drop zone

When shooting at Glennoo, a fast flying partridge crossed my front, right to left flight. Now it would be nice to say that I swung classically through on it, but I seem to have adopted some sort of oddball method of a shooting technique, as I point the muzzles where I predict the said bird will be when I pull the trigger. Anyway, I dropped it about a hundred yards away, Tia was on it in a flash, when she hit the drop zone she took off up the hill at speed, nose to the ground. Nearing the top, a partridge fluttered up in front of her, jumping high, she caught it and brought it back straight to hand.

I never bred from her because I had her x-rayed and her hips were not so good, it would not have been fair to potential puppy owners and it certainly would not have been fair to the welfare of the breed. Besides, as a result of her recent illness and operation, breeding from her is now immaterial as she has now been spayed, which of course is what I should have done in the first place.

The Vizsla breed is almost too affectionate at times towards their



Tia back to health, flanked by Heidi and Sally.

owner and are something of a paradox, being extremely sensitive on the one hand, but capable of being equally strong-willed on the other. Tia strikes me as being more suited to the house, living in close proximity with family members, as she can be very domineering with her kennel mates, especially the youngsters.

At present (June) she is still on sick leave and on 'light duties' so to speak, but My Goodness, it is good to have her back. She is not my number-one game finder though, four-year-old Heidi has that distinction, with young Sally moving up the ranks to equal or surpass even her, but the July grouse counts will be all the more fun, not to mention the forth-coming season, now that I have my companion and second-in-charge back in the team.

Finally; I was reading up on the Lewis surname one evening during the short days of winter past. The spelling of Lewis for reasons unknown, had been altered that many times, it is virtually impossible to keep track of

what they got up to, the name changing with every sin revealed or crime committed. Hardly surprising, when you learn that back in the late 1700s, a Louis was caught in his 'silks' frolicking about in the royal chambers.

Incredibly, the Lewis ancestry had at some time or other been honoured with a coat of arms, though I seriously doubt if it was awarded to them for royal favours, or indeed they actually retained it for any period of time, before flogging it at the medieval equivalent of a car boot sale. Favouring the motto, "Better to save face, than flee in disgrace," it is little wonder then, that they always turned up on the winning side and yet, with every skirmish lost or won, the names Louis, Lewes and Lewis crept along the Isles like Japanese Knotweed. Also, I was secretly hoping that somewhere along the way, an 'O' or a "Mac" preceded the name, hinting a wee touch of Irish blood or Scottish breeding, but not so, the origins of 'Lewis' is as Welsh as Snowdonia's national park!



SKINNER'S

Feel good factor for dogs

AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT IRELAND

Our dog foods are all specially formulated and nutritionally balanced to meet the energy requirements for dogs of all breeds. Our *Skinner's* range is suitable for all dogs and our *Field & Trial* range is a VAT-free range for working dogs.

We have many excellent stockists of our dog foods throughout Ireland.

For more information or details of stockists, please contact:

Mark Earney, Area Sales Manager on **07818 578774** or
Customer Services Department on **+44 (0)1379 384247**



Find us on Facebook
Follow us on Twitter



SKINNER'S
ALL YOUR DOG NEEDS

- ✓ NUTRITIONALLY BALANCED COMPLETE FOODS
- ✓ NO ARTIFICIAL ADDITIVES, FLAVOURINGS OR PRESERVATIVES
- ✓ HYPOALLERGENIC FOODS AVAILABLE IN BOTH RANGES
- ✓ SUITABLE FOR ALL BREEDS OF DOG
- ✓ COMPETITIVELY PRICED

Tel: +44 (0)1379 384247

Fax: +44 (0)1379 388143

email: info@skinnerpetfoods.co.uk

www.skinnerpetfoods.co.uk

Roger Skinner Ltd, The Mills, Stradbroke, Eye, Suffolk IP21 5HL

Terrier, Lurcher and Whippet Show Roundup

Dublin Working Terriers Club Dog show and Race Day 10th May (Tom Barry's Show)

Deep in the heart of the beautiful Co Down and on the outskirts of the picturesque village of Scarva, nestles the green landscapes of Sandy Heak's farm. With the smell of newly cut grass, this was the perfect venue for the Dublin Working Terriers Club dog show and race day.

Overall Show Champion and Best In Show: Dessie Mackin with Soda.

Racing: Master Mc Grath Qualifiers: Donal Smith with Prince and Gary Smith with Lola
The Sporting Whippet Club of NI Dog Show and Race day 17th May at Dunsilly Kennells, Antrim.

What a really nice relaxing day we had at The Sporting Whippet Club of NI Dog Show and Raceday. The craic was excellent, backed up with the largest crowd at Dunsilly since barbeque day last September. Some top class Whippets in the ring, all with one thing in mind, to qualify for Shanes Castle 5 Nations Whippet Championship.

Overall Best in Show: Janet Duke with Oscar

Reserve: Albert Ritchie with Jodie.

North Armagh Working Terrier Club Dog Show and Race Day Sunday 24th May (Breandan Coleman's Show)

The Meadows Equestrian Centre, Lurgan, Co Armagh is a centre of excellence for equestrianism and was the luxurious surroundings for the show. Families and trailers arrived in abundance and the weather was reasonably good for most of the day, but became very cold in the evening.

Overall Show Champion and Best In Show Ciaran Mc Evoy with Scooby

Reserve Overall Show Champion Davie Best with Harley

The All Ireland Lurcher, Terrier, and Whippet Club Charity Dog Show Sunday 31st May (Mickey Quinn's Show)

The show at Annaghmore race track in aid of the Macmillan Cancer Nurses exceeded all our expectations, despite heavy rain the night before.

Overall Show Champion and Best in Show Dessie Mackin with Cuchlannan Bounty

Reserve Davy Best with Penny

Master McGrath Qualifiers: Under 23 Joe Leonard with Pacey; Over 23 Michael McGrath with Chad

A cheque for £1,200 was presented to to Daphne Kilpatrick, Macmillan Cancer Nurses.
Gilford Lurcher, Terrier, Whippet Show and Raceday, at the NI Country Sports Fair Scarva House, Scarva, Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th June

Scarva Demense was an ideal setting for the NI Countrysports Fair, Dog Show and Raceday run by the Gilford Terrier and Lurcher Club. There were some really nice dogs but I was a bit disappointed with the very low turnout of Whippets but the Terrier and Lurchers made up for this.

Overall Champion and Best in Show went to: Glen Doherty with Diesel
Shannagh Working Terrier, Lurcher, and Whippet Show Sunday 14th June

Seaford near the village of Clough, Downpatrick, County Down was the venue and there was a big turnout at this show.

Overall Best in Show and Supreme Show Champion: Seamus Baird with Soldier

Master McGrath Qualifiers: Over 23 John Nangle with Rally; Under 23 Billy Craig with 007

A very successful Shannagh Show and congratulations to all concerned.

The Irish Game Fair & Fine Food Festival, Shanes Castle, Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th June

Shanes Castle Co Antrim was the venue for The Irish Game Fair and Flavour Fine Food Festival. Set in one of the most glorious, yet easy accessible regions of Northern Ireland, this Castle is steeped in history. Huge crowds of visitors from north and south of the border and further afield came to enjoy the perfect family day out.

In the canine country sports section, the highlight of the weekend on Saturday was the Master McGrath Championship, and on Sunday the Five Nations Whippet Championship. Some excitement around the doggie section on both days. Many thanks to Tom Barry and his wife Leanne and his brilliant team for a well run Dog Show and Race Day.

We had some craic at the ferret judging and racing arena. This brings a great buzz of excitement and laughter, very popular, and some good racing. Darren Moore and Graham Fyffe, you are experts in this field, and display a very high degree of sportsmanship, backed up with Stephen McGonigal's commentary.

John Nangle and his racing dog Kelly won the Master McGrath in glorious sunshine, and on Sunday the Overall Show Champion won by Nicky Robinson, while the Five Nations Whippet Championship was won by Leeroy McCullagh, and Champion Puppy by Dessie Mackin.

The Game Fair at Shanes Castle has impeccable credentials and attracts huge numbers of people to the region, delivering a timely boost to tourism and an opportunity for town and country to come together to

celebrate and enjoy the craic, along with some of our finest country sports and traditions.

Some of the top results:

Dessie Mackin won with his Champion Puppy

Nicky Robinson was Overall Show Champion and best in show with Barney.

John Nangle from County Carlow, won the Master McGrath with his winning dog Kelly.

Leeroy McCullagh won the 5 Nations Whippet Championship with Tizer

Reserve 5 Nations Whippet Championship Graham Fyffe with Bolt

Dog Show and Raceday in Rathnew, Co Wicklow, Sunday 5th July

As it was Charity Dog Show day down in the beautiful garden of Ireland, we were up with the dawn chorus at 5.15am. With our car loaded up, we headed down the motorway to Rathnew. There were no wrong turns this year, as David Dickenson and his good wife Marie had the venue well signposted.

The racing was a little different from what we would have up North and was a great bit of craic, creating laughter and excitement. I must say it was very relaxing to watch, and I really enjoyed this part of the show immensely. Well done to the Dunphy family who ran the racing to perfection.

Peter Cummins won Overall Show Champion and Best in show with his beautiful Lurcher Harry

Overall Whippet Champion: Ira Rodgers with Rocky

Overall Lurcher: Peter Cummins with Harry

Overall Terrier: Cullen McGrath with Harry

Overall Puppy Champion went to Karen Cummins with Ben

We cannot forget our sponsors including Albert Titterington who sponsored £50 for the Overall whippet and Alan Hunter Crosbie and Tracy Crosbie, who kindly donated the Glass engraved trophies, Frankie Sports in Wicklow Town for engraving the 'Art Dickenson Memorial Cup,' which was presented to the Champion Lurcher by Dorothy Dickenson, in memory of her late husband Arthur.

It is also nice to know that Wicklow Cancer Support Group will benefit from all our loyal Canine friends showing their pedigrees off on the day to the value of €1,333.

We all enjoyed ourselves and many thanks for the beautiful bouquet of flowers and silver plaque which was presented to me. I must say I really enjoyed judging at your show and I am already looking forward to next year's event.

Irish Game Fair & Fine Food Festival, Shanes Castle



1. Master McGrath Winner - John Nangle with Kelly.
2. The Master McGrath Lurcher Challenge - almost thirty of the McGrath family were on hand to cheer 'Kelly' over the finish line in a hotly contested race, which is the premier event for lurchers in the UK and Ireland.
3. The All Ireland Puppy Racing Champion - Gareth Young & Rachael Kane with Duchess.
4. The All Ireland Whippet Racing Champion - Susan & Earnie McCann with Bella.
5. The All Ireland U23" Elite Racing Champion - Finbar Leonard with Tracy.
6. The 5 Nations Whippet Championship Winner & Reserve - Leeroy McCullagh with Tizer & Graham Fyffe with Bo.
7. Dog Show and Raceday, Rathnew - Overall Show Champion Peter Cummins with Harry.

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM AROUND THE SHOWS



DWTC Show - Overall Show Champion Dessie Mackin with Soda.



Sporting Whippet Club Of NI - Best In Show & Reserve Best In Show Janet Duke with Oscar & Albert Ritchie with Jodie.



(Above) North Armagh Working Terrier Club Dog Show & Race Day - Overall Show Champion Ciaran McEvoy with Scooby.

Gilford Lurcher, Terrier, Whippet Show and Raceday, NI Country Sports Fair, Scarva

(Right) Overall Show Champion (Best In Show) Glen Doherty with Diesel.

(Below right) Overall Racing Champion Gary Smith with Finbelt.

(Below) David Downey Run the Ferret Showing & Racing Overall Winner Rose McCoy with Conker.



Obituary

Frankie Maguire

Maguire — Frankie, 86 years, died Friday 14 November, 2014 suddenly at his home in Glenfarne Village, County Leitrim. He leaves his wife, Stella; his two sons, two daughters, grandchildren; and many many close friends.

Born and raised in Glenfarne, Frankie always had a passion for animals and trained pointers and setters for shooting and trials. Frankie worked as a groundsman at Blacklion Golf Club, but continued on after his retirement. He was a keen traditional music player. He played the accordion and the fiddle and never missed a chance to share his talent. He played at functions and at Game shoot dinners.

Frankie was a very well respected dog trainer and he hunted with hounds and Terriers. For years, he attended dog shows, where he won numerous

awards. He was a terrier and gun dog judge in Ireland, North and South always taking his time to examine each dog thoroughly. Frankie was a gentleman both with those he met, and also with the many dogs he trained and owned. He was never hard on a dog and understood the importance of developing trust between handler and dog.

A funeral service was held on Sunday 16 November in his home town of Glenfarne, attended by his family, friends and sports representatives from all over Ireland. The Chapel and grounds outside were filled to capacity. He will be sadly missed by his many friends and remembered with love.

The Irish Sporting World has lost one of life's true gentlemen who attended shoots right up to his death. Rest in peace



The late Frankie Maguire

Your life was love and labour
Your love for your family true
You did your best for all of us
We will always remember you.

Margaret McStay

For a day out with a difference

CARNFUNNOCK Country Park

*Packed full of exciting and
unusual attractions*

To book or obtain prices and further information
please contact:

**Carnfunnock Country Park,
Coast Road, Ballygally,
Larne BT40 2QG**

Tel: 028 2827 0541

Email: carnfunnock@midandeantrim.gov.uk

Website: www.carnfunnock.co.uk





Congratulations to Mr Matty Lambden and FTCh Pettiswood Prince on achieving the Top Irish Bred Dog Award at the IKC Retriever Championship in Coolattin. Matty exclusively uses Nutts About Pets/SpeedRite dog food and recommends it as a quality product. FTCh Pettiswood Prince is now standing at Stud. Tel 086 8772944



Nutts Speedrite would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Martin Fitzgerald, Judge (2nd Left) and Mr. David O'Sullivan (4th left) both judges are current users of our products. Also in this picture is Mr. Ger Flannery, ROI Manager, tel (0)87 966 4663 (1st left) Mr Jimmy Teehan Sales Rep (Leinster) (0)87 331 3771 Middle, Mr Joe Fagan, Sales Rep (Connaught) (0)87 790 9606 (1st right) also missing from this photo is Mr Ger McKenna, Sales Rep (Munster) (0)87 1215167. **Nutts Speedrite** are the proud sponsors of the Working Spaniel Club of Ireland and the Ulster Gundog League Northern Ireland.

NUTTS SPEEDRITE MAIN SPONSORS FOR THE LUCHER, TERRIER AND WHIPPET SHOW AT BIRR GAME FAIR

Many congratulations to Miss Kirsty Harpur and Skylar from Castlederg on becoming Lurcher Champion, overall Show Champion and joint Five Nations Champion at Birr 2015. Skylar is solely fed on **Speedrite 28% Racer**. In this picture is Mr Basil Thompson, Managing Director, Mr Jimmy Teehan, Mr Joe Fagan and Mr Ger Flannery, Manager.



Contact:

Ger Flannery, Manager (ROI) on 087 9664663

Joe Fagan, Sales Representative (Connaught) on 087 7909606

Ger McKenna, Sales Representative (Munster) on 087 1215167

Jimmy Teehan, Sales Representative (Leinster) on 087 3313771

Head Office: 3 Golan Road, Omagh, Co Tyrone, BT79 7TJ on 048 82243999



about pets

about pets

- Nutritionally balanced** ✓
- Added vitamins and minerals** ✓
- No artificial colours or ingredients** ✓
- Recommended by breeders** ✓



SpeedRite Field & Trial

- High level of protein needed for energy** ✓
- Suitable for all breeds of hard working dogs** ✓
- Easy to digest** ✓
- Nutritionally balanced** ✓
- Recommended by Field & Trial professionals** ✓



SpeedRite Greyhound

- Proven winning formula** ✓
- Nutritionally balanced & high protein** ✓
- Enriched with vitamins and minerals for increased stamina & extra endurance** ✓
- High quality ingredients ensuring a highly digestible & palatable diet** ✓
- Recommended by greyhound professionals** ✓



Follow us on

facebook

/NuttsAboutPets

nuttsaboutpets
www. .com



Nutts About Pets (NI Head Office)
2 Golan Road, Omagh, Co. Tyrone, BT79 7TJ
Tel: +44 (0)2882 243 999
Email: sales@nuttsaboutpets.com
(ROI Branch) Church Street, Banagher, Co. Offaly
Tel: +353 (0)879 664 663

The Irish Working Terrier Federation

- championing the right to practise what they love



After a few years in existence, the Irish Working Terrier Federation (IWTF) can reflect with satisfaction on a great deal of work done, but there are substantial challenges ahead and a lot of hard graft still required.

When speaking to me during the summer, Chairman Wesley Cole pointed out many of the positive things about the IWTF, including the fact the organisation is steadily growing in numbers, enjoys a dedicated membership and has established close links with many organisations. Some of the negative things include a misinformed media and unbudging anti-hunting groups who don't believe in the old adage of 'Live and let live.'

The IWTF has blossomed from a very small beginning. In May 2012 Barrie Wade got together with several terrier-men during the weekend of the Ballywalter Game Fair in County Down, and chatted about the possibility and necessity of establishing an organisation which would represent their interests. The matter was discussed again the following month during a RISE (Rural Ireland Says Enough) meeting in Cork, and a group of about ten terrier-men present at the meeting decided to found the IWTF. Some of their aims included setting out a code of conduct, and promoting and protecting legitimate terrier work in Ireland.

The IWTF now has a very

impressive website, and year on year they have a significant presence at the Irish Game Fair & Fine Food Festival at Shanes Castle, Antrim, and at the Irish Game and Country Fair at Birr Castle, Offaly.

Wesley told me that people sometimes assume erroneous things about terrier work. "What it is in fact," he said "is a humane form of pest control. Foxes can cause a considerable amount of damage on farms, and new born lambs are easy targets for these predators. It is because of this threat to farm animals that fox population control becomes an unavoidable part of rural life. Many members of the public unfortunately don't see this reality and are labouring under a misapprehension, which is a Disney, childish view of nature. As a result, they verbally attack farmers and hunters, calling them cruel; when in fact hunters are no more cruel than any other member of society and are merely dealing with a necessary reality of farm-life."

Farmers often see the devastation which foxes can wreak upon their livestock. For example, there was an article last January in the Farmer's

Journal which related the story of a Wexford farmer who spotted a fox with one of his neighbour's lambs in its mouth. 'My neighbour lives away from the farm,' said the farmer, 'so I usually check the sheep for him. When I was there on Saturday, I caught the flash of an eye with my lamp and saw a fox carrying the dead lamb. I took careful aim and took the fox with a shot to the neck. This is a strong area for sheep and dogs have done a lot of damage, but I see foxes around as well. Some people think foxes aren't doing any harm but this is proof. My neighbour was lucky that he only lost one lamb.'

Another problem is urban foxes and several members of IWTF have received calls from people living in suburban areas who want to get rid of this nuisance. "The urban fox sometimes plays havoc in people's gardens, including damaging lawns. Foxes can be attracted by the presence of invertebrate turf pests such as leatherjackets and chafers in lawns. They sometimes uproot flower beds and vegetable patches because they are establishing an earth, burying food, or helping themselves to fruit and vegetables," he added.



Some fine terriers from a recent show.

Toxocariasis is the most common disease which foxes are likely to transmit to man

Urban foxes can also cause illness in pets and people. They can carry a range of parasites and diseases which affect the health of domestic pets and people. They can harbour numerous canine diseases which can be injurious to your dog. Toxocariasis is the most common disease which foxes are likely to transmit to man, via microscopic toxocara eggs which can remain infective in the soil for two to four years after the faeces has disappeared. The eggs have sticky shells which adhere to fingers and clothing and humans become infected by accidentally swallowing the eggs. Because they tend to put dirty fingers and toys in their mouths crawling babies and toddlers are most at risk. In the UK about 100 new cases of Toxocariasis are diagnosed each year. The symptoms of this disease are unpleasant and difficult to treat and include stomach upset and pain, headache, sore throat, wheezing and listlessness. It can also cause blindness. Domestic cats and dogs are also prone to this affliction. Foxes are susceptible to Weil's disease which is a potentially life threatening condition and can be passed on to domestic pets and humans via contact with their urine. Foxes can pass mange on to dogs. If the opportunity arises foxes will kill small domestic pets such as kittens, guinea pigs, birds and rabbits.

Councils in Britain advise the public to refrain from feeding urban foxes. 'It is very important,' said one English County Council, 'that no attempt is made to try to tame foxes, to encourage them to feed from the hand or to encourage them close or into houses using food. This is only likely to cause problems. Urban foxes are wild animals and should be treated as such.' The Council pointed out that some people regard urban foxes as a nuisance, 'especially if they occupy a den under a building or undertake certain activities too close for comfort.

Complaints include fouling, digging up of lawns or flower beds, and causing a disturbance by barking at night.'

A third of their diet is from farm livestock

It is interesting to read about the problem of pests in other countries. For example, the company Animal Control Technologies Australia (ACTA) specialises in the control of a number of pest animals including foxes, wild dogs, feral pigs, rabbits, mice and rats. The European fox was introduced to Australia in the 1870s for hunting purposes and today foxes are widespread in the country. Foxes prey on many species of Australian native wildlife including birds, small mammals and reptiles. ACTA says that effective fox control has been shown 'to reduce the extinction pressure and to allow population recovery.' ACTA also states that 'serious economic damage results from fox predation on farm livestock, including lambs, calves, poultry, water fowl and goats. With a typical fox density of about 4 foxes per 400 hectares (1000 acres), each fox will eat about 400 grams a night, or a little over a tenth of a tonne of food in a year. Overall, about a third of this diet is from farm livestock, a third from pest vertebrates like rabbits and mice, and a third from wildlife.'

Wesley Cole told me that the IWTF has a number of objectives, including: "Promoting the best, most humane and efficient practices in relation to the use of working terriers for pest control purposes; improving public awareness of the manner in which properly conducted terrier work is carried out; encouraging new participants to join a recognised working terrier club and learn from more experienced members; unifying the working terrier clubs under one umbrella organisation and providing a single reference point and centre of excellence on matters relating to terrier work; countering the activities

of those who by their actions would bring terrier work into disrepute; protecting both the working terrier and its owner from harmful legislation."

When the IWTF was formed the primary idea was to protect terrier work and counter the negativity frequently thrown at it. At the time, the founding members were also concerned about upcoming Government legislation which could be a threat to terrier work. During the RISE meeting in Cork, the Chairman of the Irish Foot Harriers Association (IFHA), John Flannery, gave an emotional, determined speech during which he pledged the strong support of the IFHA to the IWTF. On the 24th of September 2012 the IWTF received written support from the IFHA. Two months later they received written support from Countryside Alliance Ireland. The winter of 2012 was an anxious time for the IWTF as the government prepared its Animal Health and Welfare Bill. Thankfully, as it transpired all the anti-hunting amendments were voted down by an enormous majority.

There are many hunting people out there who don't wish to be proactive and would rather bury their heads in the sand and do nothing. The threats to the sports we love are too large to go along with such an attitude. The hardworking committee of the IWTF knows that it will have to persistently fight against the negative misinformation which is regularly entering the public domain. The people peddling this misinformation want to do away with all fieldsports including fishing, shooting and foxhunting. No one is dictating to these people the way they should live; but unfortunately they wish to dictate to us what we can or cannot do. Many of them would consider themselves liberal, but in fact their attitude is illiberal. It is also a skewed vision of the world as it really is, a world where the need for pest control will always remain.



"DATATAG STOPS THEFT"

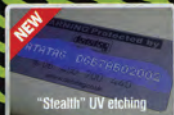
The No.1 Theft Deterrent for your Outboard Motors

All NEW & Improved Electronic Security Identification System for Outboard Motors

- All NEW Datatag technology
- NEW "Stealth" UV etching technology
- NEW Ultra destruct warning label with QR Code
- NEW Unique electronic transponder
- NEW Datadots®
- NEW Secured by Design (Police preferred specification)

Simple DIY installation with full instructions
Suitable for all type of outboard motors

A lifetime's protection for just one low
cost with NO monthly charges or fees.



RLS Boats Contact: River Lake and Sea,
58 Coleraine Road, Portrush BT56 8HN
E: info@riverlakeandsea.com www.riverlakeandsea.com
Tel: +44 (0) 77 25-144 784 or +44 (0) 28 708 250 67



A.A.MONTEITH & SONS

Registered Firearms Dealers

One Of The Largest Selections of Firearms in Northern Ireland

NEW SAKO A7 ROUGHTECH RANGE
AVAILABLE AT A.A.MONTEITH & SONS

**sako A7
ROUGHTECH**



PRO STAINLESS RRP 1580.00



PRO BLUE RRP 1420.00



RANGE RRP 1440.00

A.A.Monteith & Sons, Urbalshinny Sporting Lodge, 15a Urbalshinny
Road, Beragh, Omagh, Co. Tryone, BT79 0TP, Northern Ireland

Telephone & Fax: 02880758395
www.aamonteith.co.uk

Mobile: 07850260731
email: sales@aamonteith.co.uk

J.M.K Quads



☎ 028 406 29155 048 406 29155

Authorised Dealer

SALES | SERVICE | REPAIRS



- Special offer on Suzuki LT-F 250cc £3150 + VAT
- On-Site servicing £99 including parts and labour
- 0% Finance on New Polaris
- Over 150 used quads in stock to suit all needs fully serviced and guaranteed.
- Full range of attachments, sprayers, trailers, toppers, graders, rollers carrier boxes and much more.

85 Ballynanny Road, Banbridge BT32 4LQ
sales@jmkquads.co.uk www.jmkquads.co.uk

Ireland & UK Kennels

dog kennels, cat shelters and rabbit hutches

Supplying quality plastic Dog Kennels,
Rabbit Hutches & Cat Homes for over 12 years



The 'SNUGS' range of products are manufactured in Britain to a high quality, due to the type of material used this product will last for years if treated well, unlike its wooden counterparts these products will not rot, give splinters, leak or fall apart at the seams, coupled with the range of colours available, what caring pet owner wouldn't want to own one!

Homes for Cats

- Cat Palaces
- Cat Shelters

Homes for Dogs

- Large Dog Kennels
- Small Dog Kennels

Homes for Rabbits

- Rabbit Hutches
Length 42" Width 18"
Weight 12Kg



Large Dog Kennel
Length 31" Width 31"
Height 30" Weight 15Kg



Small Dog Kennel
Length 28" Width 24"
Height 26" Weight 6.5Kg



Cat Palace
Length 16.75" Width 15.75"
Height 15.75" Weight 5Kg



Cat Shelter
Length 22" Width 16"
Height 16" Weight 5Kg



+44 (0)7899 291 701 info@irelandandukkennels.co.uk
www.irelandandukkennels.co.uk

Obituary

Bob Garvan

When a life is most remembered for its actions, thoughts and deeds, then it is a sure sign of a life lived with great fulfilment and pride. Such were the sentiments of the great throng of people who gathered to celebrate the life of Bob Garvan at his funeral in Bangor, after he passed away peacefully on 24th February 2015, aged ninety-five years.

Wherever great Sporting Estates are discussed, then Clandeboye comes high on the list, and shooting on that estate is synonymous with the name Bob Garvan. He was responsible for the rearing of many thousands of game birds annually and shoot days were of an era when the sporting elite visited Clandeboye to enjoy shooting of unique quality.

His contribution to the gundog world, and in particular to the Spaniel fraternity was of the highest order. Not only was he a keen competitor, but through his influence and organising ability, many Spaniel trials were held in Clandeboye, a tradition which continues to this day under his son Barry. Bob was a member of many societies, but held a particular affinity for the Antrim and Down and North of Ireland Spaniel Clubs. Such was the reputation of Bob Garvan and Clandeboye that the British Spaniel Championships were held there in 1962 and 1992. Bob also hosted and shot at the Irish Championships in 1989 and 1992. This is a record that no other estate or gamekeeper can match in Ireland.

Bob also loved training and running spaniels, and he won many awards, and made up FTCh Breckonhill Brave at Castleward in 1956. He subsequently competed in the British Championship at Grimthorpe, Lincolnshire with this dog and gained a creditable Diploma of Merit.

Bob's skills in Judging were also much in demand, and he was frequently invited by many societies to deploy his skills. He judged the Irish Spaniel Championship with Scotsman Denis



The late Bob Garvan.

Douglas in 1988. Bob was also a legendary shot at any quarry, and he was frequently to be seen at trials when game on the ground ensured the smooth progress of events. He had an unusual shooting action – having lost part of his index finger, he used the middle finger of his right hand to engage the trigger on his trusty twelve bore – and he rarely missed.

Many were the Committee meetings of the Antrim and Down at Bob's beautiful cottage on the Clandeboye Estate, and this venue was a veritable shrine for everything good in the countryside. Bob loved his environment, was of the old style and tradition, and took great pride in his game, wildlife, his expansive vegetable garden and his prolific collection of poultry and wildfowl.

Bob Garvan was born and brought up in Terrydoo, Limavady and he was

one of five children. As with a lot of his contemporaries, he enlisted in the Armed Forces with the Royal Air Force at the outbreak of war in 1939. Some of his war was spent in India, where his duties were as a Despatch Rider. Bob confided to his family that this period of his life instilled in him a sense of duty, which taught him many life skills, which were evident in the conduct of the rest of his long life. After demobilisation, Bob found it difficult to settle, and after employment in agriculture, and several years as a bus driver for Manchester Corporation, he returned to Northern Ireland in 1953 with his wife Marjorie and small family to take up the position of Gamekeeper in Clandeboye. He retained and enhanced this position until his retirement, The work was hard, and involved long hours, but Bob enjoyed every minute of it and often quoted one

of his favourite remarks, inherited from his father "hard work is never easy in a lazy body."

One of Bob Garvan's favourite sayings, and quoted by his daughter at his funeral, sums up his work ethic beautifully:

Time waits for no man
It just passes by
And rolls ever onward
Like the clouds in the sky.

Bob Garvan will be sorely missed. He is survived by his children Barry, Roger, Robbie, and Christine and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. His wife Marjorie passed away in November 2007, He has left behind a legacy as a great father, country sportsman and lover and supporter of good working dogs. His record may never be equalled !

I would like to express my gratitude to the Garvan family and Ken Lindsay for their help in the compilation of this obituary.

Peter Smith *Bob with one of his springer spaniels.*



Shooting packages available for the 2015/16 season

• **Goose & Duck Flights • Rough shooting/driven days • Stalking**
Call for prices for Pheasant and Partridge poults delivered nationwide.
Please telephone 07938 214368 Email ngmcml@aol.com

Diamond Fifty for the Labrador Retriever Club of NI

Diamond celebrations are the order of the day as the 'Lab Club' celebrates fifty glorious years of Shows and Field Trials. In 1965, field trials in particular were still in a state of relative infancy compared to some of the sophisticated "walked up" events which we see in the UK today.

Nevertheless, a hard core of enthusiasts were determined not to be outdone and formed the Labrador Retriever Club of Northern Ireland to further the development of the breed.

Examination of historical documents immediately reveal a number of strategic differences in the modus operandi of the LRCNI then and now. The show and working sections worked very closely together, and the work of the Club was supervised by a very high powered executive committee. A Show card, including a Field Trial section, from April 1972 reveals Leslie Mackie as President, a link which still exists today, and also such luminaries as The Duke of Abercorn, Ruth Tennison, Lady Algeo, Hon G Annesley, and Colonel Lindsay as Vice Presidents. The Secretary was the eponymous Albert Kilpatrick, a name still revered today, and who is credited with laying many of the foundations for the success of LRCNI through the years.

The Field Trial section, whilst dominated by Albert Kilpatrick, also had some stalwarts whose names resonate with today's sport and they include – Margaret Glossop, Sam Jennett, Jack Skelly, and Bert Thompson. A Field Trial card for a stake in November 1973 at Carnagh, Keady, shows Judges B Blossom, H McTier, B Stuart, and W G McCormick. The result was - 1st Bertie Thompson with Ulstare Shane, 2nd Barney Lunt with Danbriars Black Gem, 3rd Major Tom Patterson with Craighorn Mist

A number of things are evident – the

Club closely linked both Show and Field Trial activities. Support is evident from UK participants, mainly Scotland for FT entries and sometimes exclusively for Judges. The gene pool for breeding was very small, but was improved by pioneers such as Sam Jennett and Bert Thompson, probably as a result of their frequent visits to see new stock at the IGL Championship. There was great input from the Republic of Ireland, and a two way process of co-operation which is sadly lacking today.

The LRCNI has always been progressive. The weekly spring and summer training classes are invaluable for beginners and experienced handlers alike, and continue to foster a good "attitude" towards dog and Club. It is hoped that organisations like the Lab Club will continue to put the Breed first, and ignore personalities who should be given much less priority. Those who have been prominent along the way include, Albert Kilpatrick, Bert Thompson, Jack Skelly, Sam Jennett, Frances Doherty, Frank and Mary Hughes, Tony Kent, Martin and Pamela Rush and Billy Harper.

Many events have taken place to celebrate the first fifty years, and they have been very successful. The LRCNI marked their Diamond celebrations with a commemorative working test in the wonderful setting of Clondeboy Estate in Bangor, by kind permission of the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava and with great support from Barry and Peggy Garvin. The test was very much enjoyed by competitors and spectators

alike. The weather was kind, a barbecue was laid on with friends old and new enjoying each other's company and camaraderie. It was heartening to see a many new competitors, including young Joseph Jeffrey, who won the best newcomer award. The newcomers and the young will be the future of the sport over the next fifty years and require encouragement and investment.

The test produced a record entry of eighty-five dogs in three Classes and the day was much enjoyed by all who attended. The Committee would like to record their thanks to all who supported the event by attending, taking entries, judging, throwing dummies, catering and generally helping out and also thank the generosity of sponsors including Feedwell, Sporting Saint, Irish Country Sports and Country Life and Earlswood Veterinary hospital.

The Committee put in a great effort behind the scenes and deserve support from everyone as we enter a next era in the life of LRCNI. Thanks to the Field Trial boys - Roy Griffin, Joe Morrison, Richard Johnston, Tommy McMinn, Stephen McKelvey, Bill Morrison – for running this event. We'll look forward to the next one!

So a good fifty years and here's looking to the next fifty. With renewed energy and a progressive and hard working Committee, the Lab Club and all of its members should look forward with confidence and enjoy the events, friendship and the companionship of their trusted Labrador Retrievers. Well done to everyone concerned!



1



2



3



4



5



6



Diamond 50 - The Results

1. **Unclassified Test** - Phillip Turner - Winner with "Shangarrilyn Jude", Billy Lundy - 2nd with "Drumgoose Warlord", Johnny Walsh - 3rd with "Tullycurran Teal", John Wilson - 4th with "Lynjohnwil Magic Meg".

2. **Novice Test** - With Joe Morrison is Gerard McKay, Winner with "Dungannon Star", other results we Tommy McMinn - 2nd in novice test with "Apollabay razzmatazz", Michael Corrr - 3rd in novice test with "Drumgoose Alonso", Keiron Coey - 4th in novice test with "Butterlump Wigeon."

3. **Open Test** - Open test award winners and judges.

L-R: Roy Griffin, Martin Rush, Billy Lundy, Declan Boyle, John Barr, Richard Johnston and Roy Rankin.

4. **Top overall** - 1st and top overall scoring dog across all three tests - John Barr with Ir FTCh Willowount Regal Rose, 2nd - Billy Lundy with Int FTCh The Newcam Boss, 3rd - Richard Johnston with Ir FTCh Shinnavale Excalibur, 4th - Declan Boyle with Ir FTCh Millar McDuff.

5. **Top marking dog** - Thomas Brady - winner of the best marking dog award with "Morayglen Munro of Glenanne" and a BVA eye test sponsored by Earlswood Veterinary Hospital.

6. **Novice Test Winner** - Gerard McKay with "Dungannon Star."

7. **Best newcomer** - Joseph Jeffrey with "Hermes Moonshine."

Outstanding Gundogs in Belgium

Having Judged a very successful trial on partridge last autumn for Club De Gouden Jachthoorn, Tommy Hughes and I were delighted to be invited by charismatic Club Chairman Fille Exelmans and his Board to judge a Working Test to be held on 16/17 May 2015 in Vichem, about 50 kms south east of Brussels.

Also judging from England were Jim Gale, who has judged the IGL Championship on a couple of occasions, Phil Allen, and also Fille Exelmans. To make the occasion even more of a family party, the Club also invited the wives of the Judges, and the hospitality we received was absolutely outstanding.

This gundog organisation is unique in our experience, as it has its own Clubhouse located in a modern building in the picturesque town of Vichem. The Clubhouse is replete with a bar, restaurant, dispensary, and seating for over two hundred, thereby catering for all member needs. In addition there are adjacent many acres of training grounds with specially constructed jumps, ponds, rivers and cover crops to meet all training needs. Truly this creates a unique atmosphere, greatly appreciated by all members, and supported as a club properly should be.

The Saturday consisted of five stands

allocated a single judge, covering every imaginable type of retrieve, and competitors walked over a large area safari style until all ninety-four dogs had been seen. The classes included Beginners, Novice and Open.

The Sunday was a Team event of eighteen teams of three dogs over each class, and there were representatives from Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Italy and France. This was a fun day and greatly enjoyed by all involved.

For both days lunch and refreshment was provided by Club catering personnel who worked tirelessly to ensure that hospitality was not spared, and the tasty Belgian white beer went down a treat.

In all events we had an eclectic mix of labs, goldens, flatcoats, and the odd duck toller just for good measure. The standard overall was good, as results at UK based International Tests have shown, these handlers and dogs can compete at the highest level and win.

The Results were:

Beginner - Hanneke Kruizinga with Shangarrilyn Alice
Novice - Barbara Walzel with Luca vom Keien Fenn
Open - Volker Hermann with Starcreek Infinity
Team - Team Scaffer Axel

The whole event was run in a most sporting manner, the hospitality for everyone superb, and the organisation excellent. Not one dissenting voice was heard over the two days. We in the UK and Ireland can learn much from our Belgian friends.

Returning home on the Monday, one could not help but reflect on the professionalism of De Gouden Jachthoorn Club, and the effectiveness of the Organisation Board under the tireless Fille Exelmans. It was an absolute privilege to be invited and for us as Judges to see the outstanding work being done to improve all retrieving breeds by our European colleagues.



The Girl Power team in their uniforms.

FTCH Shimnavale Excalibur at stud

Winner of 5 trials and member of
winning UK team at Chatsworth
and Irish CLA team in 2013.



Hips: 3 & 3 • Elbows: 0
Clear eye certificate • PRA, CNM and EIC clear

For further information contact Richard on
07715 039 956 or rickyjohnst@hotmail
or visit
www.shimnavalegundogs.wordpress.com



Shotguns – Rifles – Air Rifles –
Pistols – Ammunition – Reloading
and Accessories



44 Union Street, Lurgan, Craigavon, BT66 8EB
Tel: 028 3834 3021
Fax: 028 3832 8580
Web: www.mckerr.co.uk



SPECIALIST
PHOTOGRAPHIC
RETAILERS

Over 180 years of trusted photographic experience. shop online for
our wide range of specialist products including:

Astroscopes • Telescopes • Binoculars • Magnifiers • Filters
Digital Cameras • Lenses • Digital Accessories • Film

Tel: 02890 326992

Shop online at: www.blackandlizards.com

Find us on Twitter: @BLPhotographic

Visit us at: 8 Wellington Place, Belfast

black & lizards
optometrists

www.blackandlizards.com

Venture Sports

Fishing - Camping - Outdoor - Shooting Accessories

Fishing Advice, Local Clubs and Permit
information Boat Hire and Ghillie.

71 Glaslough St
Monaghan.

Tel 047 81495

Mob 086 8351378





1



3



5



7



2



4



6

1. Relaxation outside the Clubhouse.
2. The Five Judges
3. Waiting for the results
4. Winners of the Club Competition
5. Open Winners
6. Novice Winners
7. Beginner Winners

All photographs courtesy of Marc Van Ryne



Carnkenny Game Farm

Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone

For Sale

7 weeks old pheasant poults

12 weeks old partridge poults

4-6 weeks old ducks

Day old pheasants, partridge & ducks

Adult Cock & Hen Pheasants -

Ready from October

Delivery arranged country wide on reasonable orders

Tel: 0861082814 or

0044 7729309562 or 00447762779731

Email: carnkennygamefarm@outlook.com

AT STUD



FTW:
Waysgreen Apollo

Hips: Single Digit

Elbows: 0-0

CPRA/CNM: Clear

Contact
07710 877 899

FED EXCLUSIVELY ON

Connolly's
RED MILLS
SINCE 1908



www.moyleshoot.co.uk

Bookings are now being taken at our Game Farm for the 2016/17 season for: quality eggs,
chicks & poults in Grey & French partridge 9 different pheasant strains
Mallard growers

All poults are delivered with a health certificate

Also bookings are being taken now for the Shoot for the 2015/16 Season
for full driven days, mini driven days and dog training days.

Tel. 07590 198395



Art & Antiques

An ancient firearm, which is believed to have been fired at both the Battle of the Boyne and the Siege of Derry has been sold for £20,000 in a Belfast auction room.



The musket was believed to be used at the Battle of the Boyne and the Siege of Derry made £20,000 (sold at Ross's)

The 17th century musket, which featured several years ago in a peace gesture between the late Dr Ian Paisley, when he was First Minister in Northern Ireland and the then Taoiseach of the Irish Republic Bertie Ahern, went to an anonymous buyer. And while there is said to be little likelihood of the weapon being put on public display I have a sneaking suspicion it will remain in Northern Ireland.

Auctioneer Daniel Clarke, of ROSS'S AUCTION who sold Lot 400 – that was where it stood in the catalogue – told me: “Yes, it is not every day we get something like this coming under the hammer but it certainly attracted quite a lot of interest. Our sales room was crowded for the occasion, although I must say we also had the BBC Bargain Hunt programme filming with us at the time. And personalities like Tim Wonnacott also attracted a lot of public attention. The gun was sold in a matter of seconds and it drew enormous interest from collectors and historians across Ireland and further afield. A carbine musket, it would have been commissioned by a Dragoon officer and is only one of a handful of weapons, bearing the cipher of James II, to have survived from that era. We understand it has been in the possession of the same

family for 300 years and would have been used beyond 1690 after which it was ‘mothballed’ before coming to public attention again in the symbolic ‘peace’ gesture between Dr. Paisley and Mr Ahern when they met several years ago at the site of the Battle of the Boyne in Co Meath.”

The musket was made in the Tower of London in 1685 by George Fisher, gunmaker to King James II of England.

After its headline grabbing appearance the privately owned weapon was returned to its Co Antrim owner in 2011.

Mr Clarke added: “We believed it would fetch somewhere from £15,000 to £25,000. The gavel came down in the middle of the estimates and we were quite happy about that. We were quite pleased to have the BARGAIN HUNT team back with us again. It is hard to believe it is 11 years since they were last with us. The show will, I understand be shown in

the autumn.”

Turning to the current auction scene, Mr Clarke said: “We have certainly seen signs of an upturn during the past few months and it is to be welcomed. There is also evidence of much better paintings coming to sale in recent days, particularly Irish paintings and there is a strong interest too in silver lots. There continues to be a renewed interest in jewellery both in our online and room



Sir William Orpen's 'Gladys Cooper' which sold for €175,000 sold at Whytes)

sales and that interest is coming from all generations. We have also seen a marked recovery in furniture lots and hopefully this will increase as there is

more movement on the housing scene than there was for some time. In fact we are clearing more houses than ever and this again is evidence of this movement.

Our on line sales have been quite successful to date but we are still holding fifty weekly sales each year, and hope to be doing so for the foreseeable future."

WHYTE'S LEAD THE WAY

The Irish art market has shown signs it is bouncing back again and this was true at WHYTE'S sale towards the end of May when some fine prices were achieved. There were several highlights at this sale including Sir William Orpen's 'Gladys Cooper' which sold for €175,000 against a low estimate of €80,000 and a Sir John Lavery, 'A Bacchante,' 1910 which made €135,000 against a high estimate of €80,000 and a Sir John Lavery, 'A Bacchante, 1910 which made €135,000 against a high estimate of €80,000 euros. Other notable results included: Paul Henry, 'Maam Valley' €52,000; Patrick Swift, 'Girl in a garden,' €20,000; Walter Frederick Osborne, 'Near St Patrick's Close, Dublin,' €18,000 and Donald Teskey, 'Waters Edge,' €16,000. Overall the auction grossed just under one million euros and 85pc of the lots on offer found new homes.

Ian Whyte tells me: "This was our best start to the year since 2008, with five successful auctions in a row and sales rates of 75% to 92%, averaging 80%. Collector confidence is back and prices are beginning to rise again. Our biggest problem is getting artworks at the top end of the scale from the likes of Yeats, Orpen, Lavery, Henry and so on. We have no difficulty in selling pictures in the over €50,000 price bracket."

In June, WHYTE'S produced their 'Eclectic Collector' sale which brought a wide range of lots including silver, coins, banknotes, picture postcards, cigarette cards, toys, camera, advertising posters and entertainment and sporting memorabilia to a discerning public.

Adds Ian: "The collection of postcards, lotted in counties and towns, made over €22,000 and a collection of coins, initially valued at €5,000 to €7,000 and when lotted, estimated at €15,000 to €20,000 in the sale



Sir John Lavery, 'A Bacchante,' which made €135,000 against a high estimate of €80,000 (sold at Whytes)



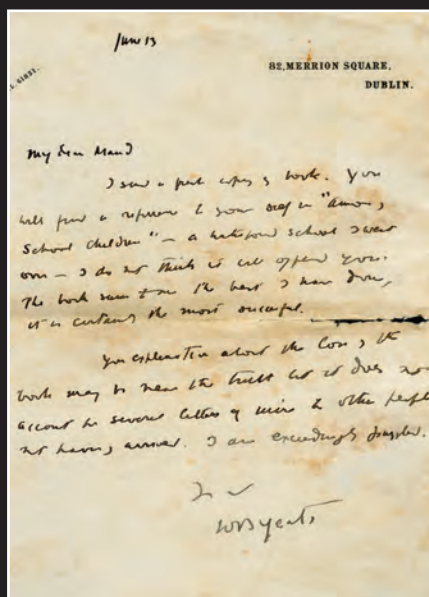
Coins collected by the grandfather of a great-uncle of the seller were collected mainly in the 1880s and 1890s (sold by Adams for over €40,000)



A Jack Butler Yeats oil, 'Roundstone, Connemara' went at €58,000 (sold by Adams)

catalogue, made over €40,000 thanks to spirited bidding from British and American collectors and dealers who had specially travelled to the sale-room. Some 400 bidders registered on line from North America, Europe, Australia, China, Japan, UAE and Qatar, but most of the lots were sold in the room, which included dealers and collectors from Ireland, UK and USA." One particular lot, the GAA Football 'Virtual championship of All Ireland' 1895 and Leinster championship 1895 gold medals attracted strong interest and came under the hammer at €7,200.

Among the bank notes a Currency Commission 'Lady Lavery' one hundred pounds note sold for €3,600; a Currency Commission 'Ploughman' Northern Bank note, €4,600. Central bank 'Lady Lavery' ten shilling to one hundred pounds collection made €750; a Central Bank Lady Lavery fifty pounds, €1050;



This WB Yeats autographed letter to Maude Gonne (realised €16,000 at Adams)

a 'Ploughman' Ulster Bank one pound, €800; 1994 First Trust, First Note issue presentation went at €520.

SUCCESS AT ADAMS SALES

In ADAMS Sunday Interiors sale early in June a George IV mahogany breakfront bookcase by James Winter & sons sold for €9,200 followed by an early Victorian mahogany Jupe pattern expanding dining table at €8,000 and a pair of Irish George III rectangular side tables at €8,000. A rare St James double chamber scent bottle fetched €5,000 while a pair of Vernis Martin inlaid vitrine cabinets went at €4,700 and a Charlotte Blakeney Ward, portrait of a lady at €3,200.



1930s diamond necklace by Cartier made €210,000 (sold by Adams)

ADAMS also had a highly successful Irish art sale in May when a Jack Butler Yeats oil, 'Roundstone, Connemara' went at €58,000 followed by John Luke's, 'Farmstead, Armagh' at €40,000, and Sir John Lavery's 'Street in Rabat' at €38,000. Among other high priced lots were: George Russell, 'Celestial Light' €21,000 euros; Mary Swanzy, €20,000; Norman Garstin, €18,000; Rowan Gillespie, 'Spirit of the Blind Harpist', €17,000; William John Leech, €15,000; Colin Middleton, €15,000; Robert Taylor Carson, €13,000.

ADAMS fine jewellery and watches sale saw a 1930s diamond necklace by Cartier going for €210,000 followed by a diamond single stone ring at €40,000 and another diamond ring at €14,000. A pair of diamond earrings sold for €7,000 followed by a pair of diamond ear studs at €6,800, a diamond bracelet at €5,000 and a lady's 18 ct gold dress watch by Rolex at €4,400.

In ADAMS history sale, a WB Yeats autographed letter to Maude Gonne realised €16,000 while an important Irish 20ct gold presentation strawberry dish by William Egan & Sons, 1966 made €12,000. A rare proclamation of the Irish Republic handbill, Easter 1916 went at €7,500 and an album compiled by Olive Guinness made €6,200.



Irish 20ct gold presentation strawberry dish by William Egan & Sons made €12,000 (Adams)

IRELAND'S premier event specialists

Exceptional Solutions for Corporate & Sporting Events,
Weddings, Private Parties, Exhibitions
& Agricultural Shows



- Marquees
- Tableware
- Furniture
- Generators
- Catering Equipment
- Event Electrics & Lighting
- Luxury Toilet Units
- Portable Refrigeration



www.eventus.ie

Galway Road, Tuam, Co. Galway, Ireland
T: +353 93 24472 E: info@eventus.ie



NORTHDOWN
marquees and more

www.northdownmarquees.co.uk

Ballynahinch Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland
T: +44 (0)28 9081 5535 E: info@northdownmarquees.co.uk

Hearing nothing but great reports coming back from the Irish Game Fair at Birr (what an event, yet again) Emma Cowan couldn't resist sneaking off to find out about what was being billed as the best place to stay in the town – maybe even the county! Where else but the four star County Arms Hotel.



Join the family at The County Arms Hotel, Birr

In a world of characterless chain brands, there is nothing I appreciate more than a good, traditional, family-run hotel, comfortable but intimate and maybe even a little bit quirky. That is exactly what the County Arms, owned and run by the Loughnane family, offers. Founded by Michael and Margaret Loughnane back in 1962, it has been built around the core values of that famous Irish hospitality and family endeavour. Michael and Margaret's son, Willie, and his wife Gene started taking over from their parents some forty years ago and now the third generation of the family is carrying a good tradition forward.

The County Arms is not one of those outfits that simply adopts the 'family run' banner as a vacuous marketing slogan. This is the real deal! You'll certainly still meet Willie Loughnane taking a keen interest in all that goes on, but it is his sons, Barry, Conor and Peter who look after the day-to-day operations of the County Arms now. Barry's wife Adeline is in the thick of it all too, as housekeeping manager, while Andrew the 'baby' of the family is one of those rare finds – a man who knows how to make sure everything works properly. Willie's daughter,



Sarahgene, is a teacher by profession but also a most accomplished puller of pints, and takes her turn behind the bar whenever she can. With so many of the Loughnane family working together alongside their team of staff, the County Arms genuinely exudes that special family charm. Everyone knows each other inside-out and for the staff, this clearly is a home from home. The result is the sort of welcome, comfort and relaxation you would expect if you were visiting your own family and friends – a heartfelt reception and the assurance that nothing is too much trouble.



Of course, there are just a few added benefits to staying at the County Arms Hotel that you might not necessarily enjoy visiting your Aunty Anna's! Where should I start, for there are the bedrooms, the bar, the restaurant and more to mention. Well, for me, a swimming pool and sauna represents the most sought-after luxury in any hotel and, in this regard, the County Arms most certainly delivers! The water temperature in the twenty-metre pool is perfect and it's just the right size to fool me into believing I'm a great swimmer! There's also a jacuzzi and, my absolute favourite, a sauna and steamroom. I suppose I ought to mention the Olympic standard gym and the 'wellness' suite specialising in Ógra spa treatments. I tend to spend so much time in the pool and sauna that I never make it further. When I stay at a hotel with wonderful leisure facilities I really feel that I've treated myself and I ain't going to sully that wonderful sense of decadence by sweaty exertions on a cross trainer. Of course, you might think differently and that's the great thing about this hotel – it's all there to choose from.

After a strenuous workout lounging in the sauna, I've usually acquired a bit of a thirst, so let's head to the bar. If the kitchen is the heart of the home, then Bar 62 is the heart of the County Arms Hotel. It has been redesigned and fitted out recently and it really is comfortable, retaining the feel of an Irish kitchen



bar, cosy and relaxed and great for a bite of lunch or informal dining as well as just a drink. Wine is my usual tittle and I was delighted that Bar 62 had a selection of good wines by the glass. I could have been tempted to another, but sense prevailed and I opted instead for a coffee out in the 1809 foyer, where I was lucky to find a comfy armchair by the fireplace where I could get lost in my book (hard working day for me so far).

Thinking I really ought to take a little exercise, I headed out into the gardens and grounds of the hotel. Stunning. I'm afraid I'm something of an ignoramus about flowers and shrubs (more of a carrots and parsnips person) so I can't tell you the names of all the beautiful flowers and plants. I can tell you, however, that the gardens were simply beautiful, clearly designed

and created by someone who knows and loves plants and beautifully maintained. The overwhelming feeling was of peacefulness, stolen moments in a secret place simply contemplating nature. I enjoyed my walk.

In truth, declined that second glass of wine because I was keeping myself for dinner! For several years I've been on the judging panel for the Irish Restaurants Association and I knew that the County Arms had won 'Best Hotel Restaurant' for County Offaly so I was keen to try it out. Head Chef Jason Daly, like many of his noteworthy counterparts these days, makes a point of trying to source as much produce from the hotel's own vegetable gardens and otherwise as locally as possible and, as anyone who has been to the Game Fair at Birr knows, there really are

some excellent food producers in the region. I opted for something really simple and about as Irish as it gets: fillet steak. What a steak! The thick medallion was beautifully seared and cooked au pointe, blue, just as I had ordered it, the crispy outer giving way to succulent flesh that, in the centre, was barely warm. It was delicious, but I'm sure if you like yours 'well done' it would arrive as your version of perfection on a plate. Served on a bed of creamy mash with gently roasted tomatoes and a garnish of latticed potato, the only thing my plate needed was a glass of excellent wine and, I can tell you, they have some rather special Bordeaux down in the cellars at the County Arms.

Replete, it was time for bed and a few more chapters of that book. If you're going to treat yourself, why not do it in style and that I certainly did, for I had one of the suites, said to among the finest 'Hotel Presidential Suites' in Ireland. My rooms, not too much short of two thousand square feet in all with a living room, bedroom, bathroom and guest toilet, were everything I'd hoped for. The floor to ceiling Georgian window gave wonderful views over the gardens and out to St Brendan's Park. I have to confess that I have embraced the digital age, however, and after taking in the view I connected my notebook to the wifi and caught up with the world as I sat at the rather attractive mahogany writing desk (truth be told, I wondered if I could sneak it out of there).



I'm sure you know that no woman can resist a bathroom though, so before long I made my way in that direction. Wow! A free standing bath, a sit-down shower and loads of space. I know I'd not long left the pool and sauna, but a shower couldn't hurt and I thoroughly enjoyed the high pressure water massage bestowed on me. As for bed, the four poster lacked only a companion!

The next morning I was fortunate to bump into Willie Loughnane himself, who gave me a quick tour of the other bedrooms. There are seventy in all, offering everything from deluxe to standard to family rooms and seven wheelchair friendly rooms too. In short, the County Arms Hotel has a warm and comfortable welcome for all its guests, from families to couples to groups. There's a lot to do in the area, golf, fishing, shooting, equestrian,

walking, cruising the Shannon, cycling and, of course, The Irish Game Fair at Birr. When I mentioned this, Willie's eyes lit up. "It's the highlight of the year," he said. "The Fair brings more visitors to Offaly than any other event and it's been a tremendous boost for business right across the area. Albert Titterington and his team know how to stage and manage a really excellent event and we're very proud to play our part in facilitating the many guests that visit our beautiful county every August."

Well, he said it. If you're heading to Offaly or the Game Fair next year, this is the place to stay but take my advice and book early!

County Arms Hotel
Birr, County Offaly
 ☎ +353 (0) 57 9120791
 ✉ info@countyarmshotel.com
 🌐 www.countyarmshotel.com



The Savile Row Company Store

The Savile Row Company is a global online retailer of fine luxury goods with a focus on menswear, but also spanning across accessories, footwear and womenswear. Each new season sees new growth and development of the range through the addition of more fine quality products.

Our Discount Store is located at Unit 12 Station Road Industrial Estate in Magherafelt.

100% Cotton Shirts sold from £17.50 to £30

100% Wool Suits £170 (wool sourced from Alfred Brown Mills in Yorkshire)

100% Silk Ties £14

Please quote GF10 to receive a 10% discount (in store only)

The Savile Row Company Store, Unit 12 Station Road Industrial Estate, Magherafelt, BT45 5EY

Opening Hours 9:30am to 4:30pm Mon to Fri 9:30am to 4:00pm Saturday Tel 028 796 34234



Active Hunting Ireland

BEST HUNTING & OUTDOORS STORE

Registered Firearms Dealer

Hunting Supplies
Clay Pigeon Shooting
Archery, Aims & Targets
Bear Grylls & Survival
Pest Control
Hunting Knives
Deer Stalking
Clothing & Footwear
Firearms & Ammunition
Game Shooting

Spend €100 or more
shopping our products* on our site
and get **10% OFF**

enter this promo code at the checkout

* Offer excludes firearms & ammunition
Valid until 29/02/2016, one use per customer
You must create an account to avail of this discount

ICSCL15

exclusive offer!!!

VISIT OUR STORE: Inch, Gorey, Co. Wexford
CALL US: 0402 21588 / 087 90 222 09
EMAIL US: info@activehuntingireland.ie
FOLLOW US: facebook.com/ActiveHuntingIreland

BEST PRICES - GREAT RANGE OF PRODUCTS
FAST DELIVERY (FREE SHIPPING AVAILABLE)
NEW ***STAR BUYS*** EVERY TWO WEEKS
IRISH STOCKIST OF HUNTER'S SPECIALTIES

www.activehuntingireland.ie

The Craft

There are to this day, isolated Fenland villages where the concept of witchcraft isn't met with outright ridicule.

In an age of mobile phones, computers, and internet connection, this may seem strange indeed; but it is no less true, and resting under a vast East Anglian sky, and a long way from anywhere, the village of Deeping St. Mary is one such place. Scarcely more than a row of ancient, thatched brick cottages, 'Deeping' can boast a mention in the Domesday Book; a point from which visibly, very little seems to have changed.

When allied with isolation, old beliefs and superstitions hang on with an iron grip, as a walk down any of Deeping's winding lanes will prove, if

taken at hedge laying time. Ask the old hedger working there, why at intervals, he leaves a tall finger of uncut hawthorn, projecting vertically from an otherwise straight and level hedgerow. His answer, though honest, may surprise you; for resting on the shaft of his beetle, he will tell you that it is done to stop witches flying along the hedgerows at twilight.

Against such a background, it is perhaps unsurprising, that certain individuals in a community might be viewed with suspicion, fear, and mistrust. In the village of Deeping St. Mary, such a person is Margaret

Spalding. Of age indeterminate, and with the skin of a winter crab apple, 'Meg' Spalding has lived in her cottage of uneven brick and sedge thatch, since well beyond living memory.

Disturbingly, there are even foxed sepia photos hanging in the village rectory, which show a woman of identical features, standing in front of Meg's property in 1881. A bizarre coincidence, surely? There are those however, who are not so sure, and they look away as they scurry past Meg's cottage, remembering the occasions when her own peculiar brand of malevolence, has been exercised.

One local farmer, with little respect for Meg, repeatedly let his cattle stray into her vegetable garden, despite warnings of dire consequences. The old woman had told him that if he did not remedy the situation, by properly maintaining his fences, he would be sorry. In due course, he was.

This concoction was a well known guard against witchcraft

Arriving one morning to find three of his best beasts dead in Meg's garden, the farmer immediately called the vet, so that a cause of death might be determined. Despite carrying out detailed post-mortems, and much to the surprise of all, no conclusion could be reached. The baffled vet announcing that all three animals had 'Simply dropped dead without reason'! A measure of how seriously the farmer viewed Meg after this event, may be gauged by his placing in a bottle, dressmaker's pins, human hair clippings, and an amount of his own urine. This concoction, when tightly corked and placed above a house front door, is a well known guard against witchcraft. The same can be said of the rowan sprigs and dozens of old horse



Foxed sepia photos in the village rectory, which show a woman of identical features, standing in front of Meg's property in 1881.

shoes, which the farmer arranged liberally against the outer walls of his property.

Not all village residents though, were convinced that Meg was anything other than a crotchety old woman. One such was local agricultural worker, Eddie Jackson. When not picking sprouts or carting sugar beet, Eddie loved nothing more than to roar around the fenland roads in his 1970, Dodge Charger. Painted bright orange, and with the Confederate flag emblazoned upon its roof, the car was Eddie's pride and joy. The country & western fan had spent many hours and much money customising the vehicle; adding a whip aerial, white wall tyres, and a deafening airhorn, which played the first twelve notes of 'Dixie' at well over 140 decibels.

When bored, Eddie would roar up outside Meg's thatched cottage, and rev the Charger's powerful engine, whilst repeatedly blasting out 'Dixie' on the airhorn. The very panes of Meg's windows would shake at the force of the cacophony, whilst Eddie howled with laughter and claimed: "That'll teach the old bat!" This behaviour carried on for several weeks, until, one clear spring afternoon, the Dodge Charger was written off in a freak accident.

In a statement later given to Cambridgeshire Police, Eddie explained how he had been driving along a needle-straight road through the fens, windows down, 'Wichita Lineman' blaring out on the car radio, when suddenly, and from nowhere, an old woman had appeared only a bonnet length before him on the road. Braking hard and swerving violently, the Dodge

Charger had skidded off the tarmac and down a steep bank into a water filled drain. Rolling three times before coming to a halt, the car's subframe had been badly twisted, and Eddie, in spite of his seatbelt, was bruised black and blue and lucky to be alive.

Having crawled out of the wreckage and back up the bank onto the road, the shaken farm worker could see no sign whatever of the mysterious pedestrian, despite the fact that the road deviated not an inch, for a mile in either direction. A blood sample proved Eddie sober, and tests carried out by a police psychiatrist found him sane, if quite genuinely terrified. Needless to say, no one ever revved a car outside Meg's cottage again.

Both hunter and hunted vanished into a large beechwood

Over the years, a fair number of odd tales concerning Meg circulated the village. None stranger though, than that recounted in the Malt Shovels pub, by a notorious local poacher. Quite adamant that he was speaking the truth, he recounted how one October morning when out in pursuit of game, he had slipped his brindle lurcher at a hare on a long stubble at the back of the village. Especially fond of hare stew, the poacher had willed on his long dog as it closed with 'Old Puss,' and watched enthralled as the hare twisted and turned and leapt in the air, in one of nature's oldest and most enthralling duels. Never could the lurcher quite close with its prey, despite being one of the fleetest dogs in the county, and having covered the entire length of the

field, both hunter and hunted vanished into a large beechwood.

Sprinting across the stubble to discover the result of the chase, the poacher entered the wood, where to his consternation, he found Meg Spalding gasping and wheezing for breath like a pair of old forge bellows, whilst slumped against the trunk of an ancient beech tree. The lurcher dog, its sides also heaving, stood before the old woman with an air of confusion. The poacher, visibly shaken, called off his dog and fled.

Many in Deeping St. Mary were not surprised by this revelation, for it has long been acknowledged that the hare, and not the black cat, is the true 'Familiar' of the rural witch. Numerous villagers believed that Meg travelled both night and day in this animal form, passing quietly through her neighbours' orchards and gardens; a sharp eye on their business always being kept. A plausible explanation perhaps, for why the old woman knew so much of their affairs. Naturally, such fear and suspicion breeds resentment, and even luck of the magical kind can eventually run out.

For as long as anyone could remember, the local estate had maintained a policy of not shooting ground game. Generations of game keepers had explained this policy to guests, since well before the days of The Kaiser's war. New eras of course, bring new ideas, and an ambitious young keeper, as yet unfamiliar with the area, might be forgiven for wanting to boost the day's bag with a few rabbits and hares.

So it was that on a November



An unusually large, dark and aged animal, bolted out from the turnips.

morning, in the turnip field at the rear of Meg's cottage, a line of beaters advanced like guardsmen, whistling and shouting as they went. Spaniels, released from slip lead and land rover, quartered the frosted rimed game crop with ceaseless energy; their docked tails the very essence of perpetual motion.

An unusually large, dark and aged animal, bolted out from the turnips

On whirring wings pheasant and partridge flushed into the air, and curling, climbed steeply towards the foot of the slope, where stood a line of waiting guns. Then, for the first time in many years, a shout of 'Hare!' went up, as an unusually large, dark and aged animal, bolted out from the turnips and on towards Meg's cottage. With great speed the old hare streaked away, but reaching the garden fence and safety, inexplicably swerved right toward the foot of the slope and the guns waiting there.

Deaf to all whistles, an errant spaniel roared after the hare, preventing it from turning, and driving it onward. As the long eared quarry passed between two standing guns, it visibly flattened itself

against the earth, and sped toward a jungle of tall kale, and safety.

Offered a safe shot, the end gun in the line mounted his 20 bore and fired; a spit of earth kicking up a yard behind the fleeing creature. As the hare veered away from the report, the determined gun increased his lead and fired again, thus setting in motion a chain of events, which will long be remembered in Deeping St. Mary.

Struck squarely by an ounce of No.6 pellets, the old hare cartwheeled end over end, to disappear amongst the kale crop. As sometimes happens when a hare is shot, the animal emitted a blood chilling cry; a cry well known to countrymen, and one often compared to that of a human child in peril.

The shriek that rent the air that morning however, was not that of an infant, but the agonised cry of an old woman in her death throes! As one, shooters unloaded their guns and beaters lowered their flags, as badly shaken, all descended to the kale crop to investigate.

The soft, brown, fleck of the hare, could clearly be seen blowing across the field's bare earth, but as the shoot Captain and head keeper waded nervously into the kale, they were met

not their fallen quarry, but by a sight both mysterious and horrifying in equal measure. There, quite dead, and no more than a metre into the crop, lay the still body of Meg Spalding. No one spoke. No one offered an explanation; for how could they? The gun, who had so deftly bowled over the hare, stood ashen faced and trembling. Shock quite clearly, having already set in.

The police, perhaps understandably, failed to draw a satisfactory conclusion, for had not ten witnesses seen a man shoot a hare, in an open field, in broad daylight? How Meg's stiffening body came to be in a game crop, on a shoot day, on a cold November morning, they had no idea. The case remains open and unsolved. Strange though, that even the curious amongst the shooting party, had not troubled to determine, why the hare should veer away so suddenly from Meg's garden, and certain sanctuary.

Had anyone present examined the base of Meg's garden hedge, they would most certainly have found there, and placed at regular intervals, dozens of old horse shoes, rowan sprigs, and most intriguingly, an ancient green bottle containing a dark liquid. That's before they were all quietly removed, of course.



Offered a safe shot, the end gun in the line mounted his 20 bore and fired.

BRACKEN HILL SHOOT



**Bookings being taken for
quality driven Pheasant shooting**

Duck & Partridge days also available

**A number of 50 bird walked up days, available
in September and October
suitable for training days.**

See: www.facebook.com/brackenhillpheasantries

BRACKEN HILL GAME FARM



**We run our own shoots and therefore know what keepers
and our customers require from a game farm. We produce
strong well-feathered birds that fly well but hold on the
ground and produce a good return. All birds are
guaranteed to be delivered free from any disease or
infection.**

**We have weekly vet inspections and all birds are checked
by a vet prior to dispatch. The result is healthy strong birds
that grow on well and provide excellent shooting.**

**We supply Traditional blackneck; Polish (bazanty);
Brackenhill ring neck; Chinese ring neck; Kansas ring neck;
Manchurian ring neck; Red leg partridge and Mallard.**

FREE DELIVERY



**Cranford, Letterkenny,
Donegal, Ireland**

Tel: 00 353 749163011

E: brackenhill@eircom.net

www.brackenhillpheasantries.ie

Hunting in black and white – Zebra



Occasionally a lone Wildebeest will run with Zebra.

One of the most interesting-looking and instantly recognisable wild animals in Africa is the Zebra.

Their unique black and white stripes make it almost impossible not to spot them — even at a distance. Very much herd animals, they are not territorial, moving around a lot, always within reach of fresh water. Their donkey-like tracks are easier to follow than most other species but it does involve covering a lot of ground. While classed as “non-dangerous”, Zebras are far

removed from the jovial characters portrayed on kiddie’s TV cartoons. Stallions are particularly vicious creatures — kicking, biting, fighting with each other, also apt to kill their own offspring, despite living in tight family units.

My first visit to South Africa many years ago was on foot of an invitation to take part in a Zebra cull at a large

property outside Bloemfontein. Not the sort of invitation that comes along every day! In that context, “large property” describes an area the size of County Louth. The local herd had expanded to a point where the ever-increasing number of males became a threat to its well-being, hence the need for a cull. It was necessary to remove eight stallions to ease the problem — and a ready-made local market awaited the meat. Getting there was an adventure in itself commencing with my rifle going missing in Johannesburg’s Jan Smuts airport (since renamed — twice) and the onward flight to Bloemfontein in a rickety old twin-engined Islander that had seen better days. The firearm was eventually retrieved from an aircraft bound for Ankara in Turkey. Had it gone there the likelihood of returning it for the hunt, or at all, was probably remote? On arrival at the ranch the usual range test took place; we were using .270s which is minimal for use on Zebra. A larger calibre is preferable, although with critical shot placement the .270s will just about do. Being deer stalkers and former target shooters was an advantage. Test-firing was followed by a drive around the district to familiarise ourselves with the terrain



Glassing the terrain for Zebra herds.

and type of shooting (all long shots) involved. Seeing so many different and exotic wildlife species in their natural habitat made that drive an experience never to be forgotten. The terrain consisted of plains, hills, lakes and bush veldt. Clear blue skies, sunshine and sheer excitement added to the mix. Absolutely stunning!

Stalking in close to select one for culling

Our team consisted of a Professional Hunter, his apprentice, four trackers and two Irish shooters. The apprentice PH was an enthusiastic young man well kitted out for the occasion in smart bush clothes, wearing a purpose-built belt sporting a knife, torch, rifle ammunition pouch, Leatherman multi-tool, 9 mm pistol and a spare magazine. He also carried a .375 H&H Magnum rifle. Perhaps unkindly, we christened him "Action Man". We weren't to know that this was his first day on the job. Using two bakkies (4 x 4's) we had set out into the unknown looking for the Zebra herds – I was in the apprentice's vehicle. Sighting our quarry was relatively easy — although stalking in close to select one for culling was a different matter. With so many pairs of alert eyes scanning all directions, it required endless hours of patience to manoeuvre unseen into a suitable spot from which the herd could be glassed. Males and females have similar striped patterns and body size, making it difficult to differentiate between the two. Features that help to identify them include the male's larger head, thicker neck and occasional brown marks within the white stripes. Another useful piece of knowledge is the males' propensity to lead when the herd is heading for water. On all other occasions mares take the lead while stallions hang back or remain on the periphery. This is a common trait with most wild species; females out in front while males hang back for a quick getaway in the event of trouble. We actually achieved the required cull over a number of days that were long, hot

and thirsty. The shots were mostly straightforward — getting into position, waiting for a clear view of the target animal and taking the shot.

One particular hunt was more eventful than the others

Along with the apprentice hunter I was having difficulty getting within shooting range unseen; we came up with a plan. The herd was due to start moving towards water shortly, so we set ourselves up on a Koppie (hillock) along the route that they would travel. From that vantage point we overlooked the herd away in the distance and eventually, as they approached, the males moved into pole position. Scanning them with binoculars, it was

agreed to cull a particularly large stallion that conveniently had moved out on his own. This involved shooting at a moving target which didn't present any great difficulty as I had full view of where I wanted to place the shot. At the appropriate moment I squeezed the .270's trigger and knew that the shot was good. As per normal the animal tried to run and would have covered a few more steps before he went down had not the apprentice fired his .375 immediately after my shot. The report, from just behind my ear was deafening, causing me to jump with shock; to this day I recall the polite words I said to him. Apart from the obvious danger of firing from behind someone, I berated him for firing at an animal that I had



A painting (oils) by the author's wife Marie, from a photo that she took in the bush.



The end of a successful hunt edit.

already shot. His excuse was that he thought that I had missed, although the opposite was clearly evident.

When we examined the downed Zebra we saw that the .375's shot had been inaccurate – just a flesh wound. This raised questions as to who would pay for shooting the animal had I been a paying client. The accepted rule in African hunting is that when a client fires a shot and a blood trail is evident, the client pays whether the animal is recovered or not. In this particular instance, had I been a paying hunter, missed the animal and the apprentice PH's follow-up shot only wounded it as it ran away, I would have been liable. It would be impossible to ascertain who had fired the wounding shot. Despite that thought remaining with me down the years, I was actually caught by a similar circumstance not too long ago. A Duiker (small antelope) went down after a shot from my .375 and on seeing it moving, I prepared to fire again. The PH told me to save the ammunition (.375's rounds are expensive) and sent the tracker forward to finish-off the wounded animal. On his approach the Duiker jumped up and ran off never to be seen again. Despite protesting, I still had to pay. Hunters planning an African safari in the future might want to remember that.

Since that first visit I have been on many Zebra hunts some more memorable than others. In one particular area it was not unusual to be told that a client somewhere around the world had ordered a Zebra pelt and would I please take a bakkie plus tracker and go and shoot a decent specimen. A slightly similar situation arose in 2009 when a particularly nasty stallion developed a penchant for kicking in-foal mares and had to be culled. Equipped with my Sako .375 H&H Magnum and accompanied by a tracker who is one of the best, we commenced the hunt for this stallion. It was easy enough to spot due to having only one ear, the other

was bitten off during a spat within the herd. Also he was a distinctly large specimen which was going to help picking him out. After two frustrating days of what appeared like glassing most of the Zebras in Africa, and mainly on foot, we finally spotted him. There's no doubt that he too had us under observation, as he made it extremely difficult to get in close. Eventually we managed to get within shooting distance and one well-placed shot from the Sako initially brought him down. With plenty of fight left, he still tried to take on the tracker who had to jump sideways. Then he headed in my direction making it necessary to take a second shot to bring matters to a conclusion. This Zebra was a very tough animal indeed, and despite his reputation for causing mayhem and killing foals, I decided to ask for the pelt as a trophy. It took about a year to have it prepared and shipped to Ireland, all of which cost a small fortune. On arrival I changed my mind and gave it away!

Country Sports and Tackle

All types of Antique, deactivated and Modern Firearms bought and sold
Cash paid for all Volunteer Rifles, Bayonets, Ammunition and Paper Shotgun Cartridges etc.

Have you found or inherited a Firearm for which you have no Certificate? Have it made legal in confidence.

Opening times

Thursday 9:00am - 8:00pm

Saturday 9:00am - 5:00pm

Contact me for details on

Tel: 028 9446 7378 or

Mobile: 07703 193268 **Fax:** 028 9446 3703

9 Rough Lane, Antrim BT41 2QG

countrysportsandtackle@gmail.com

www.csandtackle.co.uk

facebook country sports and tackle





MAC EOIN GENERAL MERCHANTS LTD DINGLE CO. KERRY.

TEL: 087 2077019 or 066 9150615

Email: info@maceoinltd.com

www.maceoinltd.com

special offers

special offers

TOP NETTING IN STOCK



Rat Cage



Multi Rat Cage



Larsen Traps From € 74.00



Mink Cages Double
& Single Entry



Mark 4 & 6
Spring Traps



Clulites & Spares
Best Prices



Ferret & Terrier Sets
From € 200.00



Tracer & Lightforce Lamps



Battery Packs



Warrener Dvd's
From € 25.00



Vermin Control Book
€ 13.00 Inc Post



Aniseed
Hold Spice



Crates € 42.00



18 Kg Feeder



Metal Feeders



Galvanised Chick Feeders
From € 5.00



22 Kg Feeder With
Top Hat € 29.00



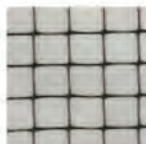
Heavy Springs



68 Kg Galvanised
Outdoor Feeder



Feeders &
Drinkers from
€ 3.50



Top netting All
Sizes Available



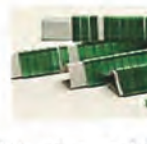
Clip Pliers



Egg Washers
& Baskets



Egg Candler



Wing Tags € 20.00
per 100



PlasticBeak
Bits. All Sizes



Hanging Nipple
Drinkers



Full Range of
Decoys



Tally Counter



Wide Range of Cover Crops



Game Hooks



450 egg incubator



80 egg
incubator



176 Egg Incubator



Plucking Machines

Netting Clips
Wire Ties & J Clips
Hog Ring Pliers & Hog Rings

Disinfectants & Hygiene Products
Mite & Louse Powder
Will will beat any prices
Where possible. Call for
Quotes.

TOP NETTING

11' X 11' X 1.5" MESH € 15.00
22' X 22' X 1.5" MESH € 43.00
32' X 32' X 1.5" MESH € 88.00
42' X 42' X 1.5" MESH € 135.00
OVER 20 SIZES AVAILABLE
SIDE MESH & WIRE

Fox Snares € 35.00 for 10
10 x mark 4 spring traps € 100.00
10 x mark 6 spring traps € 130.00
4 x Mink cages for € 100.00 delivered
3 x Larsen traps for € 210.00 delivered
3 x Octagonal magpie Cages € 400.00
Larsen Trap Springs € 5.00 pair
10 pairs € 45.00

IRELANDS LARGEST SUPPLIER OF INCUBATORS, TRAPS & GAME EQUIPMENT.

We Will Beat Any Trap Price For Goods Of Same Quality. Show us your Quote

All Traps are Approved & Comply Fully to Wildlife Act.



Pointers & Setters Champion Stake 2015

It was the turn of the International Gundog League to run the Champion Stake for Pointers and Setters in 2015 and the stake was held on the 29th and 30th of July on Sheikh Mohammed Al Maktoum's glorious Bollihope moor in County Durham. Steward of the Beat was Bollihope Head Keeper Peter Fawcett, Sheila Steeds organised and ran the event with her usual quiet efficiency and our Judges for the stake were Billy Darragh and Dom Goutorbe.

It was something of an international affair: Billy Darragh hails from Ireland but now lives in Scotland, Dominic Goutorbe's father was the well-known field-trialer Rene Goutorbe who was originally from France and an Italian magazine had sent the lovely Rosella to photograph and report the event.

It was a relief to everyone when the rain that had caused the previous two days' trials to be cancelled petered out overnight and left us with a cool, breezy and sometimes bright day for the first round. There were eighteen brace made up of fifteen pointers, ten Irish setters, nine English setters, one Gordon setter and one Irish red and white setter. There were twenty dogs and sixteen bitches running handled by five ladies and sixteen gentlemen. Ireland was well represented with eighteen of the dogs and seven of the



The winning team: David O'Neill and Irish setter FTCh Glynark Aramis with the Heywood Lonsdale Perpetual Challenge Trophy.

handlers, Gerry Devine being exceptionally busy handling three of his own dogs and two owned by Bill Connolly of Red Mills.

As always the Bollihope ground was in perfect condition: the heather perhaps a little late coming into bloom after the cold, wet summer, but amply supplied with good strong coveys of well-grown grouse. The Guns, David Renton and Albert Robinson, both took a keen interest in every brace ready to select their Keepers' Choice from the runners. We took a short walk out across the moor and the first brace were called up to show their paces.

When a moor holds a really good stock of grouse, as Bollihope always does, there will rarely be a chance for dogs to show their pace and drive with fast, wide quartering since grouse will almost always be found early in each run. Indeed, quite a few dogs hit coveys on their first cast, often resulting in an unavoidable flush and it is to their great credit that just about every time the dog



Gerry Devine and Sheila Steeds with the trophy for the most stylish dog on the first day awarded to Bill Connolly's English setter FTCh Ballyellen Cara.



Bill Connolly's English setter FTCh Ballyellen Cara on point during the second round.



Carol Calvert casting off her Irish setter Glynlark Apollo.



A grouse away from Gerry Devine's English setter Ballyellen Colleen under the watchful gaze of Judge Billy Darragh.



James Coyle's pointer FTCh Koram Kaiser moving at speed.

responded by dropping instantly. Where a dog is cast directly into birds a flush does not result in elimination, provided that it is acknowledged promptly and that the dog has gone out properly across the wind and not bored forward into the beat at an angle, but to be right in the middle of a covey within seconds of being cast off must be tantalising to a dog that is all revved up and eager to run. Still: this is the Champion Stake and the Judges are entitled to expect a Champion Stake standard of performance. They were rarely disappointed.

Strong competition

After several wet days the grouse were rather more lively than they would be if the weather had been warmer and the ground drier. Some coveys sat tightly where others were obviously running ahead of the pointing dog. At times the whole covey would get up in a single cloud of grouse, but the next dog to point might find that the birds had to be hunted out and lifted in twos and threes: a great boon when you are shooting over dogs and impressive during a trial, provided that the work out is well conducted and the dog drops each time birds get up. At times we could see coveys lifting well ahead of the dogs, disturbed by a shot or by grouse flying over them. There would clearly be a strong scent left when the next brace ran over the ground and quite often an odd grouse that had stayed behind when the rest of the covey lifted leaving the dog with Kipling's chance of triumph or disaster when it reached the area.

The standard of work on this first day was generally very impressive and there was strong competition for a spot in the second round as the Judges finished with the final brace and started their deliberations. There was one award to be made: The Ladies Trophy in memory of Barbara Beazley, Eppie Buist and Auriel Mason for the Most Stylish Dog on the First Day of the Champion Stake and it went to Bill Connolly's English setter FTCh Ballyellen Cara handled by Gerry Devine.

Day 2 brought heavy rain which turned to drizzle

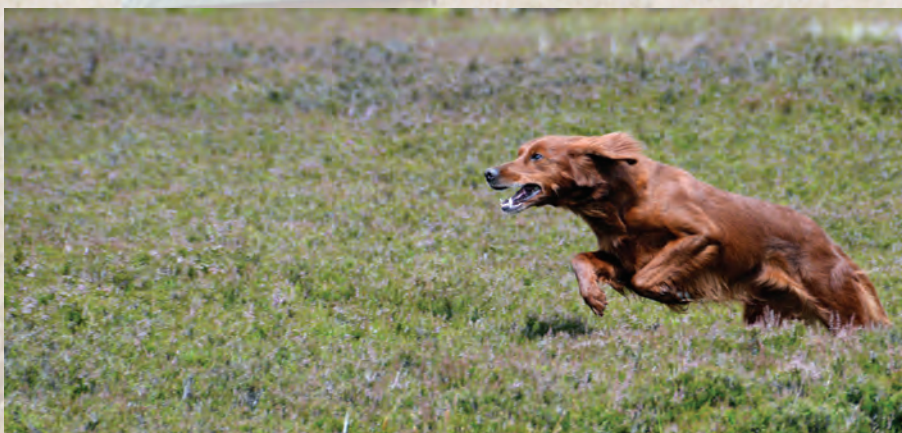
The second day did not make an auspicious start with heavy rain falling as we gathered for the draw for the second round. Judges Billy Darragh and Dominic Goutorbe had been quite rigorous in their judgement of the previous day's runners and just fifteen dogs were called back: four pointers and eleven setters made up of five Irish, four English, one Gordon and one Irish red and white. The rain had turned to drizzle as we drove across the moor to the beat selected by Peter Fawcett for the second day but just as the first brace were called forward the skies cleared and it stayed dry for the rest of the day to the relief of all, not least those of us trying to take photographs.

A fresh breeze and wet heather meant that the grouse were unlikely to sit tightly and it was soon clear that this would not be an easy day for the dogs. Scent seemed to be excellent with dogs taking birds from seventy or eighty yards back but the grouse were prone to running while the dog was waiting for the Judge, Gun and handler to reach the point, and birds were often seen lifting ahead on the beat. Once again the standard of work was excellent, as befits the most prestigious stake in the pointer and setter circuit, and there was some excellent bird-handling on display leavened with the odd error and occasional lapse.

After some thought Billy and Dom called back six dogs for a third and final round. Wilson Young's pointer Fearn Quark of Burncastle quickly found birds (for about the seventh time during the stake) while brace-mate David O'Neill's Irish setter Glynlark Aramis had a clean run with no birds on his side of the beat. Steve Robinson and Gerry Devine were next with Professor Herbert's Irish setter FTCh Coldcoats Corbally Boy and English setter FTCh Gortinreagh Eppie respectively, but the English setter did nothing to aid her cause when she turned as soon as Gerry cast her off and headed for her brace-mate's side of the beat. Finally Steve



Billy Darragh watching as a grouse rises from Irish setter Shan-Ry-Con Andraid, handled by David O'Neill.



David O'Neill's Irish setter Shan-Ry-Con Andraid quartering.



Winning Irish setter FTCh Glynlark Aramis showing his paces.



Alan Neill's pointer Koram Piper of the Glen ran with great pace and style.



Flood Marine Services
22 KILLYBRACK ROAD
OMAGH
COUNTY TYRONE
+44 (0)28 82 246 539
INFO@FLOODMARINE.CO.UK
WWW.FLOODMARINE.CO.UK

IRELAND'S PREMIER SUPPLIERS OF:

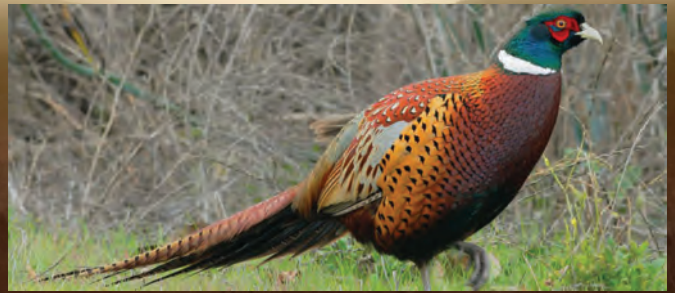
- YAMAHA OUTBOARD MOTORS
- GENUINE YAMAHA PARTS
- WIDE RANGE OF CHANDLERY
- WARRIOR BOATS
- TERHI BOATS
- WHALY BOATS
- MARINE ELECTRONICS

SERVICING AVAILABLE



NEXT DAY DELIVERY AVAILABLE

MULBERRY SHOOT



www.mulberryshoot.com

SINGLE GUNS AVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING DATES TO MAKE UP A FULL TEAM OF 8.

- October 21st. 200 bird day two gun available
- November 1st. 200 bird day two guns available.
- November 4th. 150 bird day two guns available.
- November 22nd. 200 bird day two guns availability
- December 2nd. 150 bird day two guns availability.

A NUMBER OF DAYS ARE STILL AVAILABLE IN MID DECEMBER AND JANUARY FOR FULL SYNDICATES OF EIGHT GUNS.

Contact John Forde for more information
Mulberry Lodge. Connolly Co. Clare

Tel: +353 (0) 65 6839955 Mob: 087 2691633



Quality Crops from Bright Seeds



Sunnyside Wildflower Meadow

Contains: Cornflower, Corn Marigold, Corn Chamomile, Corn Cockle, Oxeye Daisy, Field Poppy, Red Clover, Linseed, Phacelia, Lucerne, Sainfoin and Red Campion. This meadow should last for 3 to 5 years.

Pack sizes and delivered prices as follows:

6kgs to sow one acre	€250.00
3kgs to sow half acre	€150.00
1.5kgs to sow quarter acre	€100.00
150gms to sow 100sq metres	€15.00

John's Delight

The most popular Game Cover crop sold to gun clubs in Ireland. This contains: Triticale, Linseed, Gold of Pleasure, Mustard, Phacelia and a small amount of Crimson Clover, Cornflower and Red Poppy. This is a one year crop producing 1 tonnes of seed per acre.

€75.00 per 1 acre bag plus carriage.

Both crops can be sown successfully up to the middle of June.

John Howard, Sunnyside Farm, Rathcormac, Co. Cork. Phone: 025 36253
E-mail: sunnysidefruit@eircom.net For crop photos please visit: www.rathcormacgunclub.com



The Guns were Albert Robinson and David Renton.



Judges Dominic Goutorbe and Billy Darragh.



The knowledgeable gallery saw some excellent work over the two days.

Robinson with Irish setter Coldcoats Rapid Meg and Richard MacNicol with last year's winner Mr L Hild's pointer FTCh Gerensary Minerva were called to run and the pointer found a bird that Steve's setter had missed.

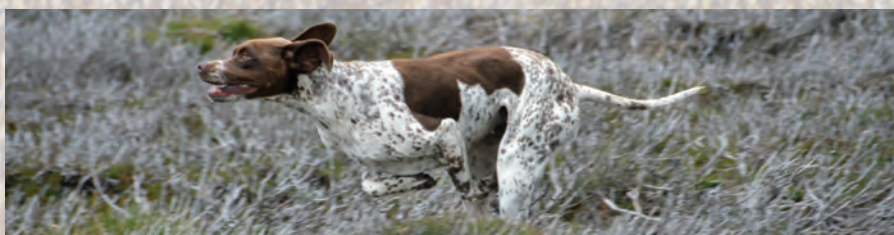
The results

That brought the trial to an end and we gathered to hear the results. The winner was David O'Neill with his Irish setter Glynark Aramis and the runner-up was Wilson Young's pointer Fearn Quark of Burncastle. Third place went to Professor Herbert's Irish setter FTCh Coldcoats Corbally Boy handled by Steve Robinson and fourth to Mr L Hild's pointer FTCh Gerensary Minerva handled by Richard MacNicol. There were Diplomas of Merit for Gerry Devine's English setter FTCh Gortinreagh Eppie, Dennis Longworth's

Gordon setter FTCh Ensay Tiva of Bringwood, John Naylor's pointer Gerensary Starlight of Bitternboom and Mrs Margaret Sierakowski's Irish red and white setter Dalriach Neige handled by Colin Organ. In addition Wilson Young was awarded a stick made by Sepp Fawcett as Keepers' Choice and became the first winner of a silver salver: the Mrs E M Town Memorial Trophy for the runner-up.

This was a popular and well-deserved win for David O'Neill and FTCh Glynark Aramis who seemed to

spend much of their first round on stand-by but always performed quietly, efficiently and very stylishly when called to run. Any of the first four dogs would have been worthy winners of a Champion Stake that produced a great deal of excellent dog work despite conditions that were sometimes difficult because of the wet weather though the beautiful Bollihope Moor was, as ever, a joy to visit with Peter Fawcett and his team doing everything possible to make the trial as successful and enjoyable as possible.



Jimmy Dalton's pointer Shannaghview Gershwin De Lagopus impressed with some strong running.

Summer bird hunt in the Dutch Randstad

A flock of geese over the decoys.

At 3:15 AM the alarm's merciless beeping went off, much to my wife's displeasure. I quickly turned it off, got out of bed, and tried to remember what planet I was on.

After chucking my gear in the car, I drove south through the harbour region of Rotterdam and the industrial oil-manufacturing zone known as Pernis. Nearby was Europort, one of the largest seaports in the world. I was driving through one of the most heavily populated and industrialised places on earth, and it was hard to believe that in another twenty minutes I would be joining a bird hunt in rural farmland. I eventually pulled up at a farmhouse in a hamlet just outside the town of Poortugaal. This town is about fifteen minutes south of Port Rotterdam.

Waiting for me in the darkness were the group of hunters who would be joining me this morning. Jan-Dirk was the man who had invited me along and would be running proceedings. Joining him were his longtime hunting mates Andre and Peter, who were all local to the area.

To my surprise, we were also joined by a young man called Joel who was in his early teens. Joel was doing a school

assignment on goose hunting and how the birds were controlled by hunters protecting farm crops. Normally geese are hunted in the winter, but because they were in such increasingly high numbers it was decided to allow controlled shooting to protect the valuable summer grain crops. Another non-hunter who was joining us this morning was Arjan. He had been invited with his golden retriever Sverre to try his hand at retrieving downed birds.

After the introductions, we got back into our cars and drove a short way in the dark onto a nearby crop field. Dirk Jan positioned the other two hunters safe distances away to build their hides. I then got busy with Joel putting out grey goose decoys on short poles. Dirk-Jan also had a taxidermy grey goose positioned in the form of a landing bird placed on a longer pole.

After setting up some extra wood pigeon decoys, we got started on the camo netting, which was placed in a

box configuration next to a mesh fence. By the time first light came around, Myself, Joel, Dirk-Jan and his spaniel Edor were cozy inside the hide.

The strategy of this morning's hunt was to try and attract geese and pigeons to a clear piece of paddock next to a grain field. The grain in the cleared area had already been cut but the geese and pigeons still found plenty of grain still lying on the ground to eat. When geese were spotted or heard Dirk-Jan would give a few blasts of his goose decoy whistle and hopefully attract the geese to land among their 'friends.'

As it became lighter, we waited for tell tail formations to appear from the direction of the nearby Oude (old) Maas River, Jan-Dirk however noticed that a flock of geese were already standing in the paddock about 100 metres away from our hide. These geese behaved quite unexpectedly and when the light cleared a bit more, we understood why. It was a group of the larger exotic Canada geese. These birds



Dirk-Jan and Joel with two Canadas.



Tension mounts - waiting behind the net in the early morning light.

were a lot less weary than the more shy and smaller native grey geese.

They circled and this brought them directly over Andre's hide

Joel was sent with the dog to flush them into the air. The birds took flight but flew in the wrong direction heading away from our hide. Luckily, they circled back and this brought them directly over Andre's hide, which was positioned behind a wall of reeds on the edge of a canal.

Andre's over and under 12-gauge boomed twice and a massive Canada goose dropped out of the formation. Andre then picked the bird up and positioned the goose among the rest of his decoys and returned to his hide. We settled down and watched another flight of Canada's coming at us in a straight-line formation. A couple of blasts from Andre missed and the geese gained height and escaped.

Not long after, a flight of grey geese came over when Dirk-Jan gave a blast on his goose call. As they came just in front of the hide, Dirk-Jan rose and fired twice. I watched two birds peel off and drop to the ground. Impressive.

One of the birds was only winged however, so Dirk-Jan set his spaniel loose and Edor brought the injured bird back to the hide where it was humanly dispatched. The other bird fell near the grain crop and Dirk-Jan retrieved it quickly and also placed the two birds among his decoys.

As the light cleared more, I noticed just how built up the area we were in was. Encircling the broad fields was a residential zone. This surprised me

somewhat, but obviously the houses were a safe distance away and the locals were used to the blasts of hunters protecting farm crops from hungry birds. It was typical Dutch rural management. Space being at an absolute premium in this part of the Randstad, they pack as many uses into their land as they can. It's amazing that they can keep it as picturesque as they do.

Over the next hour we were able to call in more geese of the Canada and grey variety. At one stage a smaller bird flew in to check out the decoys and Jan-Dirk dropped it with his Winchester under and over. When we took a closer look at it, the bird had light brown-golden feathers with green wedges on the wings. This was another introduced species known as the Nile goose or Egyptian goose. These wildfowl are native throughout Africa and are actually a super-sized duck, rather than a goose. They were introduced years ago to the Netherlands and have spread throughout the country.

No 4 steel shot was not ideal for the pigeons

Between the waves of geese coming in we were also graced with loads of wood pigeons. These pigeons are in very healthy numbers and love nothing more than munching on grain and tender green shoots. They are pretty good to eat as well. A flock of five birds passed nearby our hide and Dirk-Jan poked his gun up and fired. A plump pigeon fell from the flock and was placed among the decoys. The hunters were using number four steel shot in their guns. This however, was

not ideal for the smaller pigeons, but compromises have to be made. The geese also had to be taken at relatively short range to maximise stopping power because they are such powerful birds.

Despite the human density of the area, typical farmland species were abundant. Dirk-Jan told me that roe deer were starting to colonise the area. We also saw a European brown hare hopping along in the paddock nearby. Mallard duck were also plentiful, flying over in large numbers. As the duck-hunting season had not started yet, these were off the menu this weekend, however.

Among the game birds flying over, were also birds of prey, which seemed to have little fear of people. In one instance, Andre shot a pigeon and soon after a grey goose, while this was happening a marsh harrier was hovering over the grain field nearby. The rare but increasingly more common predator was totally unconcerned by the shooting. Also making an appearance was the larger bodied buzzard, which is making a real comeback to the Netherlands. Buzzards eat a wide range of prey, from worms to birds and rabbits and can be seen regularly in rural areas. During this pretty busy time, we noticed that no birds had flown over Peter's hide, which he was sharing with Arjan, and his retriever.

As Andre and Dirk-Jan had bagged a good number of birds, Peter was invited to join us and Arjan was invited to join Andre and retrieve some birds that had been downed in the wheat crop.

As the light was bright now and the geese had slackened off, we stood outside the hide and chatted about the

progress so far. To Peter and Arjan's disappointment they had not had a clean shot at any of the numerous flocks that had flown in. They were just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

It was difficult to believe, but while Andre and Arjan worked the dog in clear eyesight, geese were still tempted to come onto the decoys. Another flight of Canadas swooped in low and Andre shot one, they could not gain enough height to clear our hide, so Dirk-Jan also managed to bag a straggler. This was one of the highlights of the

morning and brought a smile to every one's face.

A pheasant burst from the wheat with a startled shriek

Joel was then sent with Edor into the crop to collect the bird. As he and the spaniel worked their way through the crop, a pheasant burst from the wheat with a startled shriek and flew off in the direction of a nearby forest. This was unexpected, pheasants are not as numerous as they once were, so it was a real treat to see this one winging it

away. As Peter hadn't had a chance to take a shot the whole morning he took the opportunity to bag random pigeons that were frequently flying over our hide. He had to be careful, however, as among the wild native wood pigeons were feral pigeons. These birds are unfortunately impossible to distinguish from someone's homing pigeon and were best well left alone. This seemed a shame to me, as I would like to see a lot less feral pigeons in the wild than there currently are. The pigeons were coming in really close now and a



Swinging onto a goose.



A pigeon comes to hand quickly.

netting before heading to Dirk-Jan's house. The geese and pigeons would go in the freezer to hang, then distributed among the hunters later. A breakfast spread was waiting for us as we shared sandwiches and coffee and chatted about the hunt and ourselves.

Joel had had a great experience working with Dirk-Jan's spaniel and also had enough information to complete his high-school assignment about managing geese and crop destruction. Arjan had given his dog a good run and they both had received some good experience in the Dutch countryside.

Dirk-Jan then graciously gave me some breast fillets from a grey goose. They would be later fried in a pan and then grilled for twenty minutes, and served with salt and pepper, delicious.

We all said our goodbyes and headed our own ways with a fantastic summer Randstad wildfowl hunt behind us.

Peter manages a quick shot at a pigeon.

couple of them were bagged within a range of 20 metres. Andre also joined in from his position and the dogs had plenty of work collecting the birds that fell.

We then joined Arjan and Andre and watched the dogs working the area collecting birds. They had to cross the nearby canal to find them in a crop paddock and because Arjan's dog was

still learning, this took a while. If the retriever couldn't find the bird then the spaniel was sent in.

As the pleasant summer sun shone on us among the golden wheat, I thought to myself there was no better way to spend a morning.

Once the dogs had rounded up all of the birds, we headed back to our hide and packed away the decoys and



Mr Dirk-Jan, Peter and Andre and the bag at the end of the day.

do!
discover
outdoors



We have been supplying outdoor equipment to the adventurous since 1939

Experienced staff offer friendly, efficient service
Kit for bush crafters and preppers
New army surplus bunker open on first floor
Brands such as Merrell and Bear Grylls now available in children's sizes.

OPENING HOURS

Mon - Fri 9:00 - 5:30 • Sat 9:00 - 5:00

Contact details

Discover Outdoors, 12-14 College Square East
Belfast, BT1 6DD, 02890320580
www.discoveroutdoorsuk.com
www.facebook.com/discoveroutdoors1



USE OUR NETTING TO PROTECT YOUR STOCK

Bird Control Netting for all your requirements. Cut to size

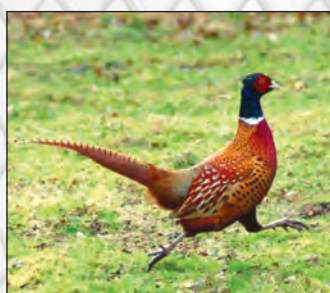
Square Mesh sizes:
50mm, 38mm, 28mm, and 19mm

GK NETS

Foresters Hall, Balglass Rd, Howth, Co. Dublin

Tel/Fax: 01 8391833 Mobile: 087 6798866

Web: www.gknets.com Email: gknets@eircom.net



HOME, FIELD & STREAM ENNISKILLEN

THESE ARE SOME OF THE
MANY BRANDS WE STOCK



IRELANDS LARGEST
SELECTION OF

Rapala  **TASMANIAN
DEVIL**

18 - 20 Church Street, Enniskillen,
Co.Fermanagh, BT74 7EJ



0044 (0) 2866 322114
contact@hfs-online.com

www.hfs-online.com



The Teckel's Tale - Part 2

Hunting the 'little dog' — early days with the author's Teckel as it learns to work

In the last edition of ICS&CL I looked at the Teckel, and examined its history, its heritage and its future. I have always had an interest in the Teckel and promised myself for too many years that one day I would own one. Quite by chance, around late February this year I was talking with a friend in England who has kept Teckels for some years. He had sent a Teckel bitch to his friend several years ago and had just heard from him that he had bred the bitch to a European bred dog and may have a spare puppy. Now I had been keeping my ear to the ground for a pup, but when they came up they were either all sold, not from working parents, or just not suitable.

I toyed with importing a European bred pup but the total cost put me off a little, totting up at over £3,500 by the time I landed him home. The pup cost very little in comparison to the red tape and cost involved with getting him here. My friend's pups had reasonable lineage and both

parents were satisfactory in my eyes for what you would define as a working Teckel. And so it came about that Archie arrived, a small bundle of wild boar coloured wire haired mischief that had been the last pup available and a few months old by the time I got him.

I arrived early one morning at the breeders' home after a long old drive and was greeted by the young tyke tearing up the drive way ahead of me. I parked up, got out of my truck and scooped him up off the ground to which he didn't object. I took a shot rabbit from the back of my truck, threw it down the orchard and he took off, attempted to lift it and then dragged it all the way back to me. There was quite simply something about him I liked. We clicked from the off and I knew he was going home with me. Little did I know however, the sport we would have over the coming weeks, even in his early months!

Our first few days and weeks together were as you would expect. He didn't know me, he didn't know the lurchers and we didn't know him. He had a whole lot to get used to. I took him for his first walk along the river one evening and very quickly lost him as walked through the rushy fields. It wasn't because he ran off, but because he was so small. Up until now, I have been used to long legged speed merchants that hunt by sight. This short legged baying dog who hunted strictly with his nose was a different kettle of fish and not only did I continually loose him in long grass, I continually tripped over him in the yard.

A few weeks after he arrived, we headed for what is called locally the hill ground, or what some people would call moorland. My house is surrounded by it, in every direction there are acres and acres of hill ground and I enjoy walking the lurchers on it as much as possible in

the spring and summer months, however I was unsure as to how short legs would fair in it the deep heather. My good friend JR tagged along and as we walked Archie ran ahead, the only sign he was there was the heather ahead shaking as he pushed through it. When he couldn't get through it he went over it — it seemed by almost swimming on it — and managed to keep up with the big dogs, no problem.

His baptism of fire was to follow a month or two later as we were at a farm near home and searching out rabbits for him to hunt. Up until now he had seen nothing at all, but had been keen using his nose and was starting to find his feet and become very curious around rabbit scent. As we crossed through a small wood Fudge my Lurcher perked up and stood still, staring into a briar bush, giving me the signal that something was there. If it had been the whippet she would have been in the bush, smashing it up and pursuing whatever was inside, but not Fudge! She sits outside, making the signal and waiting for it either to bolt or someone to bolt it so she can get a good run at it!

He was holding tight to the rabbit but didn't quite know what to do

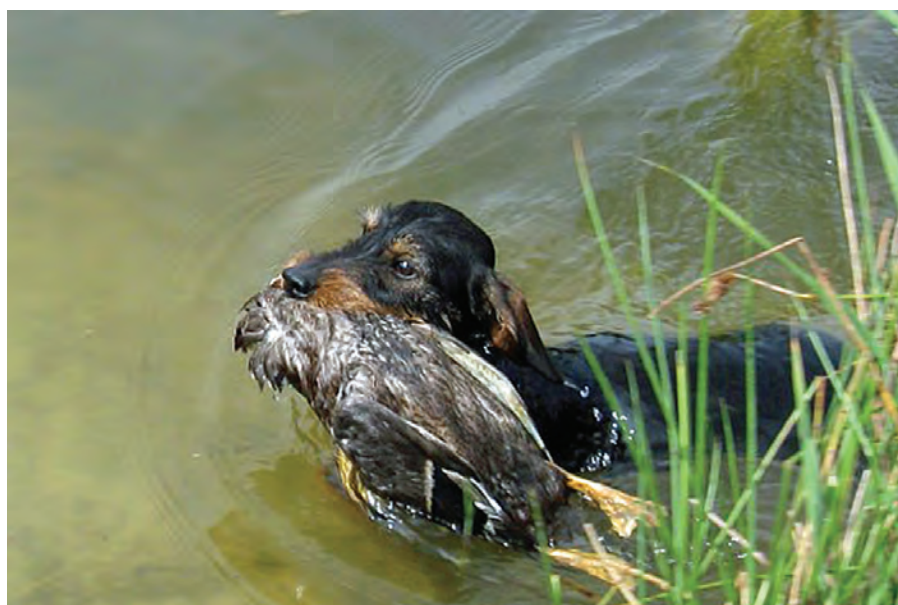
There was no better time to introduce young Archie and as I encouraged him into the bush I saw the rabbit squat down tight. I knew from where it was and the direction of the wind that it knew the Lurcher was there and wouldn't bolt unless it had to. As Archie got closer, it got tighter and all of a sudden it shot out, spun round the lurcher, who missed and then followed it back into the hedge where the Teckel somehow got hold of it. I could hear the whole thing going on. As I pushed my way into him he was holding tight to the rabbit but didn't quite know what to do. I extracted the pair and he dragged his prize it all the way back to the truck!



David & Archie and a good bag after a morning shoot.



Archie pondering on a scent.



A Waldmeister Teckel retrieving a duck.

Photo: Waldmeister Dachshunds

That flicked a switch in his head and from that day he has become obsessed with rabbits. He has had no more catches but has been responsible for setting up a few for the dogs as well as the gun on a few occasions.

With him well on his way to being a rabbitier I began working with him more on everything else and decided to introduce the gun to him. I borrowed a starting pistol from a friend, took his advice on how he trains spaniel pups to the gun and spent an hour or so with a very nervous Teckel on Saturday morning after I let the gun off probably too close for comfort. I spoke to my friend again, adjusted my technique and decided I would start off with an air gun and it did the trick.

David Rogers is not only huntsman and joint master of the Sunnyland Beagles, but he is a crack shot and he very kindly tagged along one spring morning with his airgun to knock down a few rabbits and let Archie see a little more. I had been working on this particular rabbit job for some months over the winter and it needed a good tidy up with the gun and as he shot his way through the ground, Archie and I acted as pickers up and he quickly took to the whole thing and assisted by finding shot rabbits in the cover, retrieving the occasional one and enjoying himself immensely.

If it wasn't 5 o'clock in the morning we really would have got into trouble

We were supposed to be acting professionally on what was a sensitive job and I made the mistake on the first morning of letting Archie of the lead for a sniff. He took off on a scent and spent the next twenty minutes baying like a bloodhound and chasing rabbits up and down rides in the woods, across car parks and through roundabouts! If it wasn't 5 o'clock in the morning we really would have got into trouble, or more likely just been given the boot. That morning David accounted for 42

rabbits, followed the week after by 79 and we would have lost a lot if it hadn't of been for the help of young Archie. Afraid of no bush, he dragged every runner back to us and where he couldn't or didn't, he stood over it until we got there. All good fun and great learning for a young dog.

With his rabbit hunting certificate well and truly awarded he was now a genuine rabbitier and I decided to try him with the shotgun. What I have found is that he was not afraid it, but nor was he fond of it. However if rabbits are involved he will tolerate it, and he has given me some great sport with the gun on a local spot over the last few weeks. My brother in law had been having trouble with rabbits eating his hedges and I decided that the combination of Teckel and 12 bore would be ideal and it was.

Archie and I accounted for over two dozen in a couple of nights and he now strains on the lead when we arrive, so keen he is to get on with it.

Up until now we have only on a couple of occasions had any involvement with foxes and the first I had no idea it even was a fox. We were raking through a small copse near home and he was scampering back and forth in front of me when suddenly stopped, his nose to the ground and then back up, seemingly testing the air. To my left I saw a red flash and quickly realised what it was. I got him onto the scent which he followed but without any sound or in fact really knowing what was going on. I had with fudge my lurcher along, who had been missing for a few minutes, but when I heard her let out a loud yip outside the wood I knew that she had either seen the fox at distance or had caught it. As Archie and I rounded the corner of the wood we saw that the latter was correct, and his European ancestry took over as he spent the next five minutes whining and barking at something he had never seen before, genetic memory runs through us all it seems.

His second encounter came when it

was only the two of us walking very early one Sunday morning as he hunted through some brambles along the edge of a rugby pitch. He began baying, very loud and high pitched, almost yelping. At one stage I thought something was wrong until further up the hedge a large ginger fox broke and high tailed it through a gate and up the road. This difference in tone from rabbits and anything else is was very apparent and a good clue to exactly what's happening in the cover. It is safe to say, even at his young age he has brought a lot of sport and a lot of fun and if I was honest he has probably done a little too much for a puppy. It has been a learning curve for us both and we have a lot more to do yet, blood tracking is something that interests me but so far we have only dabbled.

Having always kept lurchers I often have to remind myself that Archie is made of different stuff. There are times when he drops his nose and tears off up a laneway, through a fence and into the next field while baying like a mastiff and I have to either run after him or wait until he decides to give up which usually takes 20 minutes more when I should have been home long ago. Just today I stupidly let him off the lead near the college campus which has a few rabbits on the boundary and found him over an hour later being fed biscuits by a telephone engineer at the entrance to the grounds, wet, muddy and with rabbit fur stuck to his beard! The Teckel not the engineer! But I knew what he was when I got him so I can't complain, he is doing simply what nature intended and using that exceedingly powerful olfactory gland coupled with a little fire in that long belly. Hopefully he will progress and as the summer draws to a close and we all look forward to the Autumn with its crispy dry days and cooler nights I may have a few more Teckel tales in time for the winter edition of Irish Country Sports and Country Life, so until then. Good Hunting.

Spike Camp, Snow and Stalking

Canisp Mountain from Lodge.

The advert said red deer hind culling in the far north west of Scotland but my attention was grabbed by the words 'Spike Camp.'

The advert on the Assynt Foundation's website sought four stalking guests to assist with the hind cull in the remotest areas of the estate and who must be prepared to sleep under canvass in winter conditions and 'muck in' with all aspects of the expedition. Visions of the trials and privations endured by Shackleton and Scott, immediately sprang to mind.

I contacted Head Stalker John Cullen at his base at Glencanisp Lodge near Lochinver and gained a place on this year's Spike Camp. John forwarded details of equipment and clothing requirements and an outline of the expedition Itinerary. I had a few weeks to prepare for the steep climbs and deep snow that were predicted and took full advantage of the time to improve my hill fitness and to sharpen my marksmanship on the range.

It is a long haul from Belfast to Lochinver, so I built in a stopover in Inverness. The trip was made in a

mixture of snow flurries, punctuated by spectacular mountainous scenery and bright sunshine. On arrival at the Victorian Glencanisp Lodge I was welcomed by John and his team, under stalker John Venters and Jeff Watts, the plant and logistics manager for Spike Camp. I was shown to a comfortable

and spacious room overlooking the loch and a stunning view of the 730 metre Suilven monolith which dominates the local landscape. This room was said to be Lord Vesty's, the former owner of the 44,000 acre Glencanisp and Drumrunie estates. The Assynt Foundation, a community owned social

Campsite at dawn after storm





Breakfast al fresco.

enterprise, purchased the estates and the lodge from the Vestys in 2005 under the provisions of the Scottish land reform act.

I met my companions, retired solicitor Simon Jefferys and PR Consultant Hubert Rasig and hotelier Jann Bengen from Germany at the briefing before the adventure began. Travel to the camp was to be by Argocat ATVs and Quad Bike, and the route was 7 Kilometres of rough and, at certain points, very steep broken track. We would be camping in two arctic bell tents, one with a wood burning stove which would also serve as a communal area for meals and socialising. Cooking was in a shelter to be constructed from wood and polythene sheeting. Our campsite lay at the head of Loch na Gainmh which lies between Suilven and Canisp mountains. Our group would be split into two teams with Simon and me led by John Cullen, and Hubert and Jann led by John Venters; Jeff would take charge of camp management.

Rifles were zeroed with tight groups expected of everybody as it was anticipated that some long shots were likely. Simon and I were using our own rifles, while Hubert and Jann would share the estate rifle. After an excellent meal, we retired early to pack our kit for the early start next morning. Breakfast was enormous and I concluded that this was to see us

through lean times while camping on the hill and living on 'hard tack'. When I tell you that our first meal served in the tent was a bowl of the heartiest Venison casserole I have encountered, you will understand that there were no Shackleton-Like privations to brag about on return.

We were spotting deer and experiencing a rush of expectation

The two heavily laden Argos and the quad bike set off in bright sunshine and rolled along the rising and twisting track. We quickly reached the snow-line and every turn revealed stunning views and we were spotting deer and experiencing a rush of expectation.

John allowed us a few moments to glass the surrounding hills and spot deer on the lower slopes of Suilven and Canisp, before directing the whole team to erecting the tents, constructing the kitchen and moving our gear inside. A call to arms came as John despatched Hubert and Jann to Canisp under stalker John Venters, while he would guide Simon and myself onto the lower slopes of Suilven.

The Argocat was defeated by the deep snow, leaving us with the two kilometres of glistening snow that separated us from our quarry, a parcel of hinds that John had spotted from the camp site. I was nominated to take the first stalk and took up position behind John. Even at such a distance from our deer, John was on the alert for any animals that might be in the intervening ground and every hollow was taken with great stealth. Negotiating drifts and gullies bridged with snow made our approach challenging, but at last we reached a point where John deemed it suitable to leave Simon and our packs in cover and make our final stalk in to a suitable firing point. He indicated no talking and the need to stay close. Taking my rifle he crawled forward frequently pausing to glass ahead and signalling back that the deer were there. As at this stage in a stalk, my heart raced when I got the wave forward from John to get a look at a



The Team set out to follow the deer that had fled downhill before the deepening snow.



John and Simon make their way to the high ground.

hind that stood at the foot of a rock face some 150 metres ahead. Its head and forequarters were hidden from view as it disappeared into a gully only to reappear uphill pausing just long enough for me to take a shot. I squeezed off but lost sight of the deer in my scope due the recoil. John whispered that my shot was high. At that moment, three hinds appeared in front of us at less than 80 metres moving up hill. John issued his instructions to 'take the lead beast, stand up slowly and use my shoulder as a lean.'

This was new to me, the deer were moving as I stood up and laid my rifle

on Johns shoulder and took aim, I judged they were 60 metres away when they stopped and I sent a 130 grain bullet on its way. The Deer was struck hard and rolled some way down the hill before stopping on a level patch of ground. It had expired by the time we reached it. While John gralloched, Simon and I searched for signs of the first deer. From the shot from the firing point I had to conclude that I had made a novice error and my bullet had hit intervening vegetation which deflected it. It was getting late and John declared we needed to get the carcass down before dark. It was an arduous haul, a rocky descent and along the lough side

to rendezvous with Jeff, who had brought the Argocat up to retrieve us, but we were soon back at camp, comparing notes with Hubert and Jann who had also shot a hind.

Jeff set about preparing our evening meal in the field kitchen, while we organised sleeping bags and packed ruck sacs for an early start in the morning. The wood burning stove was going well as we collected large bowls of rich venison casserole and mugs of hot tea. The temperature had fallen below zero and it was a black night and getting breezy as we retreated back into the tent to enjoy our meal in the warm glow of the stove and electric light courtesy of the generator that was humming outside the tent. John advised an early night and no one disagreed.

As Simon, Hubert and Jann left to return to their tent a flurry of snowflakes blew in through the open flap melting in mid-air as they hit the heat of our stove. I was soon snuggled down and fast asleep in my army surplus arctic sleeping bag, but was wide awake a couple of hours later. The wind had risen to a howling gale and the tent was cracking like a whip as the wind tore at the fabric and tested the guy ropes to their limits. One mighty gust found its way into the tent inflating it like a balloon and lifting the tent skirts on my side, momentarily giving me a view of the blizzard outside. A trip outside was required to locate the sledge hammer to secure the tent skirt and ear plugs inserted to blank out the wind and allow a return to sleep.

The wind had gone by daybreak and tents and occupants had survived the night, although the latter needed some adjustment and removal of snow to restore them to full capacity. Breakfast was bacon rolls, venison burgers and mugs of tea and coffee. John concluded that both parties should stalk at a lower level, as the snow would have caused the deer to move downhill. Hubert and Jann would cover the ground immediately to the north of Suilven and our group move 5Km to the northeast of camp by Argocat to an extensive



Simon sets up for his three in a row.



Simon and John with hind and calf.



The Author with a bedraggled orphaned calf.

depression surrounded by low hills. Simon was riding up front with me in the back. My musings at the scenery now resplendent in the bright sunshine was interrupted as we came to a sharp halt. I sat tight guessing that deer had been spotted when Simon got carefully out of the vehicle. I could hear whispered instructions as Simon loaded up and took a firing position. Three shots followed in the space of no more than 8 seconds, each followed by a clearly audible thump. Simon, a relative new comer to stalking, had three clean kills to his credit, a hind, follower and calf. The beasts were quickly gralloched and dragged to the Argo to be taken to the larder by Jeff, having dropped us off at a track leading to an undulating plain of snow-covered heather and hill lochs. We proceeded in single file, pausing to glass the far away slopes and every hollow as they presented. Initially only groups of stags were seen until we crested a gully, surprising a parcel of hinds sheltering less than 30 metres away. The hinds moved swiftly up hill and were out of sight in an instant. That we got so close to the hinds before spooking them said a lot for our stealth, a reminder that the stalker must anticipate finding deer at any stage in the stalk.

'Hind, follower and a calf, take the calf first,' came the whisper

John moved us on but this time leaving us some 20 metres behind as he negotiated the now rising, rocky ground. Reaching a crest, he stopped, dropping slowly to one knee, turned and signalled to get down. John scouted forward, and I flat-crawled to his side. John guided me on to three hinds some 200 mtrs away just below a ridge. John whispered 'hind, follower and a calf, take the calf first.' As I lined up on the calf I could see that they were not settled and frequently overlapped as they fed their way up to and over the ridge edge. I was happy that I had held back and not taken the shot as the likelihood of a wounding

was a real possibility. With the rifle made safe, John led us over the ridge where we found possibly the same group feeding some 230 metres away, but this time they were very settled. John gave me a nod to carry on and I sensed that he was keen for me to act quickly before they decided to move off again. I picked up the group in my scope and waited for them to present broad side and with clear space between them. I regard this situation as a bonus, as it gives me time to let my heart rate drop to a point where I am not distracted by the cross hairs pulsating to its rhythm.

Two were perfectly presented for a heart and lung shot, allowing me to line up on the smallest beast. I squeezed off the shot fully intending to reload and try for the second when, under the recoil my elbow slipped down the slope causing me to lose sight of the beast in the scope. I was convinced that I must have missed but John urged me to reload and engage the other two, 'The first one is down!' When I regained my sight picture the remaining two hinds were now standing quite still and broad side on, but with their heads up and they were scanning the hillside. I lined up on the smaller of the two and fired, this time seeing her go down. Reloading, I swung on to the last of the trio only to find her trotting towards us. She came to within 100 metres, stopped on a track to look behind her and I took

the shot. I heard the bullet strike with a solid thud and she leaped forward running head down another 50 metres before dropping, a classic reaction to a heart shot.

With the light now fading, we needed to contact Jeff to come in with the Argo to collect us and the beasts. John called him up on the radio but we needed to use a xenon flashing light to guide him in to our position. On the return trip we were involved in a white out which allowed John and Jeff to demonstrate their navigation expertise and the value of their GPS. Gaining the main track, we were soon bumping and slewing our way back to camp to be greeted by Jann and Hubert who had also got a beast each. Everyone was in good form and our evening meal was washed down with some excellent white wine courtesy of Jann and Hubert. The evening was spent in front of the wood burning stove chatting on hunting and firearms legislation in our respective countries. Stories from previous Spike Camps kept us amused until we settled into our sleeping bags for a peaceful night.

We awoke to find that there had been a considerable fall of snow. John proposed that the deer were most likely to be down at the same level as the lodge and that it would be more practical to relocate to the lodge. Somewhat disappointedly we made our retreat to the luxury and five star home

cooking of the lodge. The bright side of this situation was undoubtedly the opportunity to see much more of the estate and this entailed travelling by boat to get to the stalking grounds.

The next two day's stalking took us to the steep slopes of Beinn Gharbh above Loch Assynt where we left out two culled deer calves as supplementary feeding for the Golden Eagles. At each site John, who has a special interest in their welfare, set up trail cameras to capture images of them feeding. On these boating expeditions Jeff helmed the boat and waited on our return in near freezing conditions highlighting the lengths that the Glencanisp Lodge Team go to ensure the success of the event.

Our team of four guests accounted for 20 beasts for the week. We all had a great experience of winter camping in the mountains and were very appreciative of the excellent planning and work put in by John and his whole team on our behalf. Would I recommend Spike Camp? Most certainly! It is an experience I would like to repeat, but for the less adventurous the Assynt Foundation has excellent stalking ground to suit all abilities and stags to match. Further details can be found on the their web site <http://www.glencanisp-lodge.co.uk/index.php/stalking> and Facebook Page: Assynt Deer Stalking Highland



Canisp Lodge

Scottish Diary

It is hard to beat a day outdoors especially if you are joined by good company, and life's stresses and strains are forgotten as enjoyment and laughter speed you through the day.

The event is logged in your memory but, if you are anything like me you, will experience a certain fuzziness as you think back on the more distant memories. Photography captures our experiences and looking back at old photographs is a great method of evoking fond memories of how we spent our time, the company we enjoyed and the surroundings. One photograph I took of the Birnham Oak tree took me right back to my English literature classes pouring over the works of Shakespeare. The tree is believed to be a remnant of the great forest mentioned Macbeth but according to the experts it's probably not old for that enough to have been the actual tree but it is one of the oldest in the area and it thought possible that Shakespeare may have visited the area with a troupe of touring players.

Recently, the Scottish Gamekeepers Association's Bert Burnett posted an old gundog photograph on Facebook and mentioned that my Dad was in the photo. The photo was taken in the late



Birnham Oak tree at Newtyle - was this really one of the trees mentioned in Macbeth?

70s or early 1980s. It instantly took me back to my childhood when I used to accompany my dad to all the gundog tests across Scotland in the summer months. We would travel many miles to test locations and see the familiar faces of men (woman rarely took part back then) and their dogs competing on the

gundog circuit.

My Dad, aged 76, is still involved with gundogs and hosts free, informal training classes. He has trained, worked and competed with his gundogs for more than 40 years, winning many open tests and judging a few along the way. He competed in three internationals and



Some handlers teaching their gundogs the basics required to work in the field.



(Left/right) Guide Tom Brown and Malcom Anderson.

he won the open gundog test at the very first Scottish Game Fair more than 25 years ago. I recently accompanied him to a farm field outside Cupar to watch his friends and their dogs work on the basics of gundog training.

I also had a great day out with my Mum and sister to the Highland show, Edinburgh. The event seems to grown bigger each year and the food halls are a stuffed with produce. One of the most encouraging sights was the ALDI stand promoting the use of game and local produce.

Newtyle beat breaks records

It was one of those exceptionally rare baking hot days of summer when I caught up with Newtyle's Ghillie Andy Gunn. The stretch of the Tay at Newtyle

looked great and the warmth of the sun made me want to forget about the rest of my day and stay on the river. Newtyle is a very popular and, at the time of writing, it was the fourth most productive beat on the Tay. Andy said: "We have broken records going back 10 years for April, May, June and July and, out of the top four beats we are the least expensive."

In June, I met with Dr David Summers, Fisheries Director at the Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board, to discuss the impact of catch and release on the salmon population. Afterwards I drove to Meikleour Estate to photograph casting instructor Tom Brown working on the river with four anglers keen to improve their technique. One of them was a business coach who enjoys

fishing and sometimes uses the river as a location for his coaching sessions.

Aberdeenshire-based mother of five, Jennifer Ramsay, was also one of Tom's angling pupils. Jennifer first started fishing three or four years after seeing her eldest son's life transformed by fishing. Keen to do more to help troubled youngsters she set up a business with Paul Chisholm. They offer a range of specialised activities designed to help and support troubled youngsters, salmon fishing is a huge part of the programme.

Thirty pounders were seen jumping at Boxwood Bush

I spent the night in the East Wing (you can rent this part) of the majestic Meikleour House. I was on the top floor of the house and I had the most fantastic views over the Tay and across the formal lawns to the edge of woodland where the roe deer browsed in the fading light. I woke the following day refreshed (who wouldn't)? ready for a big day on the river. Ten lady anglers, four casting instructors and two gillies were taking to the Meikleour and Upper Islamouth beat to raise funds for the Angling for Youth Development charity based in Glasgow. The charity focusses on taking nature into the community by giving youngsters an opportunity to try out angling. Fiona Armstrong, one of the charity's patrons, also attended the event to fish. Fiona became a household name as a national television journalist, she is also a keen angler, author and presenter of a number of fishing programmes.

The ladies, of mixed angling abilities and experience, were split up into small groups to fish from boats and the riverbank. It was a fun-filled day, casting instructor Tom Brown and the unforgettable Malcolm Anderson from Caledonia Fly Company kept everyone entertained with their humour and wit on and off the river. Throughout the morning a number of very large (thirty pound plus) salmon were seen jumping at Boxwood Bush. I witnessed one monster fish jump clean out off the



The party at Meikleour had a fun-filled day with casting instructor Tom Brown and the unforget-table Malcolm Anderson from Caledonia Fly Company.



Tom giving Jennifer some casting instruction.



Newtyle gillie Andy Gunn with an eager angler.

water, I am sure it created a tidal wave as it re-entered because it was so big!

TV's Fiona Armstrong was first to catch

Fiona was first to hook a fish from a boat but after a ten minute fight her line snapped on some rocks. Late morning, we were joined by Dr David Summers and Dr. Aileen McLeod, MSP for South Scotland (SNP), Minister for Environment, who, together with hostess Claire Mercer Nairne, presented the AFYD charity with a cheque for £1300.

A two course lunch was supplied by the Meikleour Arms Hotel and served on the veranda of the Meikleour house fishing hut in the sunshine. After lunch the ladies were keen to get back out on the river and within the first hour Daniella hooked a fish from the bank but sadly lost it.

The weather has been very challenging this year, some game cover crops have suffered from a cold late spring and, as a result, failed. We have had a handful of hot, dry summery days but on the whole it has been wet and cold. Throughout July (the heating was on!) it looked and felt like October and as we go into the shooting season we are watching the weather very closely and keeping our fingers crossed for a dry spell.

Staying on the wet theme, I have been trying out new wellies from Sporting Hares based in Wales. I spend my life in wellies so they do need to be comfortable, hard wearing and non-slip. The Sporting Hares Fieldsport boot is a very good quality neoprene lined, zipped wellington boot for less than £100. When you carry a gun or camera equipment boot grip is always a big consideration. I have been wearing the Fieldsport boot daily for a number of weeks and I am impressed; in addition to the level of comfort, they have given me grip on surfaces where other wellies have failed. www.sportinghares.com/

I hope everyone enjoys a safe, fruitful shooting season and the weather does not present us with evenmore challenges.

Hunting Roundup

Hunt Chase closes Balmoral Show for another year

The popular Hunt Chase, which closes the annual Royal Ulster Agricultural Show at Balmoral Park, Maze, Lisburn, took place in incessant rain which made for slippery going throughout the contest. However, wet weather tends not to discourage the contestants or spectators and this year was no exception. This was reflected in the fact that there was a record number of teams - fifteen - and the large numbers around the main arena, none of whom had any shelter to protect them. The North Down Foxhounds won the Best Turned Out team award deservedly, though it must be said that every team was very well turned out.

Prior to the first round, Craig Caven presented a cheque, for £1,000, on behalf of the Northern Ireland Masters of Hounds Association to Stephen Thompson, who gratefully accepted it on behalf of the Motor Neurone

Disease Association.

A series of frenetic early rounds took place, in increasingly wet conditions, which included some involuntary dismounts happily without injury, before the semi finals saw the holders, Wexford's Killinick Harriers, eliminate the Louth Foxhounds and the Ward Union Staghounds similarly account for the Newry Harriers. In an even more keenly contested final, the Killinicks proved that their previous victory was no fluke by prevailing over the Ward Unions. The prizes were then distributed by Ian Wilson of the sponsors of Wilson's Auctions, accompanied by RUAS president William Robinson.

Great credit is due to the organisers, course builder Noel Fitzpatrick and his team, but mostly to the spectators as the Hunt Chase once again proved worth waiting for as the finale to the Province's most prestigious agricultural show.

IMFHA hound show at Stradbally, Co Laois

An already excellent show continues to develop and nineteen packs contested this year's event at its now traditional venue of the Cosby Family's impressive home, with what I think was a record breaking number of spectators who were undeterred by intermittent showers.

In the doghound classes, judges Henry Berkeley (the Berkeley) and Will Bryer MFH (the Cattistock) worked swiftly with the Wexford based Island Foxhounds laying down an early marker with Barrister, in the unentered class.

The unentered Old English class turned out to be the only morning class which the Island did not win – as they did not contest it. This class was won by Limerick Sabbath before Barrister and his sibling Barricade took the unentered couples class. Island Buster12 and Bowman12 took first and



The grin says it all! South Tyrone Foxhounds' Huntsman Ryan Campbell with the winning two couple of Bitches at the National Hound Show at Stradbally, Co Laois.



Huntsman Conor Dwyer proudly shows The Champion Dog Hound Island Buster at the National Hound Show at Stradbally, Co Laois.

third places with West Wicklow Gunshot13 separating them for second place, while the entered couples class went to Buster and his kennel mate Paragon11. In the stallion hound class Island Paragon11 prevailed over the Kilkenny who took second place with Ludlow Magnum13. The now expected announcement of an Island win in the Doghound Championship turned out to be an underestimation when Buster12 prevailed over his kennel mate Paragon11, who took the Reserve Championship rosette.

After lunch, judges Alistair Jackson (former Director of Hunting in GB) and Charles Carter MFH (West Norfolk) gave the Wicklow packs first and second places in the unentered bitch class with Wicklow Paisley prevailing over West Wicklow Loopy. In the Old English bitch class Waterford Snowdrop took the honours over Limerick Petticoat.

IMFHA Bursary Scheme Certificates

The IMFHA hound show, at Stradbally Hall Co Laois, was the scene of the presentation of certificates to the Association's latest bursary apprentices.

This excellent scheme has seen outstanding young people placed with experienced huntsmen as they enter hunt service. It enables them to gain the best possible guidance and instruction.

Chairman Rupert MacAuley oversaw the presentation of certificates by Michael Higgins, former master and huntsman of the Tipperary Foxhounds, to Keith Broderick who had been paced with Kevin Donohue at the Ballymacad Foxhounds and to Shane McGillick, who had been placed with Niall Mahon at the Westmeath Foxhounds.

Rupert MacAuley tells me that two new appointments to the scheme have been made with Tom Moran going to the Ballymacads while Adrienne Copthorne has taken her place with

Sam Staniland, huntsman at the Kilkenny Foxhounds.

Around the Puppy Shows

Rupert MacAuley MFH, who is chairman of the IMFHA, welcomed a knowledgeable crowd to the **West Wicklow Foxhound** kennels near Blessington where judges Paul Kerr MH (Mr Kerr's Beagles) and Billy Connors, ex huntsman of the Island Foxhounds in Co Wexford, had 2 ½ couple of doghounds and 2 ½ couple of bitches from two litters for their consideration.

After due deliberation they passed the following decisions to their host.

Doghounds

1. Lismore, 2. Longford, 3.

Lonsdale.

Bitches

1. Lapwing, 2. Loopy, 3. Lupin.

This litter was by Tipperary Captain 09 out of Kildare Saintly 08.

Senior joint master Dr David Mortell welcomed a large crowd to the **Westmeath Foxhound** kennels outside Mullingar when the new entry was judged by former joint master Caroline Preston and Morpeth huntsman Sandy Wilson.

Seven and a half couple of doghounds and two and a half couple of



Huntsman Keith McCall and Judges Mark Casserly and Mick Few at the Tynan and Armagh Puppy Show.

bitches, from eight litters, gave the judges something to think about before they passed the following decisions to Dr Mortell.

Doghounds

1. Salisbury Duke of Beaufort Saracen 12 Morpeth Pancake 11.
2. Marshal Grove and Rufford Magnum 12 Morpeth Giggie 10.
3. Ringwood Ballymacad Daly 13 Their Ribbon 13.

Bitches

1. Whimsy Monitor 09 Whimper 12.
 2. Gravity Tedworth Statue 11 Grammar 12.
 3. Ribbon Sister of Ringwood
- The doghound Salisbury was then declared Champion Puppy with Whimsy as Reserve.

At the **Tynan and Armagh** kennels huntsman Keith McCall brought three couple of doghounds and three couple of bitches from two litters out of Hurworth bitches before judges Mick Few, former huntsman of the East Sussex and Romney Marsh and Mark Casserly, newly appointed huntsman of the Iveagh Foxhounds. Keith McCall has put a tremendous amount of effort into refurbishing the kennels and has done a lot of the work himself, a fact referred to by senior joint master Brian Dougan in his speech of welcome.

The judges quickly settled on their placings enabling the following announcements to be made.

Doghounds

1. Lodger Louth Lobster 11 Hurworth Larkrise 11
2. Locksmith Sibling of Lodger
3. Loader Sibling of Lodger

Bitches

1. Locket Sibling of
2. Lotion Sibling of Lodger
3. Lobby Sibling of Lodger

Lodger was then declared Champion Puppy with his sister, Locket, as Reserve Champion. Northern pride then received a lift in the unentered couples class when East Down Bauble and Bargain shaded Meath River and Barmaid before West Wicklow Label14 beat East Down Risky14 in the entered bitch class. In the entered couples class



Huntsman Barry Jones shows the new entry to Judges Conor Dwyer and Aubrey Chapman at the North Down Foxhounds Puppy Show at Comber.

the Kilkenny siblings Chutney and Chariot14 pushed the West Wicklow Boozy14 and Label14 into second place.

The prestigious two couples class produced the biggest grin of the day, on the face of South Tyrone huntsman Ryan Carvill, when siblings Beverage, Benefit, Beauty and Beacon took the honours. This litter was sired by North Down Shylock11 out of Fitzwilliam (Milton) Beverage10. Meath Mable13 then took the Brood Bitch class from West Wicklow Melody11 to set up the finale, the Bitch Championship.

This produced a fitting end to a very successful show, with Kilkenny Chutney14 prevailing over the unentered Wicklow Paisley. Organiser David Lalor MFH and his team deserve enormous credit for the development and presentation of this show.

The **Louth Foxhounds** were again blessed with a beautiful day for their puppy show at the Lisrenny Kennels. Huntsman Alan Reilly produced 5 couple of doghounds and 6 ½ couple of bitches, from five litters, for judges James Lowry, the former huntsman of the Westmeath Foxhounds and Evo Shirley MFH, the newly appointed huntsman of the Portman.

The judges quickly and efficiently came to the following decisions and passed them to Edmund Mahoney MFH

to announce to everyone.

Doghounds

- Spiderman Lobster 11 Spicy 10
Spartacus sibling of Spiderman
Tower Brosna Tonton 07 Lonely 11

Bitches

- Golden Granite 09 Lottie 10
Goblet sibling of Golden
Torrent sibling of Tower

Everyone then repaired to the Orchard where Alan Reilly showed off the whole pack and it was good to see hounds with eyes only for their huntsman despite the presence of some loose sheep at the top end of the Orchard.

Aubrey Chapman and huntsman Conor Dwyer travelled up from the Island Foxhounds in Co Wexford to judge the **North Down Foxhounds'** new entry, at Comber.

Huntsman Barry Jones brought forward 3½ couple of doghounds and 4½ couple of bitches from three litters, all out of Mendip Farmer's bitches, for their consideration.

A peaceful, sunny day was suddenly enlivened by the refreshment tent being blown over the fence and into the grass yard, so I suppose I should say that the puppy show brought the house down!

Despite this distraction the judges worked on and passed the following decisions to Raymond Mitchell MFH.



Huntsman Alan Reilly show the Louth Foxhounds new entry to Judges Evo Sheridan MFH and James Lowry Watkins.

Doghounds

Willson Splinter 10
Mendip Wisdom 10
Devon Kildare Charmer 07
Mendip Damage 08
Bazal Heythrop Wiseman 11 Mendip
Ballad 10

Bitches

Ballad Sibling of Bazal
Demison Sibling of Devon
Willow Sibling of Willson
Ballad was then announced as
Champion Puppy with Willson as
Reserve Champion. I am glad to say
that the tent will be available for next
year but with more weights attached to
it!

Death of Captain Tom Morgan MFH

Tom Morgan MFH, West Waterford Foxhounds, has died at the age of 94 years and his death concludes a glorious chapter in Ireland's hunting history.

A native of Newport in Wales Tom Morgan settled in Co Waterford, in 1949, having previously served in the British Army and travelled widely. At home, on war leave, he proposed to his late wife Elsie who was then whipping-in to the Llangibby Foxhounds. After

the end of World War Two he organised a team to rescue 25 German Army horses which were then used to follow the pack which he and Elsie had formed in Schleswig Holstein. They had some excellent sport there, post war, which gave them both valuable experience for their later work with the West Waterford Foxhounds.

Having greatly enjoyed a post war hunting holiday in Waterford, they became joint masters of the West Waterford Foxhounds, serving together for 36 seasons from 1953-1989 with his wife hunting hounds until 1984 and Captain Morgan was still in office when he died. Some notable hound breeders joined forces with the Morgans to forge a distinctive stamp of hound for the West Waterfords. Ikey Bell and Ben Hardaway 111 were two of the most notable of these hound breeders and Tom Morgan played a leading role in this breeding programme. Elsie Morgan died in 2008 but Tom remained in office and fully involved himself in the West Waterford's life. I saw him, interested and knowledgeable, at the Irish National Hound Show at Stradbally, Co Laois, in 2014 when he presented the Isaac Bell trophy to Ryan Carvill, huntsman of the South Tyrone

Foxhounds. Away from hunting the couple bred some notable horses, many of them competed by Elsie, at the highest level, for Ireland.

The funeral service, at St Luke's Church Knockmourne, saw Tom's coffin escorted by riders and hounds before he was laid to rest with his beloved wife as West Waterford huntsman Colman Walsh blew 'Gone Away.' Every sympathy is extended to his nephew Ewart Richards, his wife Barbara, Tom's great grand nephew Nigel, his wife Toni and their sons James and Dominic in their very sad loss.

Death of George H Briscoe MH

The death of George H. Briscoe, at 94 years of age, has brought to an end the longest mastership in, I think I am right in saying, the entire hunting world.

An erudite country gentleman George had been master of the Tara Harriers since 1942 when he also began to hunt the hounds. The family connection to these hounds extends



The late George Briscoe MH.

back to the late nineteenth century when George's grandfather, George V. Briscoe, took on the pack after the death of John Preston, this being the family name of the Lords of Tara.

Continuity is everything at the Tara Harriers. George's daughter Lorraine (McDowell) joined the mastership in 1992 while his nephew, Henry Smith, has been there since 1982 and has hunted the hounds since 2001. This continuity extends beyond the mastership — the Briscoe's have hosted the Opening Meet for no less than 78 years and George, in his 73 years in the mastership, only ever had a Dowdall as kennel huntsman, Sabine Dowdall having followed her father and grandfather into the post.

Away from hunting, George enjoyed shooting, fishing, point-to-points and racing as well as being a talented writer and public speaker. His comprehensive diaries and his prodigious memory enabled him to produce two eminently readable books while his articles and anecdotes have left an incomparable record of a long life well lived and enjoyed.

It was, too, a life which accorded everyone their place, most particularly farmers and other land owners, for whom George had nothing but praise and gratitude for allowing the Hunt across their land. He never failed to remind everyone who hunted that crossing other peoples land was a privilege.

George lost his first wife, Louise, in 2001 and the following year he married Jean Wilson who had also been widowed. She, too, had an impeccable hunting pedigree her family, the Craigies, having been masters of the Ward Union Staghounds.

A large congregation at St Patricks Cathedral in Trim, Co Meath, saw George laid to rest with Henry Smith blowing 'Gone Away' for this hugely respected and much loved country gentleman.

I have covered a number of Tara Harrier meets for this magazine and, on each occasion, everyone was greeted and then seen off by a smiling George

Briscoe, glass in hand, twinkle in eye and with warm words of encouragement. In conversation with Henry Smith, he said that, far from resenting the arrival of a younger man into the mastership and eventually to hunt his hounds, George provided the exact opposite example of active support, encouragement and advice. Henry added 'in thirty years in the mastership and fifteen as huntsman I simply could not have coped without George's support, encouragement and enthusiasm which made my job so much easier.'

A large man in build, accomplishments and standing he will be hugely missed. Every sympathy is extended to Jean Briscoe, George's daughter Lorraine her husband and family, his sister Stella and his step daughters in their very sad loss.

Death of Seamus 'Bill' Coney

The death, at sixty five years of age, of Seamus 'Bill' Coney after a long and courageous fight against cancer has robbed hunting in Ireland of an active, committed and knowledgeable proponent. A native of Co Tyrone Seamus had a lifelong love of dogs and hounds and he began hunting in childhood. He hunted his own hounds, the Stewartstown Killycolpy Harriers, initially in the Ardboe Moss area, then throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic becoming, in due course, a very prominent and influential figure in the Foot Harriers' world.

An Annual Show became an established feature of the local calendar with Seamus at the helm. His own, hounds were often in the ribbons in some very keenly contested shows and these successes were frequently replicated at other shows.

As well as hunting and showing Seamus was very active in trail hunting where his hounds were also very successful and frequently in the ribbons. These events brought Seamus into contact with another large and committed group of hound enthusiasts and he also became well known and

influential in these circles.

He had a twenty year association with the South Tyrone Foxhounds some of which he spent looking after the hounds. Another local pack to benefit from Seamus Coney's drive, enthusiasm and assistance was Ireland's only private pack of foot Foxhounds, the Dungannon Foxhounds. Indeed, he played a pivotal role when the pack was reformed after the death of Kenneth Cahoon MFH and his daughter, Claire, says: "He spent many a day and NIGHT !!! hunting with them and enjoying the craic." The Dungannon's repaid this debt to Seamus by escorting his coffin at Cookstown, Co Tyrone, with six and a half couple of hounds and a full complement of members, under Oliver Little MFH, at this very well attended funeral.

Even in his hospital bed Seamus continued to assist the South Tyrones by organising a meet for them. Stephen Hutchinson MFH stood up in his stirrups to tell the field and car followers that they owed the day's sport to Seamus Coney suggesting that they should let him know of their appreciation. Seamus later rang Stephen to ask him why "all these people" were ringing to thank him. Typically, he did not think that he had done anything noteworthy! Even those who knew Seamus Coney well were astounded by the strength, courage and determination with which he faced, even defied, his illness over such a protracted period of time.

He brought hunting to a large number of people who would never, normally, have been exposed to the sport let alone become very active and committed participants. I think that that is a remarkable legacy to mark the passing of a remarkable man and I know that he would have appreciated the fact that hounds escorted him to his final resting place.

Every sympathy is extended to Seamus's wife Kathleen, their sons Eamonn and Barry, daughter Claire and to the entire Coney family circle on their very sad loss.



ata arms

60 years



IRL Tel 090 6470344
UK Tel 0208 1234226
www.wildhunter.eu
www.ataarms.co.uk



VENZA





Department of
**Culture, Arts
and Leisure**

www.dcalni.gov.uk



Angling

in Northern
Ireland

Over 60 Game and
Coarse Waters available.
Starting from **£9.50** for
Three Days Fishing



What's stopping you?

T: 0300 200 7860 | www.nidirect.gov.uk/angling

Department of Culture,
Arts & Leisure Inland Fisheries Group

Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street

Belfast
BT2 7EG

The Irish Fly Fair & International Angling Show

For numerous years my dream was to run a high-quality fly fair and game angling show in Ireland.

I always thought that our art and passion was never well enough represented in this part of the world, though many have tried and done their best and some shows I must say some have been very good that I worked at.

Although normally game angling and fly dressing have continually shared with other angling disciplines, I always thought the country deserved a proper game angling and fly fair, like those I had demonstrated at many times in England, Italy, Germany and Holland. After all, it's one of the biggest sports in the country.

So, over fifteen years ago, I bought the domain name Irish Fly Fair and started thinking how I could make this dream come true. I have worked at many angling and country shows over the years so I had good contacts, I knew so many wonderful fly dressers, fly casters, traders and well known names in the angling world and they knew me, so I had the basic plan. But what I needed was funders and sponsors or, even better, very good event organisers to team up with me. I wanted a top class show, but never had the money to put into it to make it what I required.

An opportunity arose when I was working at the Angling Ireland Expo in Dublin and met Hugh Bonner from Mara Media the organiser. I must say they are excellent event organisers and impressed me immensely. Irish Angler editor David Dinsmore knew I owned the name and suggested I talked to Mara Media, and our first meeting went pretty well, although Hugh did not agree to anything there and then but



The Galway Bay Hotel provides a fine location.

suggested we should meet again. At the next meeting with Hugh and Grace McDermott from Mara's sales team we all agreed to work together on the event.

I originally wanted to have the show in Belfast or Dublin because of their large populations, as I wanted a good turnout to keep the traders etc happy. I wanted it when the game fishing season was over also for that reason, and Hugh suggested that Galway would be an excellent venue for a game angling show and the more I thought about it, the more it seemed to make perfect sense. The west of Ireland is in the midst of so much great game angling, with world famous names like Corrib, Mask, Conn, Galway Weir, the Moy and the Delphi to name just a few. This part of Ireland had never had a great angling show and this one would be dedicated to game angling for which the west of Ireland has been a Mecca for hundreds of years for trout and salmon anglers.

More than just a 'show'

I wanted this show to have some of the best attractions for game anglers, not just a show that the public paid into to browse angling shops - although trade stands are a major part of any show and it's a great place for the anglers to get a good deal on tackle. Also a large footfall is good for the trade-stands who want to showcase their products. I wanted a mix of top quality trade stands, fly casting demos, common interest stands, teaching, talks, fishing simulators, competitions and, at its core, a host of the best fly dressers in the world to keep the public entertained and pass on their knowledge. So this is what we went about trying to create.

The venue had to be impressive too; I wanted elegance, style and comfort for everyone who attended - the people working there and demonstrating and of course the public, so Hugh suggested we used the Galway Bay Hotel in



Team Work - Paddy Kennan giving some useful tips.

Salthill. What a venue it is, overlooking Galway Bay and the Clare Hills, an Award winning 4 star hotel considered by many to be one of the top hotels in Ireland. It had massive function rooms perfect for trade-stands and a huge conservatory which would be fabulous for fly dressers to give demos, so that's where we chose have the event.

On the first morning of the show last year, everything was in place. We had an impressive list of fly tiersters from all over the world, though with a strong Irish cohort, we had a large number of trade and interest stands, fly casters and angling instructors, well known angling celebrities, and experts like Dr Ken Whelan to give talks.

I was thinking 'what have I done?'

We had everything in place to run our event, after many months of planning and hard work by me, my sister Elaine who built the website and the Mara Media team, who were a dream to work with. We had promoted it to the best of our ability and at great expense to Mara Media, with me pulling in some favours from my contacts in the angling world. I remember standing at the front door alongside Hugh silently praying for the game angling public to arrive. I had not slept the night before the show, I was so worried that all our hard work, effort and expense was going to be in vain. I remember standing at 10.15am, after the doors had opened thinking 'what have I done'? But then people started turning up, numbers increased, the interest in the show from anglers was incredible. They came from all over Ireland and many from overseas. The

feedback was fantastic, with many saying it was the best angling event they had attended (you can read the feedback on our web site www.irishflyfair.com)

That was the first year and we are now into our sixth year, Mara media are no longer with us as they though we still work at other events. The show has got bigger and better each year and is now the biggest fly fishing-only show in Ireland and the UK.

This year the show should be even better for the public as we have assembled the largest group of fly tiers ever to dress flies at a show in Ireland - around 60 of the world's best from 15 different countries, we have also a larger number of trade stands selling top brands, we have great talks and fly casting by World Champion fly casters including Charles Jardine, Gary Scott, Scott MacKenzie, Glenda Powell, and Hywel Morgan and many more. We have tuition by APGAI who number some of the highest qualified game angling casting instructors, a youth fly tying competition and much much more.

Here is a list of just some of the international fly dressers that I must thank for coming, This Year we should have around sixty including from England Alan Bithell, Barry Ord Clarke, Charles Jardine, Frank Moors, Ian McKenzie, John Green, Philip White, Stuart Hardy, France David Gourong, Germany Hendrik Wiegand, Italy Enrico Fantasia, Fabio Federighi, Ireland Alice

Comba, Bobby Bryans, Ciaran Reilly, Dean Armstrong, Denis O'Toole, George Burdess, Joe McDonald, Michael McShane, Peter O'Reilly, Robert Reilly, Ryan Houston, Joe Stitt, Denmark Bjarne Laursen, Lithuania Vytas Markevicius, Netherlands Bram van Houten, Johan Put, Norway Roger Enger Lie, Jon-Anders Nethaug, Scotland Brian Burnett, Dougie Loughridge, Jim Lees, Sweden Anders Ståhl, Martin Rudin, USA Kat Rollin Linda Hotchkiss, Eunan Hendron, John Strand, Wales George Barron, Ilan Evans and Trevor Jones, a pretty impressive line up you must agree and there are many more to sign up. (This is by invite only and if you don't see your name there and think you were invited please email me.)

This show is a must see for the angling enthusiast with many clubs and anglers making a weekend of it, and we have entertainment on the Saturday night too. I hope to see you all there please come along and give it your support, we need events like this to work in Ireland in these challenging times. If there are any companies out there who can help us in any way with sponsoring, please contact us we would be only too glad to listen. See you there on the 7th and 8th November at Galway Bay Salthill Galway from 10-6pm - Sunday 10-5pm.

For more details contact him via email anglingclassics@aol.com or get more information at www.anglingclassics.co.uk or www.irishflyfair.com

Starting 'em young at flytying.



The Irish Fly Fair

& International Angling Show

7th & 8th November 2015

Galway Bay Hotel in Salthill

Open 10am to 5pm both days

Some of the biggest names in Fly Fishing



Charles Jardine



Gary Scott



Glenda Powell



Hywel Morgan



Scott McKenzie



Stevie Munn

..... And Many More

50
Of The Worlds
Best
Fly Tyers



Plus

HUGE Range of
Tackle & Trade Stands

Junior Fly Dressing
Competition

Fly Casting Demo's

Talks & Presentations

And much much more

www.irishflyfair.com

Brought to you
With the help of
our Sponsors

HARDY
ALNWICK | ENGLAND

SEMPERFLI
FLY TYING MATERIALS

VENIARD

PARTRIDGE
OF REDDITCH

The Clare River – a Hidden Gem

When you think of salmon rivers in Ireland, names like Drowes, Moy, Owenduff, Laune, Finn, Blackwater and Delphi trip off the tongue easily. Think a bit harder and the likes of the Owenea, Easky, Owenmore, Erriff, Feale and Suir spring to mind. It's unlikely, however, that the Clare River will be near the top of your list, unless, that is, you live near it or have been introduced to its charms. Hidden in plain sight, this productive and homely river is overshadowed by its more illustrious and renowned companions in the West, but locals know it as one of the most rewarding fisheries in the country for game anglers.

Rising in the rolling countryside of south Mayo and north Galway, the Clare River flows through mostly gentle gradients on its long journey through east Galway to join Lough Corrib just north of Galway. Indeed, the river was not even a continuous watercourse for most of its history, until the 19th century when a channel was blasted with the newly discovered dynamite to drain the surrounding farmland that was flooded for much of the year. Prior to this, the river had flowed sporadically, disappearing underground in places, and forming large temporary lakes (turloughs) in others. Creating a continuous channel allowed the river to flow freely without flooding farmland, and connected the upper reaches with Lough Corrib for the first time since the Ice Age.

Creating the river channel had a

beneficial, if unintended, consequence.

It opened up the whole length of the river, some 80 kilometres or so, plus tributaries, to salmon and trout from Lough Corrib. The Clare River is now the largest spawning tributary of the lake, and as such it gets large runs of salmon every year. In the latter 19th and early 20th century, the Clare was renowned locally for the quality of the fishing. Indeed, one of the oldest angling clubs in the country, the Corofin Angling Association, founded in the 1880s, was set up on the strength of the fishing, and is still in existence today.

Unfortunately for the Clare, and many of our rivers, progress in the 20th century came in the form of intensification of agriculture. In the early decades of the State, agriculture was the biggest industry, and farming

came first. Rivers all over the country were dredged to deepen the channel and drain the land, improving and extending the productivity of farms in what were once natural flood plains. The Clare River was no exception, suffering the ravages of arterial drainage in the 1960s. Spoil heaps of limestone rock run for miles along the riverbanks, evidence of the huge amount of material that was removed to lower the channel. In recent years, flooding in Claregalway has seen pressure for further drainage, but environmental considerations hold more sway now, and minor remedial works that do not affect the riverbed are more common.

Arterial drainage changed the natural character of the river, turning productive stretches of pools, riffles and glides into featureless canal-like stretches. It took many years for the river to re-establish natural habitats, but it has recovered to a large extent, and the salmonid stocks that survived the dredging machines have thrived again.

As outlined above, the river flows through gently rolling farmland, and is characterised by low gradient, so fast flowing riffles are not common. Drainage has given the river a consistent flow, however, which provides mile upon mile of good holding water, much of which is suitable for the fly.

The lower reaches, from Claregalway downstream to the lake, are mostly slow, deep pools which



A summer flood on the Cregmore beat of the Clare River.

salmon generally pass through quickly on their route upstream. From Claregalway up-stream through Cregmore, the river has a better gradient, with more frequent riffles and pools, and some of the best fly water on the river is found at Cregmore. Further upstream again, the river is characterised by a deep channel cut during the drainage, with a consistent flow.

There are several tributaries, of which the Grange and the Abbert are the two largest and most important in terms of spawning and nursery habitat.

Salmon Fishing

The river enters Lough Corrib far to the south, very close to the outflowing River Corrib, so salmon have only a short distance to travel from the sea to reach the Clare. Consequently, fish are often very fresh when they are taken, and frequently sea-licenced fish are reported, showing just how quickly they move upstream. In wet weather fish can reach the middle reaches around Corofin in only a couple of days.

Salmon can hold up in large numbers around Claregalway in dry periods, waiting for rain to raise water levels so they can move on upstream. They then tend to move upstream slowly through Cregmore, often pausing to rest here, and continue upstream to the deeper reaches where they become resident in late summer. The best fishing, therefore, moves up the river as the season goes on. Spring salmon enter the river from April, though in small numbers. The first flood in June usually brings the first good pulse of summer fish, grilse and a few bigger salmon, often accompanied by a run of trout from the Corrib. A wet summer can mean brilliant sport on the river, with salmon running continuously, and water levels providing superb conditions for the fly.

The usual fly patterns work well here, including Cascade, Willie Gunn, Munro Killer, shrimp patterns. Green patterns also work well, and the Green Highlander is a favourite of mine when

there are fresh grilse running. Worm fishing is popular on the river, as is spinning, and both of these methods account for a lot of fish. The Corofin club have a fly-only stretch, enforced by club rule, which is available to visitors on a day ticket. On other club waters, all methods are allowed, and generally fly anglers are facilitated when fishing through a pool by stationary anglers.

A small double hand rod or a switch rod is very handy on the Clare, with roll and spey casting being necessary in many places, due to high banks or overhanging trees behind. Wading is easy in places, but beware of sudden drop-offs into deep water. For much of the river wading is not necessary.

Trout Fishing

The Clare flows through the limestone plains of east Galway, and as such, has much of the characteristics of a lowland limestone river – high alkalinity, very good productivity, and a good variety of insect species. There are a reputed 20 species of mayfly found along the river, and on any given day you can expect to see several hatches. Large hatches of *Caenis* are seen in early mornings and late evenings in summertime. Mayfly hatch in the summer months, while a variety of olives are seen throughout the season. Sedges provide good sport in the evening also.

The river holds a good stock of

resident trout, probably averaging half a pound, but a large proportion of the young trout migrate downstream to Lough Corrib, where there is better feeding. The Abbert and Grange Rivers are the most important spawning tributaries of Corrib in their own right, with DNA studies showing up to 23% of trout found in the lake were of Abbert origin, and 21% from the Grange. It's no surprise then, that the Clare gets a large run of trout from the lake.

The first trout tend to run on the first big flood after midsummer, and often accompany the grilse on their way upriver. These are better sized fish than the resident trout, having fed hard on the plentiful fly life of the lake, and average 2-3lbs, with fish over 5lbs common. Take a look through the pages of the Irish Specimen Fish Committee annual report, and most years there will be specimen trout (>5lbs) from the Clare listed. Fish up to 9lbs have been recorded, although their location is often a closely guarded secret!

The Corrib trout are free-taking when they are moving, and are often taken on salmon flies. I have had fish up to 5lbs on patterns such as an Ally's Red and a Cascade. They will also take regular wetflies fished across and down. These fish tend to become resident in the middle and upper reaches of the river from July on, with stocks gradually building up as the summer goes on. The area from below Corofin up as far



Clubs have worked with IFI to improve access along much of the Clare River, including durable stiles like this one at Cregmore.

as Tuam can be particularly productive, especially the deeper holding pools along this stretch. As they settle down, they prove more difficult to tempt, and dry fly comes into its own from July on. Many of the dry fly men will stay late on the river, fishing into darkness and using all their senses, listening for the tell-tale sip that could be a tiny fish, but just as easily be a trophy trout inhaling their fly. Fishing small and fine is essential, with size 16 patterns and light tippet the order of the day.

As the season draws to a close in September, clubs encourage their members and visitors to practise catch-and-release on the river, and indeed, there is a strong ethos developing among the clubs of conserving stocks and looking after the river for future generations. The clubs have come together to form an association, called Cairde na Chláir (Friends of the Clare), and are active in funding and coordinating habitat improvement work on the river and its tributaries. All funds



A fresh summer grilse off the Cregmore beat of the Clare River, taken on a Green Highlander tied by Denny Brennan. When fish are running they can reach the middle Clare River in only a couple of days from the sea and give a great account of themselves when hooked.

raised are matched by a sister organisation Cairde na Coiribe (Friends of the Corrib), as improving productivity on the Clare will have knock-on effects on the fishing on Corrib, and then generously matched by a private donor through the Clydagh Foundation. This multiplying effect means that for every euro raised by the local clubs, four euro goes to habitat restoration work.

Over the last few years, this has funded extensive habitat work carried out by Inland Fisheries Ireland, in cooperation with the Office of Public Works. The OPW, once responsible for the drainage, now has a remit to include environmental enhancement in its maintenance programme, and works closely with IFI to improve fisheries habitat.

Fact File

Permits

There are a number of angling clubs along the river, most providing day permits for visitors. The largest club water is that of the Tuam Anglers, with extensive fishing from upstream of Tuam and downstream almost as far as Corofin. This beat fishes best from July on, especially after a couple of floods have allowed fish to migrate freely this far upstream. St. Coleman's Angling Association has fishing upstream of Corofin village, and a short stretch downstream at Fahy's Bridge. This is good holding water for salmon and trout, and provides superb dry fly sport for trout.

Corofin Angling Association control fishing downstream of Corofin, either side of Daly's Bridge. Excellent holding water for salmon and trout, this is a very productive stretch. Club rules mandate fly fishing only from Daly's Bridge upstream to Anbally Footbridge.

Cregmore Athenry Anglers control fishing up and downstream of Cregmore Bridge. This is lovely streamy fly water, excellent after rain when fish are running, especially throughout June and July.

Inland Fisheries Ireland leases the Buckley Fishery, which extends from upstream of Claregalway as far as Lough Corrib. Currently there is no permit in place and

angling is provided free, however this may change in the future so check with IFI for the current situation before fishing.

Title research was only partially completed on the river in the 1990s, and indicates that on much of the river, the fishing rights are controlled by landowners. For non-club water, the advice is to obtain the permission of landowners before fishing.

Angling Information

Further information on fishing, permits and catches is available from Inland Fisheries Ireland, Teach Breac, Earl's Island, Galway. Tel. 091 563118 and also on www.fishinginireland.info or Email galway@fisheriesireland.ie Salmon licences can be obtained from tackle shops in the area, or online at www.salmonlicences.ie

Tackle Shops

There are a number of tackle shops in the area:
Outdoor Ranger, N17 Business Park, Tuam
Corrib Tackle, Liosban Ind Estate, Tuam Road, Galway
Duffy's, Mainguard Street, Galway
Freeney's, High Street, Galway



Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) would like to remind all salmon and sea trout anglers to submit their 2015 logbook & unused gill tags to the relevant IFI office using the pre-printed envelope supplied at time of purchase.



**Your contribution to the management of our wild Atlantic salmon stocks for 2016 is very important.
71% of anglers returned their logbook and unused tags last year.**

For further information log on to:

www.fisheriesireland.ie/Salmon-Regulations/salmon-regulations.html

www.fisheriesireland.ie

Obituary

John (Big Jackie) Child (1949 - 2015)



My great friend Jackie Child passed away on 27th June 2015.

It is with great sadness and heavy heart that that I am penning this. I knew big Jackie a long time, a lifetime. We fished together a lot over those years on Loughs, Currane, Arrow, Corrib, Erne, Melvin and perhaps his favourite, Sheelin, which we went to yearly with the Mallusk Angling Society, a club of which he was a past chairman. We also fished on the rivers Mourne, Maine, Kells and the Six Mile Water and he was also a member of that river's club, The Antrim and District Angling Association. I also for a short time worked with Jackie, who was an electrician by trade and when I needed to get work he got me some. Jackie was one of my greatest friends, we had

many laughs and shared many great days fishing together as he did with many other anglers. I will miss his wit and his funny stories which I never grew tired of hearing, his whistling that would drive me up the walls at times, his jokes in which I was often involved.

Jackie was proud to represent his country in the last few years with the Irish Disabled Anglers, as in the past he had done with the Irish Sea Anglers. He was a man of immense strength and fortitude, even when in dreadful physical discomfort his big beaming smile was never far away. Jackie was a big brother to many of my generation of anglers, always there to help whether it was at the Irish Fly Fair, the angling

weekend at Renvyle House, a Game Fair, an event or competition, he could always be relied on to help and to make the event more pleasurable and fun. He was always there to listen, always patient and understanding, he brought comfort and friendship to many. A larger than life character, he was a kind gentleman. Jackie was a big man with a big heart and was loved by the angling fraternity that knew him and in fact everyone who met him. We had some great times I wish with all my heart there was more. RIP old friend see you on a Lough on the other side.

Sympathies to his lovely wife Janet, daughter Jill, son Jonathan and the wider family circle.

Stevie Munn

Federation of Irish Salmon & Sea Trout Anglers

Conaidhm na Slat Iascairí Bradáin agus Breac Geal

VISIT US AT www.fissta.com



F.I.S.S.T.A.

FISSTA CELEBRATES ANOTHER SEASON OF SUCCESS AT BIRR GAME FAIR AND SHANES CASTLE

FISSTA – the salmon and seatrout angling federation representing clubs all over the island feel very fortunate to have obtained great benefit from the professional staging of these two very professionally run events under the Great Game Fairs of Ireland management. These very well attended events were a tremendous success this past summer which gave us the opportunity to meet and greet many of our angling clubs and members and to discuss the various concerns raised at such a crucial time.

The salmon conservation system in operation in 2015 has caused great controversy as the closures announced earlier last year were impacting greatly on local economies and many now fear for the wild salmon habitat if the Government's ten fish farm plan is approved by Minister Coveney, the first of which will be decided on shortly for the Aran Islands in the iconic Galway Bay

While the season started off reasonably

well the angling declined with the dry weather and tapers off with a disappointing conclusion even though the rain levels were reasonable for almost the final six weeks. FISSTA will complete their 2015 promotions by taking part in the Galway Fly Fair in November where we hope to once again meet our clubs and supporters.

The main areas to report on are:

- MEETING WITH MINISTER

COVENEY AND MINISTER WHITE

- FISH FARMING – LEGAL NOTICE TO MINISTERS
- DONEGAL GAME ANGLING FEDERATION CONTINUE TO GRIND THE GWEEBARRA CASE THROUGH THE COURTS
- FISSTA BRING THEIR CASE TO FARMERS AND RAISE QUESTIONS ON IFA PLAN
- FISSTA SEEK REVIEW OF ANGLING TOURISM BY STATE
- SFPA NOW TAKING UP PROTECTION
- RIVER SHANNON BY PASS PLAN
- FISSTA DISCUSS RESPONSE TO SCOTTISH SALMON ANNOUNCEMENT
- RESPONSE FROM DEPT TO NASCO ISSUE ON ESCAPES IN THEIR PLAN
- FISSTA LAUNCH RAFFLE WITH PRIZE OF NEW LANZAROTE HOLIDAY

FISSTA RESPOND TO NEW AQUACULTURE PLAN

While we welcome the three new documents issued in early summer, FISSTA have lodged queries on the content of the Strategic Environment Assessment (268 Pages) and the Appropriate Assessment (254 pages) on the New National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development (109 pages).



At the salmon leap on the Glen River is flycaster Des McNern.

The following is an edited copy of our letter to the Minister:

Dear Minister Coveney,

FISSTA, the Federation of Irish Salmon and Seatrout Anglers, (Appendix 1) represent over 20,000 members in over 90 clubs on every major salmon river on the island of Ireland and are managed by the National Executive Council (Appendix 2) who are nominated and elected to serve for one year at their November AGM. FISSTA are accredited Non-Government Observers to NASCO, (North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation) comprising of the nineteen Atlantic salmon states forum of NASCO that continuously monitors the dramatic decline of our wild Atlantic salmon. Furthermore, we are founding members of both RISE – Rural Ireland Says Enough and the most recently formed Coalition of Irish Sports with representation of over 200,000 outdoor nature sports people who are determined to protect and defend their country sports from all threats.

For over four years now we have led the campaign against your government and Irish Farmers Association policy to increase the production of netcage farmed salmon and we believe we have submitted the now familiar arguments for onshore RAS technology many times along with our many colleagues and organisations the reasons why you should withdraw these plans now.

We submit the following five queries and look forward to an early response as follows.

In the NSPA the Vision for 2020 is stated and we quote two of them as follows:

“A sustainable and competitive aquaculture sector, where production will grow according to market and consumer demands and in balance with nature and society.”

“A more competitive, efficient and innovative aquaculture sector.”

QUERY 1.

If production will be driven according to market and consumer demands, who in Ireland will act as watchdog to ensure licenses are issued in balance with “nature and society” and how can the present policy proceed without review given that the minority partner in your government has voted against such a policy at their Labour party conference in Killarney last March 2015. So why are you disregarding this democratic decision?

QUERY 2.

In Norway the state agencies are guided and monitored by OKOKRIM to ensure escapees and offenders to the marine and freshwater environment are prosecuted and fined if non-compliance is proven. Will Ireland have a similar control regime or will we continue to attract the foreign offenders who only set up in Ireland because of our



This man lives part of the year on the Donegal rivers - Billy Miillar is a well known angler from Belfast who catches his fair share of salmon.

very light touch regulation policy?

QUERY 3

FISSTA estimate that the current production due to a huge pre harvesting of salmon stock from farms during the very warm water temperature in June has plummeted to under 7,000 tons and will be even less for 2016. Why continue to ignore the spread of AGD which is nature's reaction to an unsustainable fin fish practice?

QUERY 4.

FISSTA have lobbied all state agencies to end their support for open net cages in the sea and to bring them ashore even if it does cost more grant aid to do so. Is this not a very opportune time to announce a new policy that permits RAS to be developed in Ireland so that our fin fish aquaculture industry will achieve a new brand and competitive edge, similar to the rebranding of the butter commodity under Kerrygold many years ago?

QUERY 5.

Have you sought or received advice on the NSPA from Dr Daniel Pauly who advises that: “Small sea fisheries are better. The present lack of sustainability of international (including EU) fisheries is due largely to excess capacity in industrial fisheries. We would achieve most stated aims of fisheries management plans (particularly social aims) by dedicated access arrangement for small scale fisheries. (Source: D Pauley, NASCO Salmon Summit, La Rochelle.) And on fin fish farming: “Carnivore farming, which requires three to four pounds of smaller fish to produce one pound of a larger one, thus robs Peter to pay Paul*,” wrote Dr. Daniel

Pauly of the University of British Columbia in an article - “Aquacalypse Now”
<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/environment-energy/aquacalypse-now>”

Arising from NSPA SWOT, the following over-arching needs have been identified:

1. Need to grow production, value and employment in the aquaculture sector.
FISSTA RESPONSE: ONLY BY RAS – END NETCAGE NOW
2. Need to develop the aquaculture sector in harmony with nature, in compliance with environmental law and with the confidence of stakeholders.
FISSTA RESPONSE: INVESTOR FRIENDLY RAS WILL ATTRACT SUCCESS
3. Need to foster knowledge, innovation and technology transfer to take advantage of opportunities for growth and better manage environmental impact, fish diseases, biotoxins etc.
FISSTA RESPONSE: ONLY BY RAS – END NETCAGE NOW
4. A streamlined and efficient licensing system that provides greater business certainty to applicants and more transparency to the general public.
FISSTA RESPONSE: PROTECT SMOLT MIGRATORY CHANNELLS ONLY BY ONSHORE RAS – END NETCAGE NOW
5. Need to develop marine spatial planning and equitably incorporate aquaculture into that framework.
FISSTA RESPONSE: ONLY BY RAS – END NETCAGE NOW

We await your response to these queries.
Yours faithfully,
Noel Carr. FISSTA National Secretary

FISSTA OBSERVATIONS ON IFI CORPORATE PLAN 2016 - 2020

FISSTA did not register any submission to IFI for the last 2011 – 2015 corporate plan because we had already helped to reform and reshape the legislation. In fact, FISSTA did not deem it necessary, having already invested their time and resources into this piece of legislation, and being the only angling federation that made numerous ministerial submissions and lobbied for amendments at every committee stage when the IFI heads of bill were being debated in 2008 and 2009 period. The then shadow spokesperson for Natural Resources was Minister Simon Coveney TD who assisted us greatly in our representations to the then Minister Eamon Ryan TD and Junior Minister Conor Lenihan TD. We were pleased that most of our proposals were taken on board and effectively encompassed in the 2010 Act, especially Section 41(1) of the Inland Fisheries Ireland Act 2010, that related to the IFI Corporate Plan which was to be submitted to the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and approved by the Minister every five years.

Now that the five year term will expire in July 2015, is it not unusual that we as a stakeholder are being asked to submit our proposals and comments for a new five year term without as much as a corporate assessment of achievements report from the CEO or better still from a credible independent source that would measure their own performance from their “multi annual business plans, deliver against the fisheries goals identified in this Corporate Plan.” As this new plan has to identify the new strategic direction for IFI over the next five years (2015 – 2020) it is essential that key mistakes must be identified to avoid them being repeated. We accept that any Corporate Plans to be successful must be adaptable and react to their environment. This plan will be an open document, which will recognise and adapt to the changing environmental context (internal and external) in which it operates so it is essential that an independent analysis of the past plan is completed before any new one is agreed. Otherwise, we are failing in our corporate objective to implement a strong management, effective conservation and progressive development of a much weaker and diminishing resource since 2010. In the absence of such an analysis, and to assist in the development of a more relevant corporate plan for 2020, FISSTA will make the following comments and proposals. The success of this IFI organisation and the successful implementation of this plan will

largely be dependent on the staff of IFI, whose moral appear to be at an all-time low, and FISSTA fear that they may lack the energy and enthusiasm to deal with the challenges ahead.

If in the future and perhaps before the new corporate plan is signed off by the Minister, there is a review of how our game fisheries are managed, it might be found rather strange that the game angling organisations who are at the coal face of the industry have little or no input into the policies being pursued by the agencies such as the 142 rivers in the jurisdiction of the Inland Fisheries Ireland and indeed also the Loughs' Agency which manages the Foyle and Carlingford fisheries on both sides of the political border on the island. Yet these policies have a direct effect on almost every river and lake in the two jurisdictions. Those employed to manage these waters are answerable to the various government departments who are in turn answerable to the relevant ministers. These ministers have a number of years in office and then move on as was the case with Minister Rabbitte TD, Minister of State O'Dowd TD and now Minister White TD and Minister of even more departments including Natural Resources Joe McHugh TD.

The problems associated with this type of management are multifaceted and with the passage of time, they become manifest, especially when the big ticket issues arise, as in the emergence of farming salmon at sea, the production of smolts to service the industry, the use of our rivers to produce rainbow trout for finishing in other locations, the granting of the hydro, turbine, forestry licenses, ongoing demands to restore commercial netting, even though it is agreed by most reasonable people that this is and was a major contributory factor in the decimation of the diverse gene pool of the salmon and sea trout and of course, in the decline of salmon numbers. Of course, there will never be an admission by these managers that they got it wrong. Rather, the old reliable-climate change, will be wheeled out as the main and only factor for the decline of the wild salmon.

This management structure works in another perverse manner. It effectively silences those in the scientific community who have measured the effect of sea lice infestation in the vicinity of sea cages. As employees of the relevant departments it might not be in their interests to point out the problems that ministerial policies, if pursued might have on the wild salmon population. Of course, staying silent or being muted by a politician, has its compensations in that accountability does not really apply. One has to ask, is this the best way to manage a modern fishery? Well, what other industry would not engage with the thousands of citizens who are actively involved in the day to day management of



A 3 pound wild seaport landed by Gary Rowan at the Junction Pool on the Glen River.

angling. It appears to be the very negation of democracy and the failure to obtain answers under the FOI confirms why we feel this way.

FISSTA has worked for, and has actively sought to achieve a true partnership with the IFI. To date, there has been nothing but lip service paid to this proposal. However, if it is not achieved, then the growing disconnect will widen and the necessary accountability and transparency to effectively manage the all island wild salmon and sea trout system will remain absent. FISSTA have and will continue to highlight the destruction of thousands of wild migrating smolts near all fish farms located in our salmonid estuaries. This has been the case for a number of years but when advised of this, such as the famous massive escape in Donegal/Mc Swynes Bay or even the Bantry Bay one last year, the IFI response and the BIM/Coveney one has been found wanting. A properly managed and enthusiastic Agency, subject to scrutiny, and one that appreciates partnership and cooperation, may not be so lethargic in its response. The ongoing policy of closing rivers or limiting them to catch and release has in effect seen a great reduction in anglers on those rivers affected, which has been a boon to illegal fishing. FISSTA are acutely aware of the cost of catch and release in relation to the financial distress caused to those community clubs and private fisheries on the system. The inability/refusal of the SSC to engage with clubs to ameliorate this situation is a matter of regret and reflects the inability of those responsible to act in a pragmatic manner.

The issue of transferring farmed salmon cages at sea to closed contained onshore units has long been argued by FISSTA, and especially since the Galway Bay / Inis Oir application by BIM was lodged in 2012.

The close relationship between politicians and large fish farming is a matter of concern. It points yet again the need to review the way fishing management is conducted. Those who are involved in intensive agricultural farming on land, must be asking themselves why they are subject to stringent environmental regulations to protect the waterways when their colleagues who farm in the sea do not seem to have any constraints placed on them in terms of waste disposal and disease control. They must wonder why the Food Standards Agency is so active in protecting the consumer in terms of testing and regulation while, seemingly at ease with the term organic when dealing with fin fish production that pollutes the marine. These are questions that ordinary consumers might be asking as well.

FISSTA are clear that if there are no constraints placed on short term political actions in this sector that the very survival of the wild salmon is in question. We have seen inaction on the part of the IFI in arresting the decline of the sea trout, which acts as a reminder of the need to reform the management structure. The loss of diversity in terms of sea trout especially, has meant that those in our angling communities have lost a valuable resource as well of course, the damage done to angling tourists to a region which has suffered generational unemployment and decline.

Goal 1: "To improve the protection and conservation of the resource"

FAILED – FISSTA claim that the failure to make a case for more funding based on the new €750m angling value, compared to the IFI valuation of €150m approximately explains why our protection and conservations of the resource has not improved but diminished greatly. The expertise is within the Department to analyse this professionally.

Goal 2: "To develop and improve wild fish populations"

FAILED – FISSTA claim that the failure to protect our wild migrating smolts from sea liced salmon farmed cages in our estuaries explains why our wild salmon and sea trout populations have continued to decline.

Goal 3: "To have more anglers"

FAILED – FISSTA claim that the policy reject partnership and to prosecute local anglers in the Gweebarra case has alienated clubs and prevented them from supporting the IFI staff and many as a result have given up angling in disgust.

Goal 4: "To generate a better return for Ireland from the resource"

FAILED – FISSTA claim that the failure to increase the national income from angling has cost the state billions of euro in lost revenue from overseas anglers. Again, the failure of IFI to engage with anglers and especially FISSTA means that the lessons

are ignored and the loss to the state continues.



Tara McCarthy, CEO with Bord Bia

Every new appointment at BIM brings a new dynamic and the selection of a CEO with Bord Bia food expertise will enhance a seafood sector long in need of sustainable thinking on aquaculture policy. FISSTA wish Tara McCarthy a fair wind in her very challenging new role.

DOES ANGLING HELP US PRODUCE OUR BEST WORK?

Angling can frequently inspire the overburdened if we are to ask the angling visitor how well they can relax and recover from an intense bout of stressful hard work. There have been many influential people that have shaped Ireland down the years and quite a few like former Irish Times editor Douglas Gageby and journalist John Healy who produced some of their best work after angling trips to the midland lakes. But one of the biggest fish we anglers in FISSTA can claim as one of our own is TK Whitaker. Why? Because he is a salmon angler who holds the accolades of 'Irishman of the 20th Century' from an RTE programme in 2001 and 'Greatest Living Irish Person' award in 2002 in a vote that

beat all our illustrious political icons hands down.

TK Whitaker is best known for his Programme for National Recovery Plan of the 1960s that transformed our economic and social culture at a time when leadership was crucial. So this civil servant from Rostrevor, Co down is widely regarded as the architect of modern Ireland and the most recent book by Anne Chambers outlines the meteoric rise through the ranks of the Dublin civil service completing his career as Governor of the Central Bank.

At a lecture given by Anne Chambers at the Mc Gill Summer School in Glenties, Co. Donegal recently there was nobody disagreeing with the statement that Ken Whitaker ranked as one of the most distinguished and most dedicated public servants of this state since its foundation.

Yet the entire event was surreal one since the star of the show was absent, not due to his 99 years of age but due to his prior engagement with his beloved salmon and seatrout fishing near his North Mayo cottage where he has enjoyed many seasons

to date. His first salmon was caught on the Glen River near Carrick in southwest Donegal and this experience sparked the lifelong love for a sport that made him feel: 'The sense of duty and purposiveness with which I am sometimes overburdened had drained away. So interested was I in fishing that I ignored rain and wind and could not bring myself to read or write..... I packed my car in the early morning in the quiet Carrick village street as the rain clouds were revealing a blue sky. The river would be about right. But another year must go by before I could fish it again.' It is nice to know that his work in that year provided the blueprint for Ireland's regeneration in his inspirational document Economic Development. Not a bad catch for a salmon angler. * reference Anne Chambers book titled Portrait of a Patriot – Doubleday Irl Press.



The July and August rains helped the fish return to spawn.



WHERE THERE'S MORE TO COUNTRY SPORT THAN SPORT.

You can take the majesty and beauty of the Cork Blackwater for granted. You can take the numbers of glistening salmon as read. You can take the 16 private beats of the Blackwater Lodge as some of the best on the river. But on top of all that there's the comfort of the Blackwater Lodge itself. Now concentrating on the prime months, we're open for residential (Guesthouse B&B) bookings from July 16th, but our self-catering accommodation and waters are open all season. Flick through your 2016 diary and mark a few days on the Cork Blackwater. Contact Ian Powell for info and bookings. Where in the evenings you can put the 'port' back into 'sport'.

BLACKWATER LODGE
GUESTHOUSE & FISHERY

Upper Ballyduff, Co. Waterford, Ireland. Tel: 058 60235

email: info@ireland-salmon-fishing.net Web: ireland-salmon-fishing.net

The Smartwave AV3500



The Smartwave AV3500 has impressive deck space lending it to many applications. This craft is well suited as a tender, fishing or duck shooting platform, for rescue work or as a tough

commercial boat. In short the AV3500 will excel in every application. The AV3500 is designed for maximum space, stability and low planning speed.

Specifications

Length 3.5m (11.5ft)
External beam 1.7m (5.6ft)
Hull Weight 100kg (220lbs)

Horsepower 25Hp
Deadrise 13deg
Hull thickness 8mm
Warranty 5 years
Max No People 4
Max Payload 340 Kg

Standard Accessories

Stern grab rails
Anchor cleat & locker
Bow storage area with padded seat
Rear seats
Central bench seat
Bow seat
Fuel storage
2 x fishing rod holders
Diving platforms
Oar Storage Well

RLS Boats

stockists of Smartwave and Mac Boats throughout Ireland

Contact: River Lake and Sea,

58 Coleraine Road, Portrush BT56 8HN

E: info@riverlakesea.com www.riverlakesea.com

Tel: +44 (0) 77 25-144 784 or +44 (0) 28 708 250 67

**5 Year
Guarantee**



ROAMIN' IN THE GLOAMING!

A flame-red sunset as the sedge hatch begins.

A flaming sunset marks the end of another day of flat calms and relentless sunshine. Now, the shadows are lengthening and a boat gently pulls away from a concealed dock behind the fringe of rushes.

Angling for trout would seem a futile activity during weather as hot as this, but the angler who strains on the oars of this craft knows exactly what he's doing as he crosses the headland to a little reed fringed bay where he pulls up on a bed of lilly pads to ready his tackle and have a quiet smoke. He knows there's plenty of time before he can expect any action but what could be more relaxing than sitting here on an Irish limestone Lough on a balmy summers evening.

Nothing breaks the surface of the Lough save for squabbling coots and little dabchicks, reed beds conceal skulking mallards with their growing broods. As darkness falls the swallows and martins which were hawking the reed beds are replaced by little bats and the sun slides behind the horizon. The temperature drops and the angler pulls on a jumper. He notices the moon starting to climb in the sky then something else catches his attention making him reach for the oar to push off from the water lillies into the bay. Suddenly something flutters past his ear and soon the water in front of him becomes furrowed with little wakes like

miniature speedboats as the sedge flies emerge and flutter enticingly across the surface as they struggle to make for the reeds and rushes behind the boat.

This activity has not gone unnoticed, in fact it has been keenly anticipated by the Lough's inhabitants who have lain low during the heat of the day but are now on the fin and on the hunt for the large sedge as they have been every night this past week so it's not long before the angler spots a whorl as a trout takes a pupa just under the surface, then as another sedge scuttles across the front of the boat and there's a violent swirl and the big fly is engulfed in a split second. The ripples spread across the open water as the angler reaches for his rod. A bushy, heavily hackled Green Peter pattern graces his stout leader, no room for finesse here: who knows what may be cruising out there? Even the smaller fish snatch these flies with a vengeance because of their speed as they scuttle across the moonlit surface of the Lough.

The angler watches the movement of the fish and anticipates the direction of its progress as he skilfully casts out into the gloom and lets his fly settle on the

surface before giving it a short steady pull, then another, then wallop, there is a commotion on the surface and the bushy dry fly is engulfed in a heart stopping take as the rod buckles over and the angler sets the hook before paying out line under tension as the trout panics and runs for deep water. Again and again the trout tries to make for the deeps but the strain from the reel check eventually begins to tell as it rings out in the gloom and the angler fumbles for his net in the bottom of the boat and carefully lifts the fish aboard, the white belly, dark spots and golden scales glistening in the moonlight.

Welshman's Button, Green Peter or Murrough?

This is the scenario of the summer angling sessions which are concentrated around the hours of darkness when the various sedge species choose to hatch, day time fishing may be described as 'character building' when the weather turns hot as few flies will be hatching nor fish cruising near the surface but it is these conditions which provide us with exciting sport as the moon comes up.



A Green Peter.



(Above and Below) Action during the witching hours on Sheelin.



There are daytime hatching sedges such as the Welshman's Button on Loughs such as Ennell but generally when we talk about sedge fishing we are meaning the evening sessions in the company of the Murrough or Green Peter and these can give exciting sport as the trout tend to take them with big, slashing rises as they motor across the surface to dry land. There are dedicated Irish sedge patterns for the Murrough and 'Peter' but modern patterns such as the Stimulator or a large Elk Hair Sedge will also suffice, the action of the fly probably being as important as the pattern and what is needed is a large buoyant pattern which causes a commotion as the natural does. Wet fly fishing can also be effective and wet versions of the Murrough and Green Peter are great attractors of trout even when there are no natural sedges about! Other patterns such as the Invicta and Wickhams Fancy can be effective when sedges are hatching.

Flies that cause a stir

The secret of fishing the sedge is to imitate the natural fly as it emerges from its pupal case and scuttles across the surface of the lake, some anglers like a 'damp' pattern which sits in the surface such as an elk hair caddis without the body hackle and some anglers prefer a fly which sits up on the surface such as a traditional Murrough or Green Peter with their heavy hackles or even a modern 'stimulator' pattern. These latter patterns skim across the surface of the lake creating a disturbance which can attract a trout from a distance. The vulnerable adults or emerging pupa provide rich pickings for trout and they can attract large specimen trout which normally would not venture close to the surface for food and each year many large fish succumb to these tactics. It probably helps that the sedges choose to hatch in the low light conditions which seem to make large trout more comfortable when coming to the surface to feed. To see a large trout lunging at a skating sedge fly is an exciting experience and



The sedge pupa is very fast and active swimmer.

definitely worth the effort to be out in the twilight of a summers evening when all the other boats are heading back for 'last orders' at the bar, often the sedge start to hatch just when you've decided to make tracks but if the hatch has been happening for several nights you can be sure the trout will be expecting them and the rise will occur providing the night doesn't get too cold or damp

Mixed evening menu

Sometimes we have the bonus of a buzzer hatch at the same time and it's easy to spot the different rise forms to the different flies, in this case sport may

be extended well into the darkness and the best night will be calm with cloud cover to keep in the heat and also often the trout will start to move earlier in the lower light conditions. Often the feeding trout can be heard all over the lake in these conditions rather than seen and it's certainly a situation to get the pulse going as the trout can come very close to the boat in the darkness especially if its backed by high banks, trees or rushes to disguise the outline. Generally the trout will make 'slurp' sound as it engulfs a fly and in the darkness a trout's movements can be tracked by the sound of it feeding as it cruises along picking food items off the surface, the large fish can be quite noisy and experience soon tells if a large fish feeding nearby. By positioning the boat so that he is looking into the sunset an angler can often spot rises in the glow of the evening sky reflected on the water or against the pale light of a large moon. The important thing is to get the fly in front of the feeding fish and intercept him as he moves within casting range, this is much more effective than fishing 'blind', especially if the night is calm and the boat isn't drifting much, also sometimes the hatch of fly may be quite localised and it's better to stay close to that specific area. Very often the fly will be taken with a little 'sup' but

when the strike is made the water erupts as a large trout makes a bid for freedom so don't automatically suspect that quiet rises are small fish! Also if buzzers and sedge are hatching we can hedge our bets and put a buoyant sedge pattern on the point and small buzzers on the droppers.

May though September

Although some people regard sedges as midsummer flies we often see them on the water when fishing the mayfly in late May, early June. There are currently 198 species in Britain and Ireland and they belong to the family Tricoptera which mains 'hairy wings' in ancient Greek and this feature distinguishes them from other species such as moths which have scaly wings (Lepidoptera). One of the earliest sedges recognisable to anglers will be the Grannom which hatches on rivers as does the Grey Flag or Marbled sedge. The large sedges have always been of interest to Lough anglers but now many of the smaller daytime sedges are being imitated with success as trout also take them in significant numbers especially from July onwards and often when one you're pulled up on the Lough shore for lunch an inspection of the shoreline will reveal swarms of small sedges especially under the overhanging branches of mature trees. A gust of wind will send dozens of these on to the waters' surface and these little drowned Grousewings, Silverhorns etc provide easy pickings for trout on a windy day and it won't take long before trout are attracted to the area. This year on Lough Arrow I was watching this scenario and some trout were dimpling below a tall oak tree whose branches lean right over into the water when a swan and her cygnets arrived and she proceeded to grab the branches in her bill and shake them while the cygnets rushed back and forth hoovering up the dislodged sedges and other flies. Strangely the commotion didn't put off the fish which simply moved a little further out so I let the swan do the 'groundbaiting' while I cast at the fish! Little elk hair



Ammunition for the sedge hatch.

sedges or Klinkhammers are good flies for this type of angling and obviously we can scale down the tackle for daytime angling with small flies.

So during the 'Dog Days' of summer when the sun beats down on the water, don't despair, some of the best fishing of the season may be waiting when the

sun sets on the horizon, we just have to be patient, find where the sedges are hatching and be ready as the moon rises over the water!

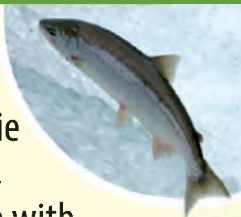


Phil Martin with another wild brownie caught after the sun had set.

Ballyduff Bridge

Salmon Fisheries • Nr Fermoy

Numerous beats, mostly fly fishing, comfortable lodge, best rates, professional ghillie service and tuition available, families welcome, assistance with accommodation, pre-booking essential.



Your contact details for the finest salmon fishing on the lower Munster Blackwater.

Maurice: 00353 (0) 873317175

Email: gofish.maurice@gmail.com

Connie: 00353 (0) 876918230

Email: connieghillie@gmail.com

Phone us today to find out about our competitive rates, day tickets, membership club, special offers and much more!



www.blackwatersalmon.ie

BALLYDUFF BRIDGE SALMON FISHERIES



A great day with Ballyduff Bridge Salmon Fisheries.

This fishery on the lower Munster Blackwater is set in the beautiful countryside of the Blackwater Valley at Ballyduff Bridge - just 30 miles from Cork and seven miles from both Fermoy and Lismore.

The Fishery has four beats - two at Ballyduff Bridge and two further up river at Ballincurrag. Fly fishing is encouraged wherever possible on all beats, but spinning and occasional bait fishing are permitted when conditions allow and are authorised by the two professional gillies who manage the Fishery.

The season to date has been somewhat mixed. March was generally a good month with quite a few fish caught, mostly on spinner due to the consistently high water levels. Some springers are now coming through and the season looks promising with hopefully a good mid season to late run.

Maurice Cahill and Connie Corcoran, two highly experienced and well known local gillies manage the fishery and are usually on hand to assist guests — whether experienced or just beginners. Expert tuition is also available if required.

Rates to fish are very competitive and seasonal offers are available and also day tickets to full membership. The village of Ballyduff is very peaceful and quiet with a good shop for most provisions and several pubs for relaxation; plenty of restaurants also nearby in Fermoy and Lismore.

For more information and some of the finest salmon fishing on the Munster Blackwater, the Fishery welcome your enquiries - Maurice Cahill on 00353(0)873317175 or email gofish.maurice@gmail.com and Connie Corcoran on 00353(0)876918230 or email connieghillie@gmail.com or visit our web-site www.blackwatersalmon.ie or find us on Facebook.

Clonbur - Fly Fishing Capital of The West

A recent visit by our media group to Galway was a pleasurable experience with happy memories of the fishing, the place and the people.

Although we had planned to fish Lough Corrib and Lough Mask our time became somewhat limited. Most of our group had travelled long distances so with only a half day on the Sunday, the fishing on Mask being exciting...and Father's Day celebrations having been organised by long-suffering families back home, it was decided to leave Corrib for the next time.

We stayed in the village of Clonbur at the invitation of Tomás Burke of Burkes Bar and Restaurant and I can confirm that their reputation for friendliness, great food and pleasant and efficient staff is very well deserved. More about Burkes and Clonbur later, but now to the fishing.

There were seven anglers in our group and we had travelled from places like Dublin, Kildare and Belfast on a Friday evening in June. I fished with Tom Ormond on the Saturday and was most comfortable in the knowledge that his boating skills, his familiarity of and his respect for the Mask are tremendous. The conditions that morning were good, a nice wave and some sunshine with cumulous cloud. There were a few mayflies hatching and some olives but not enough to excite the birds. The fish were not on top of the water but were taking wet mayflies and flashy dabbles freely under the surface so intermediate lines were the best option. It was my dream kind of wet fly fishing as Tom manoeuvred the boat around the rocks from Devenish down through Shintilla Mór, Carraigeen Islands, over to Annagh Point and Gull Islands. Too soon it was time to motor over to Saints Island for lunch.

Of course the highlight of any day on the

lake has to be when all the boats pull up on the shore for lunch and the telling of fishy tales about the lost, missed, caught and released big ones! While fish were caught on Peters, Invictas and other Sedge types, it was confirmed that green and yellow wet mayflies, probably 'Lough Arrow' or 'Rushes', also a dabbler apparently favoured by international anglers, were doing the business. There was quite a bit of fly swapping. Fergal Keane gave me a copy of his own tying of a mayfly emerger which had caught fish earlier and I parted with a couple of my special dabbles which Michael Hayes had tied up for me, that are almost too perfect to fish but they worked.

Strong winds were making drifts near the rocks more difficult

One of our boatmen, Declan Gibbons, got

the Kelly Kettle fired up, the tea was good and strong and there were two or three moments of quiet as everyone tucked into fresh, chunky ham and cheese sandwiches provided by Tomás at Burkes. A certain local boatman (who is good with Kelly Kettles) also poured a smidgeon of Sloe Gin for the company...just to warm us up don't you know... It was gorgeous. The obligatory photo was taken and we headed out for the afternoon session. The weather took a turn for the worse with strong winds making drifts near the rocks more difficult. Tom had to concentrate on keeping us safe while I fished on, having a couple of follows and boating one nice fish on my special dabbler which put me in the 'counters.' Tom also caught and released a couple of good trout. It is so easy to drift in a strong wind so motoring back to shore takes longer and can be uncomfortable but, thanks to the aforementioned boating skills of my partner,



The media group on Saints Island.



Mike Hegarty showing off his nice Mask trout.

my rear end suffered no bounce-bruises.

After a quick freshen up, the group assembled at Burkes for liquid refreshments and to raise a glass to absent friends. There was no competition this time, but two anglers were singled out for special acclaim. Dick Warner (broadcaster, journalist and reporter for the Irish Examiner) and Paddy O'Flaherty (BBC Northern Ireland) had caught their very first Lough Mask trout. Each of them was presented with a subscription to Irish Country Sports and Country Life Magazine and Passes to the Game Fairs at Shanes Castle and Birr Castle, compliments of Albert Titterton.

Then in to dinner, which I can safely say was a feast of taste and presentation. My starter was a fine wedge of Brie, baked and served on the freshest of greens; it was perfect. The choice of main course was impressive, obviously using the best of Irish produce prepared to order without undue delay. The vote for the most scrumptious main dish was won by the slow-cooked rump of lamb served with roast vegetables, mashed potatoes and piping hot rosemary gravy. Rather than excite my readers further I shall not describe the sweet, just to say that folk wished they hadn't eaten so much



Brendan, Cyril, Diarmaid and Paddy in full swing.

before seeing the dessert menu!

The events of the evening left me with abiding memories of wonderful music and song. A most popular member of our group is Paddy O'Flaherty who is an outstandingly talented fiddle player, singer and poet. Diarmaid Fleming (TV, Radio and Online Journalist) who is an accomplished and versatile accordionist was joined by the famous entertainer from Kerry, Cyril Boggins on guitar. A phone call to a very good friend Brendan Begley, who lives in Clonbur, brought him up the road with his Uilleann pipes to complete the foursome. From playing Irish jigs, reels and hornpipes to sad laments, from blues to full blown trad jazz, from Cyril's humorous ditties to Paddy's haunting rendering of ballads in the Count John McCormack style, I have seen our talented musicians in action separately, but the music they made that evening together in Burkes was magic.

I practised long distance releases!

On the Sunday morning the weather was unfavourable but we opted to go out for a couple of hours. I fished with Derek Evans (The Irish Times) and our boatman was Tom Ormond not travelling far from the launch area but fishing around Kilbride, Rock

Island and Spiders Bay south of Rams Island keeping Ferrybridge in view. Derek's International dabblers were still working for him and he saw plenty of action while I practised long distance releases!

While my tale is ostensibly about fishing, I must tell the story of Clonbur and John J Burke and Sons. To my mind Clonbur is the angling centre of the West of Ireland situated smack in the middle of the strip of land which divides Mask from Corrib. The town/village is quiet, almost sleepy during the day, very clean and tidy. There are hotels and guesthouses and an attractive old building which has been converted into self-catering accommodation and an Angling Centre. Having been told of Clonbur's connection with the ill-fated RMS Titanic, I visited the shrine-like memory garden situated on the road out of town.

However the story of Tí Bhúrca (Burke's House) which reads like a fairy tale is straightforward and uncomplicated, yet a living legend dating back to the mid 1800s. John A Joyce, grand uncle of Charlotte Burke (nee Joyce) built it as a hotel. The premises changed hands twice after that time until 1922 when John J Burke (J.J.) from Chicago, visiting his sister in Renvyle, purchased Mount Gable Hotel. As Tomás told me the rest is history, what a proud background for the family to inherit. His father Ciaran took over the business in 1951 and presently helps his son by continuing to uphold their great tradition of welcoming, storytelling, an occasional turn on the dance floor and even a card game at the counter. I met Charlotte so I can confirm that great old fashioned Irish charm runs in the family.

We had a wonderful weekend thanks to Tomás, who organised everything, the Burke family (094-9546175), Clonbur Angling Centre (087-0537791) and Lakeshore House (094-9548311). Our very special appreciation to our boatmen, Tom Ormond, Declan Gibbons, Cyril Boggins and Mike Hegarty, great guides and most enjoyable company.



Derek Evans, Betty Hayes and Tomas Burke.



The 'Back End'

Action on the River Moy.

As summer slides inexorably toward autumn and the nights and mornings get decidedly cooler, then there comes a phase for the angler known as the 'Back End.'

Whilst the last fields are being harvested there is a final chance for sport with salmon and trout. The change in temperature and day length revert to spring-like conditions with cool evenings and warm afternoons and this triggers hatches of olives on our streams and lakes, and the Black Gnat once again appears, bringing the trout to the surface larder to stock up for the lean months ahead. Many of the rivers feeding our larger loughs such as Lough Neagh, Erne and Mask get a run of lough trout at this time of year and these unique fish can provide quite a shock to those used to catching trout averaging a half pound, to suddenly becoming attached to something much larger! These trout seem more active during the hours of darkness and many a big trout has been landed under the light of the Harvest moon.

September Salmon

Autumnal weather brings about a change in the salmon, the lethargy of the summer months leaves them and they become more active, there are usually a few showers at this time of

year and this can be the cue for a late run of fish which invigorates the system and stirs the residents. Large rivers such as the Moy can provide good sport at this time of year with good numbers of resident fish going 'on the take' and a trickle of fresh fish coming through, this a time when the lower reaches such as Ballina Club waters and Mount

Falcon come into their own with large numbers of fish holding in the lower reaches and a few fresh fish running with each tide.

'The Harvesters'

Those rivers feeding our larger lakes will begin to see a run of trout as Autumn approaches, although they may



Big Lough Trout such as this Dollaghan must be treated with the utmost respect as they are the future of our fishery.



Before the season comes to a close, September often provides good sport on the Moy.

not be spawning until the end of October and into November these fish can enter the river surprisingly early, on the Six Mile the Dollaghan can be present from July onwards. Sometimes these large trout can be found feeding alongside the smaller river trout, during a hatch of sedge or olives but they are usually targeted in the evenings when they are more active and can often be seen crashing out of the water in the deep, quiet pools. It can be an electrifying experience to feel the solid resistance of a large trout hooked in the

dead of night and can be addictive, some anglers on the Six Mile take on a zombie-like appearance at the back end through working during the day and fishing through the night!

Black Bount

When the Blackberries begin to appear in the hedgerows I always know that this heralds the appearance of the black gnat on our local rivers and stillwaters. It's a time I always look forward to and although the fishing can be challenging it's always exciting. The

black gnat, *Bibio Johannis*, is the little fly that you see sitting on your car roof or on the window sill; they have a jet black body and transparent flat wings and trout love them! The fall of Black Gnat varies from year to year and last year was exceptional during autumn, with clouds of them on the bushes and the water littered with struggling bodies with every gust of wind. The trout soon learn where the fly are coming from and patrol under the bushes waiting for the hapless flies to drop in and an accurately placed dry fly can induce a lovely slow sipping rise. It's a great visual experience and fun because light rods and fine lines are required to present a size 18 fly. The tying couldn't be simpler, a black seals fur body, a little CDC for the wing and a very sparse black hackle complete the pattern, the key to fishing the Gnat is keeping off the skyline so as not to spook the trout and accurate casting. There are two falls of Gnat during the season, one in Spring around the time of the Balmoral Show and another around Harvest time which tends to be heavier and more protracted.

This time of year also brings hatches of our upwings and the warm afternoons produce hatches of olives emerging from the streams and the trout



The Black Gnat, Bibio Johannis.

will be expecting them from mid day onwards. The smaller Sedges will still be in evidence and mild weather can provide good sport into the evening. Unfortunately a cold snap can kill the hatches and reminds us of the impending winter to come.

Final Fling

Harvest time in Ireland is my favourite time of year, when a mild September shows the best of our glorious countryside and can provide a variety of sport in the best of settings. I remember many years ago when I was a member of the Rathfriland Angling Club, we set off to decoy pigeons beside the beautiful River Upper Bann. Unknown to us, there had been a flood a day or two earlier and the river was in fine condition. As we set up the decoys and sorted a hide, I heard a loud crash from the pool beside us and a quick glance showed the wide rings of the rise, which could only mean one thing - salmon had arrived! I always carried my fishing rod in the car in those days and my brother and I took it in turns to shoot and fish, the pigeons were streaming in and the salmon were running the river, The diary records twenty three pigeons and three salmon for the afternoon, a good mixed bag in



With the advent of cooler weather, Olives make a welcome appearance.

the stunning County Down countryside.

As you read this article, the days will be shortening and the nights growing longer and it's time to make the best of the last embers of the season and enjoy the changing colours of Nature's palette. The reds and golds of the leaves and fields, the smell of the cut barley fields and the gathering flocks of restless summer migrants feeding hard and readying themselves for the long journey ahead. We can gather mushrooms, blackberries, hazelnuts and

chestnuts with the kids and pass on the wonder of Nature's bounty. Hopefully the weather will be fine and the angling good, as we just have to remember that the salmon and trout are now destined for the spawning redds and must be treated with the utmost respect and care so they can continue their mission and produce offspring to populate our rivers and lakes once more and ensure sport for the years to come. I hope you have a good 'Back End' to finish the season, best of luck!



The lower end of the big salmon rivers often produces good sport at the 'Back End' of the season.

GREYS STRATA CT WADERS

Ideal for the casual angler or if you are travelling and want to keep the weight of your kit down. The CT waders feature Climatex3L™ fabric technology and won't let you down.

Code	Size
GR2163	M
GR2164	MK
GR2165	L
GR2166	LK
GR2167	XL
GR2168	XLK
GR2169	2XL
GR2170	2XLK

FREE STRATA CT BOOTS

Now Only **£169.99**

GREYS STRATA CTK WADERS

For the more demanding angler, Climatex4L™ fabric technology in the upper brings maximum breathability, and therefore comfort, whilst Climatex5L™ in the lower leg means you can confidently attach the bank without fear of damaging your waders.

Code	Size
GR2155	M
GR2156	MK
GR2157	L
GR2158	LK
GR2159	XL
GR2160	XLK
GR2161	2XL
GR2162	2XLK

FREE STRATA CTK BOOTS

Now Only **£209.99**

Size	Felt	Rubber
7	GR2185	GR2192
8	GR2186	GR2193
9	GR2187	GR2194
10	GR2188	GR2195
11	GR2189	GR2196
12	GR2190	GR2197
13	GR2191	GR2198

Only **£79.99**

Size	Felt	Rubber
7	GR2171	GR2178
8	GR2172	GR2179
9	GR2173	GR2180
10	GR2174	GR2181
11	GR2175	GR2182
12	GR2176	GR2183
13	GR2177	GR2184

Only **£99.99**

HARDY ULTRALITE DD BLACK EDITION REELS

Built upon the outstanding success of Hardy's Ultralite DD, the Black Edition features the addition of a black satin, anti-glare edition to help anglers fishing for spooky fish in clear waters where ultimate stealth is required and the flash of reflected light from a shiny reel can spell disaster. As with the original Ultralite DD, the Black Edition reels offer a lightweight option to balance modern rods, and have a narrow width/large arbour design for a fast, level retrieve.

Code	Model	Capacity	RRP	Our Price
HR1636	3000	WF4 + 45yds	£229.00	£115.00
HR1637	4000	WF5 + 80yds	£229.00	£115.00
HR1638	5000	WF6 + 85yds	£229.00	£115.00

SALE

GREYS GTS500 REELS

The new GTS500 reel series features a full die-cast construction.
• Unique line ID system, with coloured pegs supplied
• Captive spool release screw
• Large arbor design
• Supplied with 2 additional spools in a Neoprene reel case

GTS500 Fly Reel

Code	Model	Capacity	Price
GR2201	5/6/7	WF5 + 190m	£49.99
GR2202	7/8/9	WF5 + 135m	£49.99

Spool

Code	Price
GR2203	£9.99
GR2204	£9.99



NEW

GREYS GTS700 REELS

It's tri-spoke design made from part bar stock and die-cast mix offers a lightweight and strong cassette reel.
• Unique line ID system, with coloured pegs supplied
• Large arbor design
• Supplied with 2 additional spools in Neoprene reel case

GTS700 Fly Reel

Code	Model	Capacity	Price
GR2199	5/6/7	WF5 + 190m	£99.99
GR2200	7/8/9	WF5 + 135m	£99.99

Spool

Code	Price
GR2203	£9.99
GR2204	£9.99



NEW

Stillwater SKR FLY REELS

Featuring a lightweight but durable all aluminium construction, a reliable drag system that will stop anything the water throws at you and it converts quickly and easily between left and right hand retrieve. Available in a range of sizes, this versatile reel will have you covered.

SKR Reels

Code	Model	Capacity	RRP	Price
RE0314	#2/4	WF4F + 40m/20lb	£74.99	£49.99
RE0316	#4/6	WF6F + 50m/20lb	£79.99	£49.99
RE0318	#7/9	WF8F + 150m/20lb	£89.99	£54.99
RE0320	#9/11	WF11F + 180m/30lb	£99.99	£59.99

Spools

Code	Model	RRP	Price
RE0315	#2/4	£34.99	£25.99
RE0317	#4/6	£39.99	£25.99
RE0319	#7/9	£39.99	£27.99
RE0321	#9/11	£44.99	£29.99



GREY FX Box + 50 ASSORTED WET FLIES

QL0031C
RRP: £34.99
FOR ONLY: **£12.00!**

RED FX Box + 50 ASSORTED LURES

QL0026C
RRP: £54.99
FOR ONLY: **£15.00!**

ORANGE FX Box + 50 ASSORTED DRY FLIES

QL0029C
RRP: £44.99
FOR ONLY: **£15.00!**

BLACK FX Box + 50 ASSORTED POPULAR FLIES

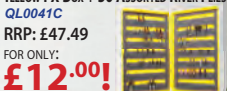
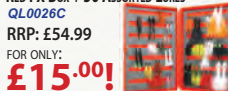
QL0028C
RRP: £49.99
FOR ONLY: **£15.00!**

GREEN FX Box + 50 ASSORTED NYMPHS

QL0027C
RRP: £44.99
FOR ONLY: **£12.00!**

YELLOW FX Box + 50 ASSORTED RIVER FLIES

QL0041C
RRP: £47.49
FOR ONLY: **£12.00!**



Shipping Rates

Location	Small	Medium	Large	Next Day
Republic of Ireland	£3.50		£9.99	
Northern Ireland	£2.99		£9.99	£14.99*

*Only available to post codes up to BT49

f /glasgowanglingcentre

t /glasgowangling

e blog.fishingmegastore.com

Call for our **FREE** catalogues or go to the link below and request them online

http://www.fishingmegastore.com/catalogues

HARDY ZENITH SINTRIX FLY RODS

SINTRIX 440

SALE

The Zenith series harnesses the industry changing properties of Hardy & Greys SINTRIX material within an ultra advanced design to produce a range of rods that offer user friendly, ultra high performance and incredible strength to weight ratio.

Code	Length	AFTM	Handle	Weight	Pcs	RRP	Our Price
HR1515	8ft	#3	RHW	2.5oz	4	£499.00	£250.00
HR1342	8ft	#4	RHW	2.5oz	4	£499.00	£250.00
HR1343	8ft 6"	#5	RHW	2.7oz	4	£629.00	£265.00
HR1517	9ft	#3	RHW	2.9oz	4	£549.00	£275.00
HR1519	9ft	#8	FW+EH	3.4oz	4	£599.00	£300.00

HARDY SINTRIX PROAXIS X

SINTRIX 440

SALE

The Proaxis range of one and four section saltwater fly rods have been designed and developed by Hardy in conjunction with some of the world's finest saltwater Guides and Anglers. Designed and developed in conjunction with Andy Mill, the most successful Tarpon tournament angler in the world.

Code	Length	AFTM	Handle	Pcs	RRP	Now
HR1736	9ft	#6	FW+EH	4	£549.00	£275.00
HR1737	9ft	#7	FW+EH	4	£549.00	£275.00
HR1740	9ft	#10	FW+EH	4	£579.00	£290.00
HR1741	9ft	#11	FW+EH	4	£589.00	£295.00
HR1742	9ft	#12	FW+EH	4	£599.00	£300.00

GREYS KF2 FLY RODS

Fitted with the new aerospace grade aluminium two part reel seat, designed in-house by Greys engineers for better form and function. Greys custom cork composite tipped AAA grade cork handle for better durability and a more comfortable grip. Section line up marks for perfect alignment.

Code	Length	Handle	AFTM	Pcs	Price	Our Price
GR1697	9ft	RHW	#6	4	£249.99	£157.00
GR1699	9ft 6"	FW+EH	#7	4	£239.99	£164.00
GR1700	9ft 6"	FW+EH	#8	4	£239.99	£172.00
GR1692	10ft	FW+EH	#6	4	£259.99	£172.00
GR1694	10ft	FW+EH	#8	4	£259.99	£172.00
GR1695	10ft	FW+EH	#7	4	£279.99	£179.00



SALE

GREYS KF2 S SERIES DOUBLE HAND RODS

A rod specifically designed to complement modern fishing styles with the more familiar casting techniques of top hand dominant traditional casting styles. The KF2 "S" Series is the perfect choice for those who feel they would like to venture into the world of short head lines and shooting heads, and are seeking the correct tool for the job but don't want to go back to casting school.

Code	Length	AFTM	Pcs	RRP	Our Price
GR1808	12ft	#6	4	£349.99	£262.00
GR1809	12ft	#7	4	£349.99	£262.00
GR1810	13ft	#8	4	£359.99	£269.00
GR1811	14ft	#6	4	£379.99	£284.00
GR1812	15ft	#8	4	£399.99	£299.00



SALE

GREYS KF2 T SERIES DOUBLE HAND RODS

A versatile rod for those who like casting, or fishing in rivers which favour the use of a full line. Provides performance at short as well as longer range, a much overlooked yet very important factor when choosing a fishing rod. The traditional action perfectly complements casting full length floating, intermediate, or sinking lines.

Code	Length	AFTM	Pcs	RRP	Our Price
GR1803	12ft	#7	4	£349.99	£175.00
GR1807	16ft	#11	4	£419.99	£210.00



SALE

LUCKYLAKER WIFI FISH FINDER

The Luckylaker is a unique iOS and Android compatible wi-fi fishfinder. Sends water temperature, depth and fish positions to up to 5 devices at the same time. Small, light and robust, the Luckylaker can even be cast into position from a rod!

- Running Time: 5 hours from a full charge
- Depth range: 0.6m to 45m

TU0050

Only **£129.99**

Users	5 per device
Weight	80g
Range	50m
Size	70x65mm



NEW

Stillwater TAY WAISTCOAT

A lightweight fly vest that has great Storage ability. This is by far our most popular vest; made from top quality materials and with more features than some vests at twice its price.

Code	Size	RRP
NG0024	M	£49.99
NG0025	L	Now Only £34.99
NG0026	XL	



SIMMS. PREMIUM FISHING NIPPERS

Built for prime cuts across a mountain of fluorocarbon, mono, and wire. Simms' new Nipper takes this angling mainstay to the next level.

Code	Size	Price
MM3301	Gun Metal	
MM3302	Oasis	
MM3303	Orange	£32.99

Code	Accessory	Price
MM3304	Replacement Blades	£14.99



First Day On The Water

Finally, everything's ready, the sun is out, the wind is fair, and the waiting's over!

Every sea angler looks forward to the first day out on the water and I am no different. All winter my friends Damian and Anthony, and myself have been looking forward to getting Damian's boat ready and back in the water. Eventually it is anti-fouled, polished and Anthony and Damian have sorted the cooling system problem out. This delayed us getting the boat back on its moorings until early June. Moorings sorted and serviced we set the date for the first go at the tope, ray and smooth-hounds.

Hopefully there would be some mackerel about, as last year they did not show up until very late in the season. To be on the safe side, I visited the local fishmonger and bought a few whole mackerel for bait in case we needed them. But Anthony had heard on the grapevine that a few had been caught, so things were looking good. Damian could not go until the afternoon of the day, so we aimed to be fishing by slack water. But would the mackerel be there? Fresh mackerel will catch nearly everything in the sea around us. Even the frozen few I had, I knew would be a poor substitute.

The day was glorious and the sea was flat. All morning, I was making sure I had everything ready like an excited kid — down to the shop for a pint of milk, enough weights and feathers, traces, sunglasses and extra clothes in case it got windy later on. At last Damian showed up with his punt on the trailer, I loaded up and we headed off to the estuary where the boat is moored. Anthony was there and it was not long before we were all on the boat, and ready to cast off. Only then I discovered that I had no hat with me. People with little cover on their heads



The author with a huss which was unhooked and quickly returned.

will know that this is a potential disaster in bright sunshine. You get your scalp burned once and learn by that not to do it again. Thankfully Damian had a spare hat onboard which I borrowed.

We set off to a spot where in the past we have found plenty of mackerel. As we went further to sea we could see a number of gannets diving. It's a good rule to watch the seabirds, especially gannets, as mackerel is their preferred food. There were also plenty of guillemots about, which eat sandeels. Good signs, as mackerel also eat sandeels. We stopped to drop the feathers but after several minutes still had no luck. You may think, 'give it a chance,' but if the mackerel are there you will hit them within a few drops.

It was 'nervous water' like where tuna are feeding

I looked for the diving gannets and saw something I have never seen in fifty years going to sea angling in this area. A patch of sea was splashing furiously about two hundred yards away and seemed to be moving left to right. I have seen 'nervous water' where tuna are feeding several times, but not like this, as the area was very small. I watched and pointed it out to the others.

Before I could get my camera out it was gone. I had checked and saw no back, because I thought it looked like a dolphin thrashing at the surface but I would have seen it if that's what it had been. I have seen mackerel chase fry and sprat before, but that has always been close to shore, where they corner the prey fish against the shore. Usually a school of mackerel can turn a patch of sea the size of a football field into splashing foam.

Anyway, we decided it had to be mackerel and raced over to the area. As soon as the feathers were lowered, we were into fish. A chance to stock up on bait for today and freeze some for other days. Besides this, we all agree that fresh mackerel is the tastiest fish in the sea and we had long standing requests from friends and family for a few to



A small smoothhound.

eat, so we decided that we would keep all we could catch. Normally we only catch what is required for the day and maybe a few extra to eat. But none of these would be wasted.

The shoal moved on after we had caught a couple of dozen. We decided that we would go to our chosen mark for the day and try for few more on the way in. In over a hundred feet of water, we dropped anchor and set up our rigs to target the bottom dwellers, such as huss, tope and ray. Anthony had a few crabs with him, so I put a crab on my top hook with mackerel on the other as I was using a two hook trace. With the lines down it was not long before Damian's rod tip knocked and he struck into a decent fish. After a bit of effort a nice bull huss, or greater spotted dogfish, came to the net. While Damian was unhooking this fish, Anthony was reeling up a double hit of doggies of the lesser spotted variety. These also like fresh mackerel and can be a nuisance sometimes as they are very plentiful. Some anglers despise them for their ability to get large bait intended for something else into their mouth. But doggies have saved many an otherwise blank day and on light gear can provide good sport.

Anthony also had a flyer hook above his main trace, as he had heard that a

few decent gurnard had been caught at this mark recently during slack water. Unfortunately this hook only caught a few small whiting on the day, plus the odd doggie which held on to the small hook. I was soon catching doggies also, all of which were unhooked and returned. One gave me a surprise: as I tried to throw it overboard I let go, but the doggie had wrapped its tail around my forearm and was still attached as I released it. Luckily, it had not rubbed itself backward and removed the skin so both of us survived the release.

It broke the surface and I saw it was a small smooth-hound

As the tide picked up again, the boat swung around and it was not long before we had tangle on our hands. I was using green monofilament line as I heard years ago that if you get into a tangle you will know which line not to cut. This worked out this time and I soon was reeling in to freshen the bait. But I had a fish on. Only when it broke the surface did I see that I had a small smooth-hound. These beautiful small sharks are a relatively recent addition to our fish species list, as they did not frequent our waters until the late nineties or so. Global warming or not, its great to see and catch them. They prefer a bit of crab to mackerel and this

was what I caught this one on. Coincidentally, the Irish record had been broken off Wicklow the week before we went out. Smoot-hound do not grow very large, the new record being 19 lbs. It must have put up a great fight and was returned safely, thanks to Kit Dunne's operation and contacts in Wicklow, which meant that the fish was weighed ashore and then released alive.

Then I got a decent knock on the rod tip and as I reeled in I could feel a heavy weight on the line. This was not a smooth-hound as they fight for every inch of line. By this time I had switched to a single hook trace baited with mackerel. I had to pull a large bullhuss all the way to the boat where Anthony kindly netted it. It was decent double figure huss and kept its mouth open all the time it was aboard. Unlike the lesser spotted dogfish, huss have a set of very sharp, albeit small, teeth. I was glad that we have a range of unhooking devices onboard to release fish as quickly as possible, so the T-bar was used to get this fine fish back as quickly as possible once the photos were taken.

All the time we were at anchor, there were gulls all around us, screaming for scrapes from the bait-board. I had noticed a number of seabird bodies as we headed out, floating on the surface.



Anthony getting some mackerel.

Partly eaten remains of small gulls and auks like guillemots, which I presume, had been killed and eaten by the predatory greater black backed gulls. I have seen skuas in this same area before and they could also have been responsible.

At about eight thirty we called it a day and after a quick cleanup we headed in, intending to try for a few mackerel as we passed 'our' spot. The trip involved travelling straight into the

setting sun as we were fishing off the East Coast. We stopped and soon had the feathers jiggling in the sea. No sign of the mackerel until I looked around and once again saw 'nervous water' about five minutes away. This was definitely mackerel, as it covered a large area of the sea. We motored over and soon had a dozen or more mackerel added to our tally. A bonus was seeing two harbour porpoises swimming past only about twenty feet away from the boat. They were probably targeting the mackerel too. I discovered that the fish all had stomachs full of small sandeels later, when I gutted a few to eat, which I did after a quick run around to distribute some to friends. They were very sweet and tasty if I do say so myself. The first day and first fish of the season is always the best.



It was obvious that the fish had dined on sandeels earlier.

TO: READERS, ADVERTISERS and SPONSORS

2016 - AN EXCITING YEAR IN PROSPECT

There were a number of significant achievements for us in 2015 and, as planning gets underway for the year ahead, we would like thank you for your valued support.



In 2015:

- **RECORD PUBLISHING** - We celebrated 30 years of continuously publishing the Irish Countrysports and Country Life magazine (and its previous title Irish Hunting, Shooting & Fishing).
- **SOARING READERSHIP** - Our combined readership of the hard copy glossy and online versions of the magazine past the magical figure of 80,000 readers per issue – making the magazine the most read ever Irish hunting, shooting, fishing and country living magazine.
- **INTERNATIONAL DYNAMIC** - The Shanes Castle Game Fair & Fine Food Festival introduced a new international focus for Irish game and country sports fairs and posted a record attendance and a record number of quality trade stands.
- **TOURISM SOARS** - The Birr Castle Game Fair & Fine Food Festival also posted a great attendance and a large number of quality trade stands and probably the largest influx of visitors to the Mid Ireland region ever.
- **DIVERSITY & EXPANSION** - Both fairs further extended the range and variety of their Fine Food Festivals.
- **MARKETING & PR DIVIDENDS** - Both fairs received the greatest amount of PR coverage ever within a hugely successful multi media campaign including the use of radio, TV, general consumer printed media and online features. As such they once again stressed the fact that, with this magazine, they form the greatest vehicles for the promotion and defence of our country sports in Ireland. Vendors and advertisers reap the benefits as well.

Our plans for 2016 include:

- **FOCUSED GROWTH** - Increase further the international and Fine Food Festival focus of both of the Great Game Fairs of Ireland and introducing a new country living event.
- **GAME FAIR DATES** - Shanes Castle Fair is now planned for the 25th & 26th June 2016
- Birr Castle game Fair is now planned for the 27th & 28th August 2016
- **HOT NEWS** - Introduce a monthly update of the online magazine to give advertisers/sponsors more promotional opportunities and readers important updates in their sport in a timely fashion.
- **NEW TALENT** - Strengthening the Great Game Fairs of Ireland team
- **INCREASE PENETRATION** - Bringing a new publication to the market place
- **SOCIAL MEDIA FOCUS** - Running regular competitions for our Facebook Group as well on our general Facebook page throughout the year.

The year ahead will be very exciting as we put our magazine and Great Game Fairs scheduled programme and development plans into operation.

We sincerely hope that you will continue to give us your much valued support in the exciting year ahead.



Paul Pringle

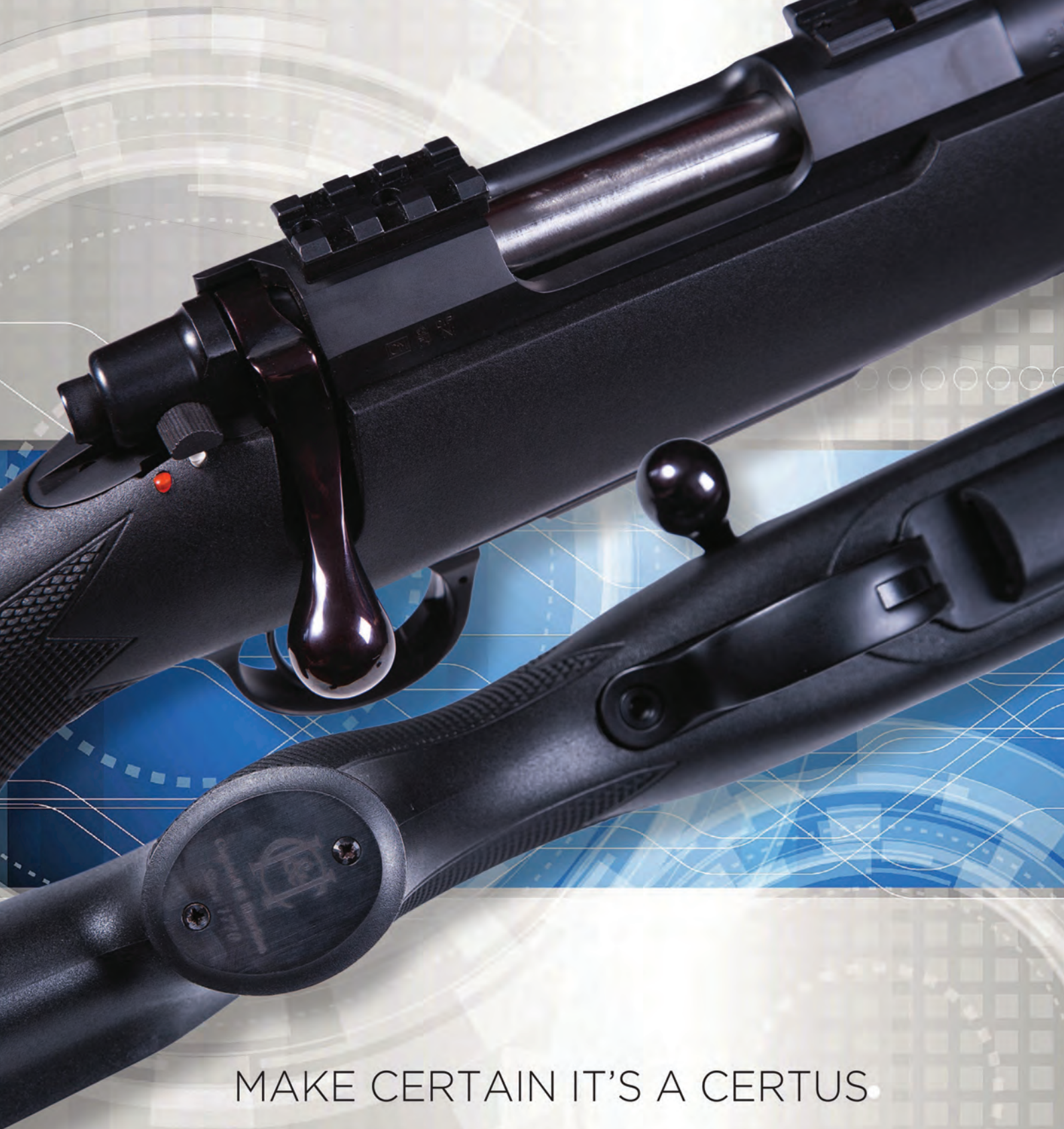
Find out more about advance booking for stands at the Game Fairs, or advertising in the Christmas magazine or having a 'tailor made' package for both by contacting:

Email: irishgamefair@btinternet.com

Tel 028 (from ROI 048) 44839161 / 44615416



Albert Titterton



MAKE CERTAIN IT'S A CERTUS

QUALITY. CRAFTSMANSHIP. PERFORMANCE

AVAILABLE IN CALIBRES .223REM, .243WIN & .308WIN

Available from the following stockists:

*The Bridge Guns & Tackle Tyrone | Barton Smith Sligo | Tom Kelly Mayo | Mc Brides Gunshop Westmeath
Griffin Hawe Kildare | Mulvihill Firearms Longford | The Sports Den Meath | Mourne Shooting Grounds Monaghan
Patrick Carley Firearms Wexford | Angling & Outdoor Waterford | Dungarvan Country Sports Waterford
Connolly's Gun Store Kilkenny | Doms Custom Rifles Wexford | Hilltop Shooting Sports Wicklow
Courtough Shooting Grounds Dublin | O'Hallorans Tipperary | Carroll's Mountain Shooting Grounds Limerick
O'Sullivan Guns & Ammo Limerick | Centre Gold Ammo Meath | CF Beattie Antrim | Lavin Guns Antrim
Maryland Country Sports Down | CA Anderson Tyrone | Hollow Farm Shooting Grounds Down.*

Visit: www.cogswellandharrison.com



Cogswell & Harrison
SINCE 1770