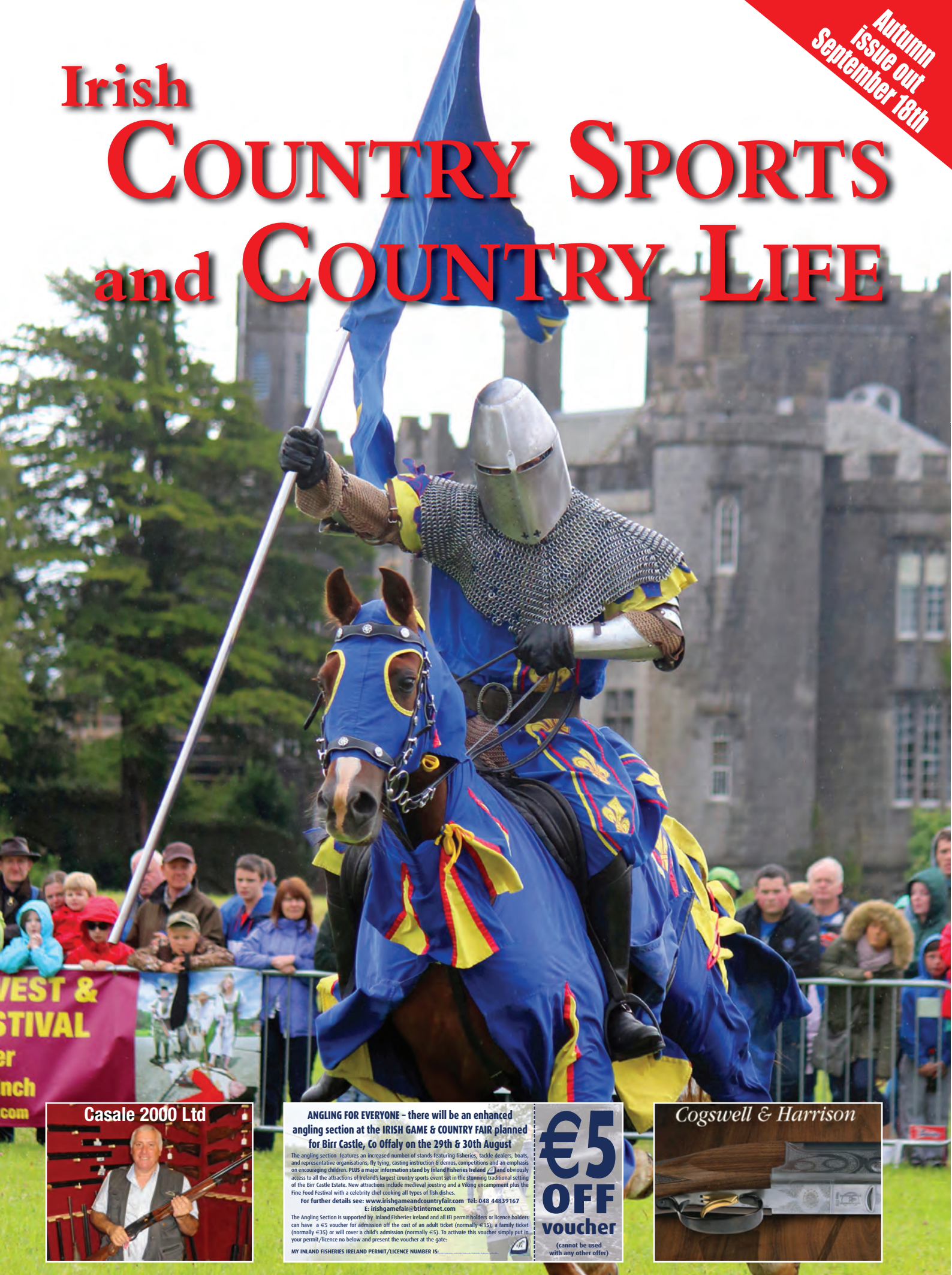


Irish COUNTRY SPORTS and COUNTRY LIFE

Autumn
issue out
September 18th



Casale 2000 Ltd



ANGLING FOR EVERYONE - there will be an enhanced
angling section at the **IRISH GAME & COUNTRY FAIR** planned
for **Birr Castle, Co Offaly** on the **29th & 30th August**

The angling section features an increased number of stands featuring fisheries, tackle dealers, boats, and representative organisations, fly tying, casting instruction & demos, competitions and an emphasis on encouraging children. PLUS a major information stand by inland@fisheriesireland.com and obviously access to all the attractions of Ireland's largest country sports event set in the stunning traditional setting of the Birr Castle Estate. New attractions include medieval jousting and a Viking encampment plus the Fine Food Festival with a celebrity chef cooking all types of Irish dishes.

For further details see: www.irishgameandcountryfair.com Tel: 048 44839167
E: irishgamefair@btinternet.com

The Angling Section is supported by Inland Fisheries Ireland and all IFI permit holders or licence holders can have a €5 voucher for admission off the cost of an adult ticket (normally €15); a family ticket (normally €35) or will cover a child's admission (normally €5). To activate this voucher simply put in your permit/licence no below and present the voucher at the gate:

MY INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND PERMIT/LICENCE NUMBER IS:

**€5
OFF
voucher**

(cannot be used
with any other offer)

Cogswell & Harrison



SPECIAL GAME FAIRS ISSUE

IRISH GAME & COUNTRY FAIR & FINE FOOD FESTIVAL



BIRR CASTLE, CO OFFALY
29th & 30th AUGUST 10.00am – 6.00pm
Ireland's most action packed family event with:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medieval Jousting • Living History Village • Re-enactments • Viking Longship • International Gundogs • International Clay Shooting • International Terriers, Lurchers & Whippets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falcons & Ferrets • Carriage Driving & Bygones Area • Dancing Horses • Air Rifles & Archery • Fine Food Pavilion • Cookery Demonstrations • The Dog Guru • Action Packed | <p>Arena Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huge Tented Village with unrivalled shopping opportunities • Angling Tuition for Children • IFI LICENCE holders get your SPECIAL ANGLERS DISCOUNT |
|--|---|---|

ADMISSION:

Adult €15 Family €35

Parking & Programme Free


For Further details see:

www.irishgameandcountryfair.com

www.countrysportsandcountrylife.com

E: irishgamefair@btinternet.com

Tel: 048 44839167/44615416

The Fair is sponsored by  **Fáilte Ireland**
National Tourism Development Authority

ANGLING FOR EVERYONE – there will be an enhanced angling section at the IRISH GAME & COUNTRY FAIR planned for Birr Castle, Co Offaly on the 29th & 30th August

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Country Sports and Country Life Editorial Comment

Were you there when history was made at Shanes Castle this year?

Well, 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 Thursday 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 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 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!"

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 US group was there as part of the O'Neill Summer School."

I have banged on before about getting youngsters involved in countryside matters by introducing them to country sports and yet again Shanes Castle came up trumps. Literally, 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 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.

But there was an added incentive too, for lucky anglers were able to take their catch to celebrity chef Emmett McCourt 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.'

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.'

But 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>

Now for brilliant Birr

Now, it's all systems go in the countdown to the final event in Great Game Fairs of Ireland calendar this year, the Irish Game & Country Fair in the splendid setting of Birr Castle, Co Offaly on 29th and 30th August. It's going to be fantastic!

I hope to see you all there as well.

Paul Pringle
Northern Editor

SHANES SOARED - NOW BIRR BLASTS OFF

Record numbers poured through the gates at Shanes Castle for what was tipped as the 'biggest and best ever Irish Game Fair.'



Shanes Castle Fair 2015 went 'International' for the many thousands of visitors who poured into the beautiful settings of Shanes Castle, one of Ireland's most magnificent estates.

Fair Director Albert Titterington says the Shanes Game Fair proved to be the No1 'must see' country sports event by far this year: "We always deliver great country sports and countryside events in beautiful traditional settings so what was different? This year the Shanes Fair had extra special international ingredients, so much so that we even had visitors from the US.

"Our unique three Arenas, international acts and international competitions, international fishing and shooting, international Gundogs, and the biggest prize fund in Great Game Fair history that attracted international interest 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," he added.

"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."



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 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."

BIRR BECKONS

Final touches are in place for the Irish Game and Country Fair at Birr, Co Offaly on 29th and 30th August:

Birr Castle's game fair is already the top fair in the Irish Republic. Historic Birr Castle is the backdrop and the public love the fair's unique style.

SPECIAL FEATURES

There are special treats planned for Birr such as non-stop

entertainment, surprise acts and attractions, top competitions of all descriptions, enormous prize funds and of course a huge tented village of trade stands from Ireland and the UK.

A BIRR FIRST - YOUNGEST EVER DOG TRAINER TAKES CENTRE STAGE

We even have the youngest ever gundog trainer - possibly in the world - when 8 year old Cole Mathews in the Main Arena with his gundog act for the very first time at Birr.

Cole is the son of international expert 'Dog Guru' Keith Mathews, so it comes as no surprise that this 'Mini Guru' shows skills far beyond his years and is a natural entertainer.

This year there's an extra special 'double' at Birr Castle when not one - but two - Dog Gurus take to the Main Arena. So while Dog Guru Keith Mathews is already an international star, 'Mini Guru' Cole is just starting off his showbiz career."

Cole will be in the Main Arena with Chloe, his Labrador gundog which he trained himself to exhibition standard.

TERRIERS, LURCHERS AND WHIPPETS

Then there's top lurcher, terrier and terrier shows and racing with the best ever Irish prize fund

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

Some of the biggest clay pigeon shooting prizes in Ireland will be on offer.

Even novice and rough shooting shots have a chance of winning some of that prize pot, including amazing shotguns up to €1,500.

Anyone who is an FAC holder can shoot at the 50 bird sporting shoot and they'll not only get the chance to win super prizes but, even if they miss all 50 clays, they'll still go into a draw for the Caesar Guerini shotgun worth nearly €1,500 sponsored by Casale 2000 Ltd.

50 BIRD OPEN SPORTING CLAY CHAMPIONSHIPS winner receives an ATA Shotgun sponsored by Brian Connaughton from Wild Hunter.

The 50 BIRD OPEN SPORTING GAME FAIR CHAMPIONSHIPS sees a first prize of a stunning COGSWELL & HARRISON SHOTGUN sponsored by David & Martin Brennan from Ardee Sports.

Anyone who enters the 10 bird pool stand and 50 bird open over the 2 days can enter their score card for a free draw for the Caesar Guerini shotgun.

ANGLING

The angling displays are sited in the picturesque Anglers Row and Salmon and Woodcock Pavilion overlooking the lake. There's great tackle and boat stands and a huge array of country clothing stands - many with excellent bargains.

The Salmon and Woodcock Pavilion has 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 is available through APGAI Ireland instructors including Arthur Greenwood and Peter O'Reilly.

FINE FOOD

The Fine Food festival at Birr is a fantastic mix of artisan food and drinks from all over Ireland and the UK. Centre stage is the Flogas Kitchen presided over by chef Emmett McCourt who demonstrates some fabulous rabbit, venison, game and fish dishes and also has 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 is a stand that most people simply couldn't pass without a nibble or a purchase. There is great catering on site and in the castle cafe where you can enjoy a glass of beer or wine with some great salads.

GUNDOGS

Gundog enthusiasts are exceptionally well catered for with something for novice competitors and those with more experience and there's a really exciting 'handling challenge' when the top two retrievers face the top two spaniels in a final showdown.

COUNTRYSIDE ORGANISATIONS

We have huge commitment and support from the country's leading fieldsports bodies. Quite uniquely the Fair is supported by all the main Hunting, Shooting, Fishing and Countryside organisations including the NARGC, FISSTA, CAI, IFA Countryside, HAI, IWTF and the Deer Societies.

The main sporting organisations recognise the Irish Game & Country Fair status as the ROI's national game fair and we are delighted in facilitating them to take a strong promotional message not only to Ireland's country sports enthusiasts but also members of the public. Please do take time to visit the following organisations on their stands and the others who are exhibiting.

BIRR'S LOCAL BONANZA

Latest reports indicate that local traders in the wider Birr area in Co Offaly are set for a welcome income boost with the arrival of the Birr Game Fair on 29th and 30th August.

And with economic green shoots sprouting elsewhere in Ireland, the local economy is looking to reap major rewards - all thanks to the Birr Game Fair.

Albert Titterington explains: "For the past 6 weeks I have been inundated with requests from wouldbe advertisers, exhibitors and the public eager to play their part in the Birr event and purchase early tickets. The number of enquiries is now at an all-time high and I already have reports of guest houses and hotels in the area being inundated with bookings.

"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 will be 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 Fáilte Ireland for their support.”

THE FAMOUS BIRR GAME FAIR WELCOME

A huge amount of work has gone into the preparations for the Birr fair and the organisers look forward to welcoming even more people than ever to Birr Castle on 29th and 30th August. We have something really special in store and hope that the public will have a wonderful time in this amazing setting. Needless to say I know that every member of the team, arena entertainers, organisers, and hundreds of trade stands will be sure to give you the famous ‘Birr Fair Welcome’ when you are there.

ATTRACTIONS at IRELAND'S NATIONAL GAME & COUNTRY FAIR

The objective of the Great Game Fairs of Ireland is to organise events with real family appeal for all those who live work or play in the Irish countryside.



Horse & Hounds parade at Birr

Apart from the fantastic in situ attractions offered by the Birr Demesne including the world famous gardens, the largest tree house in Ireland and the revamped Science Gallery, the Fair has a wide range of competitions, displays, demonstrations, trade stands and exhibits to appeal to anyone who loves the Irish countryside and rural traditions.

BIRR CASTLE DEMESNE

Full details of the attractions of the estate which is open to the public throughout the days of the fair can be seen on www.birrcastle.com. However estate manager Michael Parsons highlights a couple of recent innovations for visitors to enjoy:

"Birr Castle Gardens and Science Galleries

A Domain of Discovery

The Gardens of Birr Castle and the newly revamped Science Galleries are rich in flow-ers, rare trees, extraordinary feats of science and engineering and wonderful wildlife. The

Parsons family invite you to explore one of the most extraordinary places in Ireland. Created over generations it is an environmental and scientific time capsule.

Tree house adventure area



This adventure area inside the Garden houses Ireland's largest tree house as well as picnic areas, a bouncy pillow, sand pits and dens.

LIVING HISTORY AT THE FAIR

In 2014 medieval jousting was brought to Birr for the first time when the evocatively named Knights of the Damned team travelled from the UK to thrill kids of all ages with their take on the 'Knights Tale'. This year the Knights of North from the Eng-lish/Scottish borders will thrill the crowds in the shadows of the castle battlements.

It is thought that the present Birr Castle building was developed on the site of a previous tower house and bawn probably built by the Anglo-Normans. Birr Castle became a stronghold of the O'Carrolls who are associated with many castles in South Offaly and North Tipperary and resisted domination by the Anglo Normans and other powerful neighbours.



Jousting with Knights of the Damned in 2014



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

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

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

Barbour®



The Knights of the North take the field in 2015

And history is not only brought to life by the rattle of lance and sword on chain mail on shields and the thundering of hooves of horses but also through the Viking Village set up under the battlements of the castle. The Viking theme has a resonance in Birr as it is thought that the Birr monastery was attacked by Vikings in 841AD.



Some of the Vikings

The Viking theme is not only carried through in the village where families can interact with costumed re-enactors from Living History Ireland but also in the 'Have A Go' archery stands in the walled garden. Here families can 'have a go' with weapons of the period under the supervision of Cavan Instinctive Archery.



Kids enjoy boarding the Viking long ship at Shanes Castle.

SPORTING ORGANISATIONS AT THE FAIR

Quite uniquely the Fair is supported by all the main Hunting, Shooting, Fishing and Countryside organisations including the NARGC, FISSTA, CAI ,HAI, IWTF and the Deer Societies.

The main sporting organisations recognise the Irish Game & Country Fair status as the ROI's national game fair and we are delighted in facilitating them to take a strong promotional message not only to Ireland's country sports enthusiasts but also mem-bers of the public. Please do take time to visit the following organisations on their stands and also the many others who are exhibiting.

NARGC AT BIRR 2015

By Des Crofton, National Director, NARGC.

The NARGC will mount its now familiar major display at the Birr Country Fair in Birr Castle on the last weekend in August. This year will see some significant changes.

The NARGC merchandise shop will be offering excellent value from its existing and a new range of Hillman merchandise for shooters. Margaret Neile, and Ernie Beck will be taking care of this stand as usual. This year there will be a specials stand featuring some completely new products to Ireland, including the very innovative Steadify from Germany for deer hunters. What is Steadify? Why not come to the NARGC stand to find out and for a demonstration. We wish to especially thank George Kelly of Millard Brothers (Ireland) Limited (Milbro) who will be on the NARGC stand to assist throughout the weekend, for his assistance in sourcing the new range of products.

Jimmy Tyrrell will be there as usual with his fly-tying exhibition and his mind boggling range of flies for sale. Jimmy is always a welcome participant in the NARGC marquee where he imparts a lifetime's knowledge of fly fishing to the many visitors, a good number of whom are also game-shooters.

The Boleybrack Red Grouse Project to restore the local Red Grouse population on Boleybrack Mountain in County Leitrim returns to Birr under the expert guidance of professional Grouse gamekeeper, John Carslake assisted by Eamonn Brennan. It is the best example of active Red Grouse management/restoration in Ireland and is the definitive model for all similar projects. It is a joint venture between North Leitrim Regional Game Council, the National Parks & Wildlife Service, the NARGC and Glenfarne Gun Club. It is a wonderful example of successful partnership between state and the voluntary sector with the Red Grouse, an iconic Irish game bird, as the beneficiary

Chris Gavican will be present as usual at the NARGC Compensation Fund desk with advice and answers to questions about the very comprehensive level of protection afforded to club members by the Fund.

John Howard from Cork will be there to over advice on game crops. His "John's Delight" seed mix is a must for clubs



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www.wildhunter.eu
www.ataarms.co.uk



VENZA

involved in game habitat management and creation. This stand has been enormously popular for the past few years, and with continued heavy demand it is back again this year.

Jim Corcoran, regarded by many as the NARGC's resident taxidermist, will also be on the stand with his magnificent and varied display of the mammals and birds of the Irish countryside. His work is superb and is much admired by many who appreciate wildlife. His individual exhibits are in themselves a wonderful opportunity for members of the public to get close up to animals and birds. Jim's work is really educational.

The NARGC Game Development and Predator Control team will be on hand under the joint stewardship of Ger Burns from Waterford and Tom O'Connor from Kerry. They will offer advice to all who are interested in developing game on club territories while at the same time using various predator control methods and traps.

NARGC National Safety Officer John Flannery will be available to offer advice on safety and best practice in the field.

Cloghan and Kilcormac Gun Clubs will provide the outdoor live bird display of a variety of game birds. James "Woodie" Woods and Kevin Sadlier will be there to talk about the birds and their requirements.

The very popular NARGC shooting simulator is one of the most popular attractions with shooters and potential shooters pitting their skill against the computer. It is in constant demand throughout the two days of the fair, operating literally non-stop for the entire period. This year, thanks to Atlantic Shooting and Fishing Centre in Carlow, the NARGC will offer a Ruger 22/10 semi-automatic rifle and Tasco scope for the highest accumulative score on the simulator over the two days of the fair.

A new feature on the NARGC stand this year will be the **'TALKING DOGS'** stand where shooting and hunting folk can get advice from an expert on working dogs dealing with such topics as pup selection, the right dog for your sport, training, behaviour, care and legal obligations. The stand will be manned by Larry Taaffe who is well known as a working dog breeder, field trial judge, member of the IKC working dogs committee, Woodcock shooter and deer stalker.

Mike Johnson of MacEoin General Merchants is a regular exhibitor on the NARGC stand and Mike will be there again this year. All manner of game and vermin control equipment and products will be on display for clubs.

The Tayto Park mobile small animals' zoo will be there again. Tayto Park in Ash-bourne is one of the most popular attractions in the country for visitors, especially families with its large range of adventure activities and rides and a magnificent zoo featuring Buffalo, a large selection of deer species, various large African and American cats, Lamas, Eagles, Meercats etc. Since last year Tayto Park has added to its attractions the world's largest roller coaster.

NARGC will again sponsor the Best Novice Dog Handler

Competition in conjunction with dog guru, the very entertaining Keith Matthews. A cup will be awarded on each of the two days for best handler in the adult male, adult female and junior categories.

NARGC always makes a special welcome for the kiddies who, after all, will take responsibility for the defence, promotion and management of fieldsports in Ireland in future years. Apart from the inclusion of the Tayto Park Zoo, the NARGC stand will have face painting, balloons and lollies for the kids.

Ramone Dunne from Wexford and his Concrete Dog Kennels were a big hit in the last two years and he will be there again this year with his lovely wife.

Young Simon Spain of Paracordwest, a small venture which was set up by Simon when he was just 15 years old, will be there again. Paracordwest makes very intricate and attractive fashion bracelets which have become very popular among the hunting set. It has now added gun slips and other shooting accessories to its range. This is a truly remarkable success when one considers the age of the promoter.

Gem Hardware in Cloghan has very kindly agreed to again sponsor the trees and foliage which will dress the NARGC stand and give a particular feel to the displays and we wish to acknowledge this very welcome sponsorship.

The Stick Maker will also be there with a magnificent selection of walking, hunting and stalking sticks at incredible prices.

Award winning chef Emmet McCourt will again be on the NARGC stand demonstrating how to cook game and fish. This has been extremely popular over the past few years and it attracts large crowds to sample the delicious fruits of Emmet's culinary magic.



Emmett McCourt chef to the Great game Fairs of Ireland presents Des Crofton with a copy of his book 'Feast of Lambs'

The Sports Coalition which has been to the fore in lobbying on behalf of gun owners in relation to the firearms review will be on the stand to offer advice on licensing problems generally, setting up a target club and range etiquette and procedures.

MAIN ARENA PROGRAMME SPONSORED BY THE NARGC COMPENSATION FUND



Saturday 29th August 2015

- 10.00 hrs Muzzle Loading Display
- 10.30 hrs Fly Casting Display by Glenda Powell & APGAI Ireland
- 11.00 hrs Ferrets, Rabbits, Whippets & Longnetting Display with Steven McGonigal
- 11.30 hrs Cochise Horses
- 12.00 hrs Vikings
- 12.30 hrs Fly Casting Display by Glenda Powell & APGAI Ireland
- 13.00 hrs Muzzle Loading Display
- 13.20 hrs Free Flying Falconry Display
- 14.00 hrs Knights of the North
- 14.50 hrs Keith Mathews the Dog Guru
- 15.30 hrs Horse & Hound Display
- 15.50 hrs Cochise Horses
- 16.20 hrs The Victorian Poacher
- 16.50 hrs Falconry Display
- 17.20 hrs Muzzle Loading Display

Sunday 30th August 2015

- 10.00 hrs Muzzle Loading Display
- 10.20 hrs Cochise Horses
- 10.40 hrs Ferrets, Rabbits, Whippets & Long Netting Display with Steven McGonigal
- 11.10 hrs Vikings
- 11.40 hrs Cochise Horses
- 12.00 hrs Casting Display by Glenda Powell & APGAI Ireland
- 12.30 hrs Free Flying Falconry Display
- 13.20 hrs Muzzle Loading Display
- 13.40 hrs Horse and Hound Display
- 14.00 hrs Knights of the North
- 14.50 hrs Keith Mathews – the Dog Guru
- 15.30 hrs Carriage Driving Display
- 16.00 hrs The Victorian Poacher
- 16.30 hrs Free Flying Falconry Display
- 17.10 hrs Red Mills Five Nations Terrier Championships
- 17.30 hrs Red Mills Five Nations Lurcher Championships

Continuous Events and Fair Attractions

The organisers of the Great Game Fairs of Ireland constantly strive to provide an unsurpassed range of activities to appeal to the whole family. At Birr Castle the Game Fair programme is greatly enhanced by the natural beauty of the estate and its many existing attractions. These include the world famous gardens, the Science Centre, the Great Telescope, the lake and the Courtyard Café etc. This year there is a superb new attraction – the tallest Tree House in Ireland. Please note the Castle and its immediate grounds are not open to the public. The rest of the demesne is open to the public over the time of the fair and is also open to visitors throughout the year see www.birrcastle.com

VIKING VILLAGE and LONGSHIP: Meet costumed re-enactors creating how Vikings lived, fought and navigated the known world.

COUNTRY SPORTS ORGANISATIONS: All the main organisations including the NARGC, CAI, FISSTA, IFA Countryside, and the IWTF.

CLAY SHOOTING: organised by the Seamus Glennon with THREE GUNS to be won; a pool trap and an extreme range competition. Special prizes for NARGC members.

GUNDOG COMPETITIONS (SATURDAY): RED MILLS Novice and Open Spaniel Tests and Gundog Scurry organised by the ESS Club of Ireland.

GUNDOG COMPETITIONS (SUNDAY): RED MILLS International Retriever Test and RED MILLS AV Retriever Novice & Open Tests organised by the Broadmeadows Gundog Club. Also the RED MILLS/DUCK DRI/BARBOUR All Ireland Game Fair Retriever Handling Championships.

TERRIERS & LURCHERS – SATURDAY FEEDWELL RACING CHAMPIONSHIPS including the first qualifier for the 5th 2016 RED MILLS annual international Master McGrath Challenge SUNDAY Irish Countrysports and Country Life/Countryside Alliance Ireland (CAI) and NUTTS ROI Terrier and Lurcher Championships; Also the ICS&CL/RED MILLS Five Nations International Lurcher & Terrier Championships qualifier and final on Sunday – MAIN ARENA 5.30.

FERRET DISPLAY: SHOW & RACING organised by the Roscrea working Dog Club 12.00 noon SUNDAY 30th August at Terrier & lurcher area.

STATIC & FREE FLYING FALCONRY DISPLAY by the NI School of Falconry

ALL IRELAND STICKMAKING CHAMPIONSHIPS organised by the Celtic Stickmakers Club.

HAVE A GO ARCHERY medieval in the walled courtyard & traditional in Mount Palmer; **AIR RIFLE SHOOTING & Pony Rides** Both days.

The **MEDIEVAL ARCHERY** is being run by Cavan Instinctive Archery who will provide a collage of medieval monster mashup madness. Viking to 16th century knights. Trebuchet for kids, ring toss, horse shoe toss, pillory and human cage. Games and fun and a photo opportunity at the end if required.

ANGLING: Game Fair Casting Competitions organised by Glenda Powell & APGAI and **ULTIMATE TACKLE.**

FINE FOOD PAVILION: great artisan food & drinks

SALMON & WOODCOCK PAVILION – see sporting organisations, artists and taxidermy at its best

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT AREA: Quads, Bouncy Castles, Climbing Walls etc

These are just some of the attractions that will make for a fantastic family day out in the magical setting of Birr Castle at the ROI's REAL NATIONAL Game & Country Fair.

PLUS Birr Castle Gardens, Courtyard Café & Bar;

TREEHOUSE and Science Galleries are open.

Please Note: Visitors attend the Fair at their own risk. Parking is provided free of charge and again at car owners own risk. The Fair organisers and Birr Castle Demesne and their employees shall not be held responsible for any accident, damage or loss, however caused, that may occur to any person, motor vehicle, article or property

A new advice stand will be 'Tick Talk', which will give advice on the dangers of, and how to avoid, ticks. The expert staff will offer advice on protection and action to be taken in the event of contact from ticks. They will also offer advice on Lyme disease. These are important considerations for hunters in particular who regularly operate in areas of vegetation where various parasites occur.

Again this year the Ferbane Food Campus will feature with Donal Egan who will be accompanied by some of the Campus small industry successes.

Over the two days on the stand we will give away as prizes in various promotions, a Ruger 22/10 Semi Auto rifle and scope, two vouchers of €150 each for Milbro, two vouchers valued €75 each for MacEoin General Merchants, A set of framed flies by Jimmy Tyrrell, a taxidermy piece by Jim Corcoran, a hand crafted stick by the Stickmaker, a Steadify unit from NARGC and more. (Terms and conditions apply to prizes and give-aways).

Also, there will be an opportunity each day to win €100 by guessing the number of wine corks in a glass jar.

There will also be free fishing rods, reels and fishing tackle boxes given away in various promotions during the two days.

It only remains for me to thank the assistance given by Margaret Neile, Chair of the NARGC Shows Committee, all our exhibitors – both NARGC and others, NARGC acting Chairman Tom O'Donnell and Treasurer Simon Devereux for their support, all the NARGC personnel and others who will man the various stands over the two days of the fair, Albert and Irene Titterington for their unstinted support not just for the fair but throughout the year and last but by no means least, my ever suffering assistant, Paula Malone without whose help many things simply would not happen.



The Busy NARGC Tent.

THE NARGC COMPENSATION FUND

The NARGC Compensation Fund is delighted to have the opportunity to sponsor the main arena programme at the Irish Game & Country Fair 2015 in Birr Castle on the 29th and 30th of August and some members' prizes in the clay shooting. The NARGC has been a big supporter of this event for many years and has steadfastly increased its association and participation over those years. As Ireland's largest game shooting and countrysports organisation, we welcome the opportunity which the Fair presents to meet and hear the views of ordinary

sports shooting enthusiasts, whether your interest is game birds, deer, clay or target shooting. Your views assist the Association in the development of the kind of representation and services which members require and this has influenced in no small measure how the NARGC Compensation Fund has developed and grown since its foundation in 1984 to what it is today – the most successful and most responsive indemnity protection scheme for hunting in Europe. The reason for this is that it is a protection scheme for hunters, designed by hunters and expertly administered by hunters. No commercial insurance, which is what all other competitors offer, has ever been able to equal the benefits which the NARGC Compensation Fund provides to members and at a cost which is equal to, or cheaper than, any of its competitors.

Significantly, the NARGC Compensation Fund is not a "policy of last resort" i.e. a policy which will not pay out if the liability is covered by another policy, such as home insurance. This is what some of its competitors are offering. So, hunting protection is most certainly a case of buyer beware.

It is not too big a claim to make that the performance of the Compensation Fund is unequalled anywhere in Europe in countrysports. Apart at all from the myriad of other benefits which NARGC provides to its members, the Compensation Fund alone is good enough reason to be an NARGC Member. We are delighted to welcome all fieldsports enthusiasts to the NARGC marquee located along the front of the main arena where our personnel will provide expert advice on the benefits of the Fund.

For further information contact Chris Gavican at Freephone 1800 222 444; 086-7888411 or cgavican@iol.ie

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND at the Irish Game & Country Fair at Birr Castle



Lyall Plant, Chief Executive CAI

Countryside Alliance Ireland (CAI) is once again delighted to be exhibiting at The Irish Game Fair at Birr Castle.

The Fair gives CAI the ideal opportunity to showcase the organisation's work while engaging with members, potential members and the public in general.

The CAI marquee will host the Wild Deer Association of

Brockna Game Farm & Hatchery

For Sale

Adult Pheasants September - October

Pheasant - Poults & Day Olds

Mallard - Poults & Day Olds

Red Leg Partridge Poults

Collattin Shoot

Top Quality Driven Duck and Partridge

September – February

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November – February

Contact

Ciaran: 087 1241889

ciarandowling8@hotmail.com

Fiach: 087 6394098



Website: www.activehuntingireland.ie

Email: info@activehuntingireland.ie

Phone: 0402 21588

Mobile: 087 9022209

Inch, Gorey, Co. Wexford

Active Hunting at the Game Fair

We are delighted to announce that we will have a stand at the Game Fair in Birr Castle this year. Make sure you come along to grab some great bargains.

We will be showing our new range of Hawke Vantage Scopes, the newest member of the Hawke family. Prices start at €79.00. We will have our full range of BOGGear equipment on display, the perfect accessories for the Deer Stalker and Foxing man. Ensuring that your gun is rock-steady has never been easier.

Stock up for winter with our huge selection of hunting clothes; guaranteed to keep you warm and dry this shooting season. Choose from Deerhunter, Seeland, Jack Pyke and Percussion. There's nothing worse having than cold feet, so this year, make sure you aren't caught out in the cold weather. Our range of boots from Jack Pyke, Hillman, Grubs and Wildhunter mean that you have plenty of styles to choose from.

Every hunter needs a good knife and we are proud to say that we have one of the biggest selections of hunting knives in Ireland. Whether you want a state of the art Buck knife, or a top quality, reliable knife that won't break the bank, we've got just the knife for you. Our range of Mora Knives will certainly appeal to you, especially as prices start from as little as €6.95!

Visit our website to view our entire range of products www.activehuntingireland.ie.

We look forward to seeing you all at the end of the month!

BALLYDUFF FISHERY

The Fishery is having a good season with variable water conditions and several salmon being caught. The choice of having four beats is proving very popular for our guests.

Membership of the Club - BALLYDUFF BRIDGE SALMON FISHERIES - continues to grow and already there is a waiting list for full Club Membership which in itself is a very attractive package; day members are also well up for the season. The Fishery has an on going policy of improvements and these have been carried out as the season progresses. Car parking facilities are now greatly improved at our Ballyduff Bridge beat.

Our two highly experienced Ghillies who manage the Fisheries are always available for help and welcome all your enquiries.

Maurice Cahill 00353(0)873317175;

gofish.maurice@gmail.com

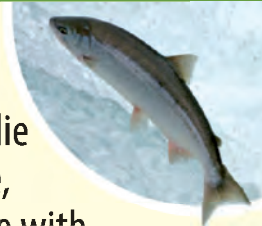
Connie Corcoran 00353(0)876918230;

connieghillie@gmail.com



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Numerous beats, mostly fly fishing, comfortable lodge, best rates, professional ghillie service and tuition available, families welcome, assistance with accommodation, pre-booking essential.



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www.blackwatersalmon.ie

Ireland with their collection of heads and deer stalking equipment, renowned Irish stickmaker, Tom Kavanagh, with his impressive display of hand crafted sticks and Walter Phelan with a variety of exhibits from The Irish Fly Fishing and Game Shooting Museum.

CAI Chief Executive, Lyall Plant comments "The Irish Game and Country Fair at Birr Castle is the perfect forum for CAI to meet and chat with our members and support-ers. With fieldsports, foods and a superb atmosphere all together in one of the country's most stunningly beautiful locations, the Fair offers something for everyone who loves the countryside and rural way of life. We are delighted to have a significant presence and to play such a vital part. **CAI is pleased to sponsor prizes for the terrier, lurcher and whippet showing and racing and the IRISH STICKMAKING CHAMPIONSHIPS.**

Countryside Alliance Ireland works for everyone who loves the countryside and rural way of life. As our members and supporters will know, we have been particularly active these past few months at both the Oireachtas and Stormont in respective of firearms licensing; an issue which obviously affects a great many of our members. Through campaigning, lobbying, publicity and education we influence legislation and public policy that impacts on the countryside, rural people and their activities.

We relish the opportunity to get out and about to speak with fellow country sports enthusiasts face to face, so please do come along to visit the CAI marquee where a warm welcome is guaranteed!

We would love to see you, so please do come along to see us and show your support for country sports and our rural heritage. Lyall Plant, CAI Chief Executive

THE FEDERATION OF IRISH SALMON & SEA TROUT ANGLERS

Conaidhm na Slat Iascairí Bradáin agus Breac Geal

Chairman: PAUL LAWTON, 37 Connolly Gardens ,
Ballyphehane, CORK City.

Secretary: NOEL CARR, Teelin Road, Carrick, Co. Donegal.
Tel/Fax 074 9730300. email: dgl1@indigo.ie

F.I.S.S.T.A.

The Chairman of Ireland's Premier Angling body - FISSTA (Federation of Irish Salmon and Sea Trout Anglers) Mr. Paul Lawton, is delighted to announce once again their participation in the Irish Game Fair at the very special venue of BIRR CASTLE. "Angling generates over €750m. and supports 10,000 rural jobs to the economy (source TDI) and Birr Game Fair has played their part in promoting this vitally important country sporting business at this time every year in our mid season. This annual event is the highlight of our country sports season where we meet our angling fraternity to discuss and monitor the mid season salmon and seatrout runs and returns from the great salmon and seatrout rivers of

Ireland. It is a very special time for FISSTA to promote the salmon youth angling programmes which are run by over 80 clubs on the island."

WHY ANGLERS WILL ATTEND?

Anglers from all the main rivers and clubs of Ireland now gather in Birr to participate at The Irish Game Fair at Birr Castle to meet and exchange notes on developments in salmon and seatrout angling and conservation. The fair has built up a huge following over the past few years as a venue where clubs and businesses can promote their brand of sport angling to a fast growing market of angling enthusiasts who are planning and placing bookings for the 2015 season. This is where all issues are raised and addressed by club members who travel to what is now Ireland's premier country sports event in the countryside calendar for anglers. The Great Game Fairs of Ireland partnered with the premier magazine Irish Country Sports and Country Life which features our quarterly newsletter allows us to spread the FISSTA message of angling to a very broad country sports fraternity who support us in our everyday work. We are most grateful to Albert Titterington and his excellent team at the fair and magazine for providing such professional organisation and for their fullsome support and cooperation in helping FISSTA to bring salmon and seatrout angling to a wider public.

FISSTA Stand at Birr Fair - Newcomers Fishing Advice

The FISSTA stand is hosting a one-stop advice centre where newcomers can get the following information and guidance;

1. WHERE TO FISH - where the nearest fishing is available - directions on how to access an-gling in your area eg; salmon and seatrout especially
2. HOW TO START - and what tackle shop near you can supply you with the equipment needed to get started.
3. JOIN FISSTA CLUB LOCALLY - who can advise further - both at the show and in your local area.
4. WHO WILL HELP - where to get tuition - both at the show and in your local area
5. WHAT YOU NEED - what equipment you will need and whose stands to visit at the show
6. READ MORE ON ANGLING - what to read up on where to get the books
7. LEARN TO FLYCAST ON HOLIDAY - where to fish and stay on an Irish angling holiday river
8. CATCH UP ON ALL FISSTA CAMPAIGNS TO CONSERVE AND PROTECT OUR WILD ATLANTIC SALMON - ESPECIALLY THEIR SUSTAINED OPPOSITION PROGRAMME TO MINISTER COVENEY'S TEN FISH FARM PLAN STARTING WITH THE GALWAY BAY APPLICATION PUBLISHED LAST YEAR.
9. ANGLING SUPPORTS 10,000 JOBS AND GENERATES €750m. LEARN MORE TO PROMOTE BUSINESS ALONG YOUR LOCAL RIVER



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IRISH WORKING TERRIER FEDERATION

This is the third year that the Irish Working Terrier Federation (I.W.T.F.) will be fully involved at Shanes Castle and Birr Castle, giving the I.W.T.F. the ideal opportunity to display their commitment to their work while engaging with all those in attendance at this prestigious country sports event.



"Our goal is of a vital, working and thriving working terrier service for the benefit of the farming and mainstream hunting communities. Through campaigning, lobbying, publicity and education we influence legislation and public policy that impacts on the working terrier world and rural activities. The Irish Game Fairs at Shanes Castle and Birr Castle are the perfect forum for the I.W.T.F. to meet and engage with our members and supporters".

The IWTF were invited to put forward judges for the ROI Terrier & Lurcher Championships at Birr.

THE SALMON & WOODCOCK PAVILION

This year again with the threat to our salmon socks from the proposed fish farms it is the 'Year of the Salmon & woodcock' And this fishy theme is the focal point for the 'Angling Village' at Birr Castle with everything one would expect at a top class angling show and more! Masses of tackle and plenty of bargains, boats, angling competitions, instruction and demonstrations, vintage tackle, fisheries, sporting art, international class taxidermy from Ingrid Houwers, and even speciality game and fish cookery with Emmett McCourt and other chefs in the Flogas Kitchen in the Fine Food Pavilion.

THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL GAME ANGLING INSTRUCTORS -IRELAND (APGAI)

APGAI will be attending the Birr Game Fair with a programme of continuous workshops for casting and equipment plus fly dressing covering the hot topics of today's game angling scene. We will have a full complement of experienced coaches to create a number of interactive learning and discussion groups for the serious angler as well as a number of attractions for the young anglers with games and fly dressing competitions plus casting classes for young casters. We will be running a casting competition based around skill as opposed to distance with two levels "professional" and "amateur" with prizes of kit and equipment.



Joe Stitt and Arthur Greenwood of APGAI with some good reading material.

www.apgai-ireland.ie

COCHISE HORSES

The action packed arena programme of the Irish Game & Country Fair features one of the widest range of entertainment to be seen at any event in Ireland. The performance of the phenomenally well trained horses from the Cochise Stud is always one of the demonstrations of that thrilled the crowd.



This stud is run by Derek O'Byrne White the well known horse trainer, who has both entertained and awed crowds throughout Ireland with the results of his exceptional training skills and horsemanship. Derek will be at Birr again this year with those well trained horses including a mare which is just back in Ireland after being crowned Champion of Champions at the recent European Championships. The display of the agility of the Paso Fino horse is demonstrated beautifully by the unique 4 beat gait of this exceptional mount and anyone with an interest in horses cannot fail to be im-pressed.

www.cochisestud.com.

FALCONRY AT BIRR

Falconry is one of the oldest of the countryside sports with its beginnings stretching back to 2200 BC in the Far East, though its true origins are unclear. It was brought to Europe by Germanic tribes who introduced it to Roman culture.

It thrived during the Middle Ages as both a method of hunting food (small game etc.) and as a sport in its own right among the nobles of the time. Falconry also flourished in the Middle East and Asia where the crusaders learned much from their Arab counterparts.

However in Europe in the late 18th century, with the advent of guns and their use in hunting, the sport dwindled and was limited to a few who continued the practice. The skill of the falconer and the amazing aerobical prowess of the birds continues to inspire awe amongst Game Fair crowds.

This year we are fortunate to have John Carmichael from the NI School of Falconry with his team of assistant falconers to put on impressive free flying demonstrations and a large static exhibition.

In addition there will be a second static exhibition from the Irish Hawking Club.

HUGE TENTED VILLAGE OF TRADE STANDS

Wide range of trade stands for the whole family to enjoy including a Gunmakers Row; a Fisherman's Row and a Gundog Row - all bursting with products necessary for your sport.



Mouthwatering Game Pies & Much More in the Fine food Festival

Plus country clothing and fashion to suit all tastes and pockets; a Craft Tent; Art Gallery; THE FLAVOUR IRELAND FINE FOOD FESTIVAL; Sporting Holidays; Renewable Energy; home & Garden equipment - in fact something to interest anyone who lives, works or plays in the Irish Countryside.

SPORTING ART

The tented village will have a number of works of art on display including major exhibit from John R Moore, who has produced the two iconic paintings associated with the 2012 Great Game Fairs of Ireland - The 'Salmon on the Glendun River' to illustrate the overall angling theme of the fairs and

'The Massereene Hound' - a fantastic painting bringing the 300 legend of the Massereene Irish Wolfhound to life.



Fair Director Albert Titterington with artist John Moore and the painting of the Massereene Hound

THE VICTORIAN POACHER REMAINS AT LARGE

Over a century ago one type of person made their living by keeping a wary eye out for the local village constable. Every rural county had at least one of these rogues - the poacher - who caused the local coppers no end of trouble.

Unafraid of the law or the judges who might well choose to send the poacher to jail or even to the colonies, he went his wily way on a 'shiny night' in an effort to put food on the table, or maybe even make a shilling in the process.

Steven McGonigal is keeping the traditional skills of the poacher alive with this unique act.



Stephen McGonigal shows Emma Cowan from the Flavour Fine Food Festival some of the gear he uses to acquire the rabbits that are used in the cookery demonstrations.

Longnetting, with the help of his amazing little whippet towering over the nets in their attempt to catch coney is what Steven does best - legally of course - in an effort to reduce the rabbit population in infested areas of the countryside and help farmers protect their crops. He showcases this lost art alongside many of the poacher's long lost arts.

We have heard the poacher bragging 'no one can stop me

especially a gamekeeper!' What he doesn't realise is that the keeper is in fact dangerous adversary just recently employed by his Lordship.

This is none other than the bucolic ,no nonsense and bewhiskered keeper known as 'Fast Hands Eddie Dash' - so named for his fame as bare knuckle fighter in his youth and for the fact that not only did he pack a fearsome punch in either hand but his hand speed was such that his opponents didn't see the punch coming. Although now slightly slower of hand and foot 'Fast Hands Eddie' is still rather fond of exacting summary justice with gnarled and rough hands or more often now with a pick axe handle on anyone caught poaching on his patch.



Fast Hands Eddie Dash

It's time to take the gloves off with regard to this slippery poacher. And how better way than to pit the former Bareknuckle Champion of Dalriada against the elusive poacher!

So if you ever had a hankering to see the wily ways of the poacher, all will be revealed at Birr - right under the nose of Fast Hands Eddie.

Will this be the poacher off to the colonies - or worse? We just have to wait and see!

THE ALL IRELAND STICK MAKERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

organised by the Celtic Stickmakers Club

The championship will take place at the Irish Game and Country Fair, Birr Castle, Co Offaly on Sunday 30th August

Champion will win an engraved tankard to keep plus £100 sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland The John McClelland Memorial Perpetual Annual Trophy. Second place Rosettes in each class sponsored by the Celtic Stickmakers Club. Special Memorial Perpetual Trophy presented in memory of Philip Lawton for the best fancy stick. Philip was the club's first secretary.

Stick Classes

- 1 Mountain staff of Hill walker, wood, all horn, including ram, buffalo, cow , including antler
- 2 Horn thumbstick, plain.
- 3 Wood thumbstick, plain
- 4 Leg cleek, horn, wood, one or two piece
- 5 Horn market stick, ram, cow or goat, nose out
- 6 Wood market stick, one or two piece, nose out
- 7 Blackthorn walker, horn, or wood, plain
- 8 Wood walker, one or two piece
- 9 Fancy stick, any carved head, wood, horn or antler
- 10 Crook, any horn, including ram, cow, goat, or buffalo
- 11 Crook, wood, one or two piece
- 12 Walker, any horn or antler head
- 13 Horn market stick, buffalo nose out
- 14 Market stick, nose in, any horn including, ram, cow, goat, and buffalo
- 15 Wood Market stick, nose in, one or two piece
- 16 Ornamental stick. Any carved stick, not necessary practical
- 17 Novice horn head, plain or fancy
- 18 Novice wood, any wood head, plain or fancy

For further details contact: Tom Kavanagh 057-8629068

E: kavanaghtom@eircom.net

WHEN IT COMES TO DOG TRAINING IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY FOR THE TRAINER TO START - AND SET A WORLD RECORD AT BIRR

A world record for dog training at Birr Castle will show that it's never too young to begin your dog training career.

That's what Game Fair director Albert Titterington said when he announced that the youngest dog trainer ever to perform at Birr Castle would be holding centre stage at the Irish Game & Country Fair and Fine Food Festival on 29th and 30th August.

This year's Irish Game & Country Fair at Birr will see eight year Cole Mathews in the Main Arena with his gundog act for the very first time.



Cole and his father

Albert Titterington said: “Cole is the son of international expert ‘Dog Guru’ Keith Mathews, so it comes as no surprise that this ‘Mini Guru’ shows skills far beyond his years and is a natural entertainer. This year there’s an extra special ‘double’ at Birr Castle when not one - but two - Dog Gurus take to the Main Arena. So while Dog Guru Keith Mathews is already an international star, ‘Mini Guru’ Cole is just starting off his showbiz career.”

Cole will be in the Main Arena with Chloe, his Labrador gundog which he trained himself to exhibition standard. Cole is really looking forward to showing what he can do and introducing his two year dog to the world of entertainment and he also tells us to expect a couple of surprises as well — so watch out!

‘Mini Guru’ Cole will demonstrate Chloe’s training, such as steadiness to thrown dummies, retrieving, using the stop whistle and directing the dog to wherever he wants it to go around the Arena. And while all this canine magic is on show, the finer points will be explained by his dad, Keith.

Dog Guru Keith Mathews is flying back from his European tour to perform at Birr Castle and will introduce young Cole’s unique act in the Arena, as a precursor to his own spectacular canine Master Class, when anyone can join in with their own dogs to learn at first hand some of Keith’s top training tips.

With the NARGC (National Association of Regional Game Councils) supplying prizes each day for the best gentleman, lady and child dog handler, this is a real opportunity for the public to get the Guru’s training magic with their own pet. Don’t miss it!

Cole and Keith are just part of the Canine Extravaganza at the Game Fair which is among Ireland’s largest and most varied canine events, featuring gundog displays by international handlers Willie Edgar and Ken Lindsay, international spaniel and retriever tests, horse and hound displays, the ROI Ireland Terrier, Whippet, Lurcher Racing and Showing Championships; the Master McGrath international lurcher racing challenge and the Final of the Red Mills Five Nations Terrier & Lurcher Championships; the ESS gundog scurry; and the Victorian Poacher with his trusty whippet & lurcher. If you love dogs Birr is the place to be on the weekend of the 29th and 30th August

The Game Fair at Birr Castle also includes: a Fine Food Festival, Living History Village, medieval jousting; an action packed arena; Gunmakers’ Row, Fishermans’ Row Arts & Crafts, and a huge tented village of trade stands supplying everything required for the country lifestyle.

Add in one of the best clay pigeon shooting layouts in Ireland with three guns to be won, lots of ‘have a go’ opportunities including fly casting, air rifle shooting, archery, pony rides, children’s play area plus all of Birr Castle Demesne open to the public for the two days – this really is one of Ireland’s most actions packed family days out.

The Irish Game & Country Fair and Fine Food Festival will take place from 10am – 6pm on Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th August.

The event is sponsored by Failte Ireland

The Ulster Scots Agency at Birr

We are delighted to feature some Ulster Scots music in our Living History village at Birr with a particularly County Offaly Flavour as two of the musicians are originally from Birr!



responsibility for the development of the Irish (Gaelic) language. Each of these agencies has its own Board whose members together constitute the Board of the North/South Language Body

The aims of the Ulster-Scots Agency are to promote the study, conservation, development and use of Ulster-Scots as a living language; to encourage and develop the full range of its attendant culture; and to promote an understanding of the history of the Ulster-Scots.

The Agency was established as a part of the North/South Language Body set up under the Belfast Agreement of 1998. The other part of the Language Body is Foras na Gaeilge which has

— otherwise known as Tha Boord o Leid in Ullans.

The Agency is jointly funded by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in the Republic of Ireland and is responsible to the North/South Ministerial Council.

The Agency has its main office in Belfast with a regional office in Raphoe, Co. Donegal an Ulster-Scots heartland area.

Great Game Fairs of Ireland Gundogs

The largest and best sponsored Gundog events at any Fair in Ireland are staged at the two GREAT GAME FAIRS of IRELAND

Gundogs

The Gundog events at Birr are sponsored by



PLEASE NOTE THAT ACCESS TO THE GUNDOG CAR PARK IS AT GATE A BETWEEN 8.00 - 9.00am. COMPETITORS ARRIVING AFTER 9.00 WILL BE DIRECTED TO THE MAIN CAR PARK.

SPANIELS

Saturday 29th August

Novice and Open Spaniel Tests (organised by the ESS of Ireland) Starts 9.00am



AND ALSO A GUNDOG SCURRY OPEN TO ALL BREEDS

Open Test :

1st €80 plus tankard plus RED MILLS Dog Food. 2nd €60, 3rd €40, 4th €20

Novice Test :

1st €50 plus Tankard & RED MILLS Dog Food
2nd €30, 3rd €20

TOP SCORING SPANIEL OVERALL (Novice or Open) wins a Barbour Coat.

SCURRY OPEN TO ALL BREEDS OF DOGS

Fastest Time Each Day €50 Runner Up €30 and best young handler (under 14) €20

RETRIEVERS on Sunday 30th August

National NOVICE Open and International team events. These events are organised by Derek Harford and the Broadmeadows Gundog Club.



Prize Structure:

Winning team: Win RED MILLS dog food and €150.

National Novice Retriever Test:

1st €50, Tankard plus a bag of RED MILLS Food. 2nd €30, 3rd €20

National Open Retriever Test: Prizes

1st €80, Tankard a bag of RED MILLS Food.
2nd €60, 3rd €40, 4th €20

THE TOP SCORING RETRIEVER OVERALL
(from Novice or Open) a Barbour Coat

THE HANDLING CHALLENGE

On Sunday afternoon the two top Spaniels meet the top two Retrievers in a challenge competition for the RED MILLS TOP GAME FAIR GUNDOG. The winner wins €100 and a Duck Dri Coat.

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AT Connolly's
RED MILLS
SINCE 1908

The ROI TERRIER, LURCHER & WHIPPET CHAMPIONSHIPS

Irish Game & Country Fair, Birr Castle

The Great Game Fairs of Ireland are renowned for their Terrier, Lurcher & Whippet events through their hosting of the All Ireland Terrier & Lurcher Championships at Shanes Castle and the ROI Championships at Birr. Although our format has been copied it has never been bettered and this year we have already staged the Irish Countrysports and Country Life magazine/ Red Mills Master McGrath Challenge and the Feedwell Five Nations Whippet Championships and at Birr we will stage the Irish Countrysports and Country Life/Red Mills Five Nations International Lurcher & Terrier Championships; the Feedwell ROI Racing Championships and the NUTTS Pet Foods ROI Terrier, Lurcher and Whippet Showing Championships.

THE FEEDWELL TERRIER, WHIPPET & LURCHER RACING CHAMPIONSHIPS SATURDAY 29th August starting 12.30pm



The Over 23" ROI Lurcher Racing Championships. - winner qualifies for 2016 Master Mc Grath Challenge. Winner €30 sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland Plus Trophy & Bag of Feedwell Dog Food; Runner Up & Bag of Feedwell dog Food

The Under 23" ROI Racing Championships - - winner qualifies for 2016 Master Mc Grath Challenge. Winner €30 sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland Plus Trophy & Bag of Feedwell Dog Food Runner Up & Bag of Feedwell dog.

The Under 21" ROI Racing Championships Winner €30 sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland Plus Trophy & Bag of Feedwell Dog Food; Runner Up & Bag of Feedwell dog.

The Whippet ROI Racing Championships Winner €30 sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland Plus Trophy & Bag of Feedwell Dog Food; Runner Up & Bag of Feedwell dog

The Terrier Racing Championships Winner €30 sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland Plus Trophy & Bag of Feedwell Dog Food; Runner Up & Bag of Feedwell dog.

The Directors Challenge

This is restricted to dogs that have not won a race at any event in the UK or Ireland

There will be three sets of heats for dogs classified as follows:

1. Rough Coated Lurcher Any size Winner Trophy
2. Bull or Terrier /cross Lurcher Any size Winner Trophy
3. Smooth Coated Lurcher/Long dog any breeding other than (2) Any size. Winner Trophy

The top two dogs from each classification will run in a six dog final

Winner €30 sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland plus Trophy plus a bag of Feedwell Dog Food ; Runner up bag of Feedwell Dog Food.

Terrier, Lurcher & Whippet Show SUNDAY 30th August Starts at 12.30 sharp Rosettes sponsored by Countryside Alliance Ireland & Irish Countrysports and Country Life magazine Dog Food sponsored by Nutts

OVERALL SHOW CHAMPION €50 + Trophy

CHAMPION LURCHER €40 sponsored by Premier Event Catering + Trophy + Dog Food. This is the final qualifier for the Red Mills & Irish Countrysports and Country Life Five Nations Lurcher Championship.

CHAMPION TERRIER €40 sponsored by Premier Event Catering + Trophy + Dog Food. This is the final qualifier for the Red Mills & Irish Countrysports and Country Life Five Nations Terrier Championship. CHAMPION WHIPPET €40 + Trophy + Dog Food

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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

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Terrier Championship Show :

1. Terrier Pups under 1 year
2. Terrier under 12".
3. Best Pair of Terriers
4. AV Working Terrier
5. Jack Russell Type Dog over 1 year old
6. Jack Russell Type Bitch over 1 year old
7. Lakeland Type Dog over 1 year old
8. Lakeland Type Bitch over 1 year old
9. Fell or Patterdale Dog or Bitch over 1 year old
10. Border Dog over 1 year old
11. Border Bitch over 1 year old
12. Cross Bred Dog or Bitch over 1 year old
13. Veteran Dog or Bitch over 7 years of age.

Championship – from unbeaten terriers other than pairs or puppy. Puppy goes forward to the puppy championships.

Lurcher Championships:

1. Any Variety Lurcher Pup under 1 year old
2. Whippet/Lurcher Dog or Bitch over 1 year old (NO PURE BRED WHIPPETS)
3. Best Pair of Lurchers
4. Any Variety Lamping Lurcher Dog
5. Any Variety Lamping Lurcher Bitch
6. Smooth Lurcher Dog over 23" over 1 year old
7. Smooth Lurcher Bitch over 23" over 1 year old
8. Rough Lurcher Dog over 23" over 1 year old
9. Rough Lurcher Bitch over 23" over 1 year old
10. Rough or Smooth Lurcher Dog under 23" over 1 year old
11. Rough or Smooth Lurcher Bitch under 23" over 1 year old
12. Collie Lurcher over 1 year old
13. Terrier Bred Lurcher over 1 year old
14. Bull Bred lurcher over 1 year old.
15. Veteran Lurcher - Any Lurcher over 8 years of age

Championship - from unbeaten Lurchers other than pairs or puppy. Puppy goes forward to the puppy championships.

Whippet Championship: (qualifier for the Five Nations Whippet Championships at Shanes Castle 2016)

1. Whippet Puppy Dog under 1 year old
2. Whippet Puppy Bitch under 1 year old
3. Whippet Dog over 1 year old
4. Whippet Bitch over 1 year old
5. Working Whippet Dog
6. Working Whippet Bitch
7. Whippet Pairs
8. Veteran Whippet

Championship 1st from classes 3,4,5,6

Family Dog Show:

Any Variety shown by a child under 12 years of age

Any Variety shown by a Lady

Any Variety shown by a Gent

**Champion Handling Class from the above classes
Receives Trophy & Rosette.**

THE FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The FINAL of the RED MILLS /IRISH COUNTRYSPO RTS & COUNTRY LIFE FIVE NATIONS TERRIER CHAMPIONSHIP JUDGED BY A THREE JUDGE SYSTEM WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE MAIN ARENA AT 5.00pm. WILL ALL QUALIFIERS REGISTER WITH FAIR HQ BEFORE 12.00 noon.



Last year winner and runner were both owned by John Hendricks photographed here with the representative from sponsor Red Mills.

The FINAL of the RED MILLS /IRISH COUNTRYSPO RTS & COUNTRY LIFE FIVE NATIONS LURCHER CHAMPIONSHIP JUDGED BY A THREE JUDGE SYSTEM WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE MAIN ARENA AT 5.30pm. WILL ALL QUALIFIERS REGISTER WITH FAIR HQ BEFORE 12.00 noon.



Last year's winner Jed McDonagh (r) with the runner Up Mark O'Neill, the three judges and the representative of the sponsors RED MILLS

The Winners of the Five Nations Lurcher & Terrier Championship will receive a variety of prizes including €500 and a Trophy and other prizes. Runners Up receive Watches sponsored By Gardiner Bros Jewellers of Belfast

All qualifiers attending receive a special commemorative cap sponsored by www.jointhemigration.com



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YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A GREAT SHOT OR WILLIAM TELL TO WIN GREAT SHOOTING PRIZES AT BIRR CASTLE!

Some of the biggest clay pigeon shooting prizes in Ireland will be on offer at the annual Irish Game & Country Fair over Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th August at Birr Castle, Co Offaly. And according to the organisers even novice and rough shooting shots have a chance of winning some of that prize pot, including amazing shotguns up to €1,500.

And the opportunities for the average game and rough shooter have got even better this year as the NARGC have put up some fantastic prizes to be competed for by NARGC members and clubs.

Well known gun dealer Francesco Morelli, from Casale 2000 Ltd, in Cashel, Co Tipperary came up with a novel idea to make competition open to all comers. Francesco says "Quite a few of our customers said that the top prizes at clay shoots often go to the real experts but we wanted to both introduce clay pigeon shooting to a wider audience and give the ordinary shooter a chance to win a gun of a lifetime. We'll be offering anyone who has a valid Firearms Certificate an opportunity not to be missed and with a little bit of luck, a chance to win this fabulous prize!"



Francesco with the prize shotgun.

Fair organiser Albert Titterington says: "We are very grateful to Francesco from Casale not only for donating this fine prize and for sportingly helping us add to our clay shooting prize fund, but also for their ingenuity in devising this exciting competition which embraces the spirit of the Great Game Fairs. Like all of us with a true passion for country sports, pursuits and lifestyles, Francesco is eager to make the shooting sport accessible to all and this is a great way of doing just that.

"Anyone who is an FAC holder can shoot at the 50 bird sporting shoot and they'll not only get the chance a chance to win super prizes but, even if they miss all 50 clays, they'll still go into a draw for the Caesar Guerini shotgun worth nearly €1,500 sponsored by Casale 2000 Ltd."

Anyone who enters the 10 bird pool stand and 50 bird open over the 2 days can enter their score card for a free draw for a

gun. Draw will take place on Sunday 30th at 5.30pm

Visitors to the Cassale stand who can avail of a very special offer of a generous discount off the price of Caesar Guerini shotguns for the duration of the fair and view the fantastic range of archery products.

SATURDAY 29TH AUGUST

50 BIRD OPEN SPORTING CLAY CHAMPIONSHIPS.

1st prize an ATA Shotgun sponsored by Brian Connaughton from Wild Hunter.



2nd prize €100.00, 3rd prize €50.00

10 BIRD COCK AND HEN POOL TRAP 33% PAYOUT GUARANTEED MINIMUM €100

**SPECIAL NARGC COMPENSATION FUND
MEMBERS PRIZE of €100 for the top score by an
NARGC member.**

5 BIRD LONG TEAL 33% PAY OUT GUARANTEED MINIMUM €100

**SPECIAL NARGC COMPENSATION FUND
MEMBERS PRIZE of €150 MEMBER
4 PERSON TEAM EVENT**

Win your club or syndicate 100 pheasants worth €500.00 sponsored by **Fiach Dowling (Collattin)** plus many other prizes sponsored by **George Kelly from Millard Bros**

**SPECIAL NARGC COMPENSATION FUND
MEMBERS PRIZE of €300 to the top placed NARGC
Club and €200 to the next best placed NARGC Club**

Enter Saturday or Sunday.

SUNDAY 30TH AUGUST

50 BIRD OPEN SPORTING GAME FAIR CHAMPIONSHIPS

1st prize COGSWELL & HARRISON SHOTGUN
sponsored by David & Martin Brennan from Ardee Sports



2nd prize €150.00, 3rd prize €75.00

**10 BIRD COCK AND HEN POOL TRAP 33% payout
guaranteed minimum €100**

**SPECIAL NARGC COMPENSATION FUND
MEMBERS PRIZE of €100 for the top score by an
NARGC member.**

**5 BIRD LONG TEAL 33% PAY OUT GUARANTEED
MINIMUM €100**

**SPECIAL NARGC COMPENSATION FUND MEMBERS
PRIZE of €150 for the top NARGC MEMBER**

4 PERSON TEAM EVENT

Win your club or syndicate 100 pheasants worth €500.00 by
Fiach Dowling (Collattin) plus many other prizes sponsored
by George Kelly from Millard Bros

**SPECIAL NARGC COMPENSATION FUND
MEMBERS PRIZE of €300 to the top placed NARGC
Club and €200 to the next best placed NARGC Club**

Enter Saturday or Sunday.

**Anyone who enters the 10 bird pool stand and 50 bird
open over the 2 days can enter their score card for a free
draw for the Caeseur Guerini shotgun. Draw will take
place on Sunday 30th at 5.30pm.**

Entry fees:

50 Bird shoot €25 per card Three Cards for €60

Cock & Hen Pool Trap €5 per card

Long Distance Teal €4 per card

Team Shoot €80 per team

Enquiries contact Seamus 087 2664191 or Joe 087
6604604.

The Irish Game & Country Fair and Fine Food Festival
takes place at Birr Castle, Co Offaly on the 29th and 30th
August the fair is open to the public from 10.00 to 6.00pm
www.irishgameandcountryfair.com

For full details of the sporting stands exhibiting and other
attractions see the FREE to READ online special GAME
FAIRS MAGAZINE on www.countrysportsandcountrylife.com



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The romance of fishing, the rush of rabbit and the flavour of fine food

As a woman with a passionate love of the countryside, from country sports to the finest of local foods, Emma Cowan is looking forward to another Great Irish Game Fair and Fine Food Festival at Birr Castle on the 29th & 30th August.

As a woman with a passionate love of the countryside, from country sports to the finest of local foods, Emma Cowan is looking forward to another Great Irish Game Fair and Fine Food Festival at Birr Castle on the 29th & 30th August.

When Fair Director Albert Titterington told me the 'foodie' themes of Birr this year would be rabbit and trout, I admit it sent me on a flight of fancy to huntin' and fishin' days gone by.

Let's start with the 'romance of fishing'. I hear the question in your voice but, for me, fishing was a grand romance in the finest country style. I never cast a line until I was in my twenties and my introduction to the great sport of flyfishing was, in fact, my now husband's idea of how best to woo a country girl. What can I say, it worked! He introduced me to fishing, I introduced him to my dad's very own Queens, fresh from the ground.

The rush of rabbit

Now, the rush of rabbit is a different thing altogether. Once again, it was the other half who introduced me to the delights of rabbit hunting. My first day out was in the County Tyrone countryside in the company of one Brian McClean and his ferret, Fred. What a day. I hadn't been doing brilliantly at my clay shooting lessons so I expected no great success but boy, could I shoot rabbits! It seems if it runs along the ground I'm on to a sure thing and in that one day I became hooked.

I tried rabbit hunting with dogs but no gun with the one and only Brian Plummer, who took me out with his ferret and two Lucas up in the hills beyond his home. Another amazing day's hunting that totally captured me. I already had my own Lucas terrier, a fearsome little hunter in her day, but I needed a lurcher. Here, I chose badly, a beautiful looking, beautifully natured rescue dog who clearly had a bit of German Shepherd in her. She was easily trained, biddable, eager - she just couldn't outrun a rabbit!



Emma with the Victorian Poacher and some rabbits.

The 2015 Fine Food Festival

You'll be picking up the link between my sport and my eating. Hunting and fishing I came to relatively later in life but hey, I've been a lifelong lover of really good food. It seems natural to me that what starts in the earth, on the ground, in the air or in the water should, most gloriously, come to the table. What better way to appreciate nature's bounty than to eat it all up! That's why, come this Game Fair at Birr Castle, I'll be an eager visitor to the Fine Food Pavilion, where I know Game Fair chef, Emmett McCourt, will be cooking up wonders with trout and rabbit on the Flogas kitchen and the Game Fair Team

will have brought together the very best of Irish food - cheeses, preserves, olives, nuts, dried fruits, eels, traditional confectionery, cakes & bakery products, meat and game and, of course, the best local beer and cider.

A groaning table of foodie delights at Birr



It's only right and natural that a Game and Country Fair should have a strong focus on bringing food to the table and that's exactly what you can expect this year at the Great Game Fair at Birr Castle. In keeping with the season, trout and rabbit will feature on the menu, as well as gourmet delights, celebrity chefs and, of course, the Game Fair regular, Peter Gott of Sillfield Farm.



Great pies from Peter Gott

A perennial favourite at the Fair, Peter will be selling his wares - game pies and the best of venison, wild boar, sausages and slow food delights, but there will also be other familiar faces - and new ones - in the Food Festival pavilion.

Fair Director Albert Titterington said: "We've brought together an eclectic mix of the very finest food and drink from all over Ireland, including Game Fair favourites pies, cheeses, chutneys, ciders etc.

Of course, no Food Festival would be complete without live cookery demonstrations and the Game Fair's very own celebrity chef, Emmett McCourt, will be cooking up a feast of delights on the Flogas kitchen at the Food Festival. Emmett will be creating a range of mouthwatering dishes to celebrate the Game Fair themes of trout and rabbit and he'll also have signed copies of book 'Feast or Famine, a cultural food journey of the north west of Ireland' on sale."

"I've cooked everywhere from Belfast to Boston, but the Great Irish Game Fairs are definitely my favourite gig," said Emmett. "It's a real celebration of bringing the country sports harvest to the table, whether that's game or fish, and to me that is the essence of good, honest food."

Chef to the Great Game Fairs of Ireland, Emmett McCourt, has had a great influence on, and played a central role in the development of the Food Festival at the Fair. Like all of the Great Game Fairs team, Emmett is a keen countrysportsman enjoying both shooting and flyfishing - and quite accomplished at both as he has twice finished runner up in the casting competitions at the fair.



Emmett is also an award winning food author with his book 'Feast or Famine' having won several prestigious awards and recently the top accolade of all 'The Best Culinary Travel Book in the World'!!!! Packed with traditional recipes of interest to the country sports enthusiast but also a good historical read this is one book that should be on every countrysports enthusiast's book shelves. It is available from Emmett at the Fair or www.feastorfamine.ie.

In the FLOGAS kitchen at the both fairs Emmett will cook venison and game dishes, rabbit dishes and all sorts of fish dishes including possibly Lough Neagh eels.

Running down through the other exhibitors there is much to interest and tempt the taste buds of the dedicated 'foodie' including

Cheese from Old Irish Creamery



Old Irish Creamery is a family based business in Co. Limerick village called Effin which lies in the shadows of the famed Ballyhoura mountains where they manufacture range of cheddar cheese with/without additives such as Oak Smoked, Garlic & Herbs, Chilli, Cranberries, Blueberries, Walnuts, Irish Porter, Irish Whiskey, Red Wine, Chocolate, Seaweed, Chives and many more. Old Irish Creamery range has won 90 national/international awards to date since began manufacture in 2008, from Gold, Silver and Bronze awards at World Cheese awards and Nantwich International Cheese Awards, Blas na hEireann and other national events. 100% Irish Cheddar and 100% natural ingredients. www.olderishcreamery.com

Springwell Ewes' Milk Cheese

Based in Castlederg on the Tyrone & Donegal Border and marching with the Duke of Abercorn's estate Springwell is based on a 2,000 acre farm and is the only NI farm milking ewes to make cheese and yoghurt. Five different soft cheeses and a mature hard cheese are made and these provide a very suitable alternative for those who are allergic to dairy products or don't like the stronger smell and flavour of goats milk cheese. See: www.gourmetbritain.com/food-shops/13363/springwell-sheeps-cheese

And from the UK - Blacks Cheese



A fantastic range of award-winning cheese truckles made in Cheshire 'with love, milk and some magic'. Blacks describe themselves as 'a rather bonkers' band of Cheese makers and their selection and production methods are a closely guarded secret.

Carrick Cottage Dips from Colin Coulter

"Dips which are our dried herbs and spices, made to our own recipes; they are totally gluten free and contain no preservatives or additives. They are very versatile - they can be made into dips with mayo or natural yogurt, sour cream or creme fraiche. They can be added to oil to make marinades or salad dressing. They can also be made into rubs for meat or added directly into soups, stews, casseroles and stir fries. Finally they can be added as seasoning to any dish. They have a long shelf life and will make up to 6 pots of dip, and can be resealed and reused thus reducing waste."

Made With Love

Margaret Cooper makes a range of jams and chutneys under the Made With Love xo label. She works from home making small batches in open pots and has a 5 star hygiene rating. All ingredients used are either grown or sourced locally.

Nine chutneys and nine jams will be available over the two day event at Birr Castle

Aubergine chutney and pineapple fig and ginger chutney are just two of the unusual flavours available. Savoury Chilli Jam and garlic chutney are forever popular.

Strawberry vodka, raspberry with white chocolate jam, berry and dark chocolate jam and a fabulous three fruit marmalade are some of the treats available.

Samples will be available and a very friendly couple will help you with any query you may have.

Kilmegan Cider

Based in the shadow of the Mourne Mountains Kilbegan Cider specialises in small batch production of three brands:



Real Cider: Giving you a taste of the original art of cider making, our Real Cider is a fully dry, 100% pure juice cider that has not been pasteurised or filtered, allowing a secondary in bottle fermentation. This gives you a light, natural carbonation with fresh fruit flavours and a long finish

Elder Flower Cider: Picked on warm, dry mornings and in their prime, local, wild elderflowers are only then ready to be carefully infused and later blended to our 100% pure juice and unfiltered 'Real Cider' to give you a delicate and subtle floral finish.

Irish Farmhouse Cider: Using a traditional rack and cloth

press this unique cider is made with 100% pure juice. Later we blend in the sweet juice from late season eating apples to our fermented cider to give you a fresh apple finish. Suitably chilled our Irish Farmhouse Cider is enjoyed on any occasion. kilmegancider.com

Crossogue Preserves

"Tipperary Award winning Artisan Preserve Company. Makers of jams, marmalades, chutneys, relishes, curds and sugar free spreads. Simplicity combined with superiority is the key to success at Crossogue Preserves, a recipient of over 50 awards throughout 20 years in business.

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Traditional cooking methods along with the highest quality ingredients make Crossogue Preserves a little luxury enjoyed by connoisseurs everywhere. We believe that truly great preserves should be made by hand using artisan cooking skills of producing small batches, just 20 at a time. We also use our own handmade Pectin which results in our unique distinctive flavour.

www.facebook.com/crossoguepreserves

shop.goodfoodireland.ie/products/category/jams-preserves-curds

Our extensive variety of products are carefully sourced to maintain our high standards of customer satisfaction."

These are just some of the quality exhibitors in the Fine Food Festival at Birr Castle make sure you pop into the pavilion to see for yourself!

Mark Douglas – the Krazi Baker – not only great to watch in action but superb bakery products from this artisan baker



Mark Douglas – The Krazi Baker

Mark tells his own story :

"I have been baking from leaving school at 16 and serving my apprenticeship with my uncle. All my baking years have been spent In the Home Baking industry using traditional mixes and methods.

With the arrival of the multi national supermarkets and methods and mixes being replaced by a premix I became very frustrated with this process.

I visited many European markets while on city breaks and found myself at the Grand Market in Budapest and noticed a pattern that no market baked bread on site. I came home and when back at work the baking on site item was staring me in the face "a hotplate /griddle.

Then the hard bit where do I get a gas hotplate and where do I go to do this.

After many refusals for entry into markets I contacted Foodni to trade at Balmoral Show something I always wanted to do. I met with Michelle Shirlow explained what I was doing and then joined Foodni and my first event was the Balmoral show in the Foodni marquee in 2012.

From there on I have worked at all the agricultural shows won a Gold star for Potato Apple in the 2014 Great Taste Awards.

I performed a baking demo in St.Georges market for Foodni as part of the promotional drive to bring The Gourmand cook book awards 2016 to Belfast. Also a demo with Foodni in George Best City Airports for the arrival of the athletes for The World Police and Fire Games 2014. Another demo in James Street South for The Guild Of Food Writers.



Some of Mark's traditional range.

Sliabh Aughty Honey From Leahy Beekeeping



The team from Leahy Beekeeping

Leahy Beekeeping from Loughrea, Co Galway www.leahybeekeeping.com will be displaying 100% Raw Irish honey from the Sliabh Aughty Mountains. 100% Natural Beard wax and Face moisturizer 100% Natural Lip Balms. They will also have a hive of their bees on display to demonstrate how these fascinating insects make such wonderful products for us to enjoy.

Noel Leahy takes up the story : “**Sliabh Aughty honey and Loughrea honey** is owned by the Leahy family. We have been breeding bees and producing honey for home use and sharing with friends for the last 10 years. Our mission is to produce 100% raw honey of the highest quality.

We are registered with the federation of Irish beekeepers and with Irish black bee producers. Two years ago we decided to increase our hive numbers to allow us sell some honey and share our quality product with others.

Our bees are in apiaries on the Slieve Aughty Mountains.

This mountain range is spread over both County Galway and County Clare and runs into the Burren

Primary plants and trees in the area that produces nectar and pollen are:

Spring

Pussy willow, hazel, Sycamore, beech, chestnut, white thorn, daffodil, snowdrops, mountain ash, Heather, Gorse, Fruit trees.

Summer

Hawthorn, Dandelion, clover, blackberry, Gorse, Lime.

Autumn

Ivy, heather, privet, Knapweed.



Raw honey full of natural goodness

The difference between raw honey and honey sold in shops

is raw honey is not pasteurized, heated or processed (and is usually not filtered).

When bees make honey, it comes with a lot of great vitamins (mostly B and C), lots of anti-oxidants, a few minerals, pollen, and a bunch of other things, including bacteria that likely help us digest the honey.

However, most of the honey you buy in a store is highly processed, beginning by heating the honey to a very high temperature, filtering out many of the healthiest parts of honey, and often adding fillers and even anti-biotics.

In fact, one study found that the great majority of honey sold in stores actually contained pretty much no pollen at all, which makes it impossible to determine if it came from a safe or natural source.

In the end, processed honey is nothing more than sugar (and high-fructose sugar at that). Raw honey, on the other hand, has been shown to cause less blood-sugar spikes, less inflammation, and less body fat.

If you're going to eat honey, make sure it's RAW. Processed honey is no different than table sugar, and perhaps worse.

And even Gourmet Food for dogs from Murphy's Barkery

As baker Elaine McIvor says "We are a little homebased bakery for dogs from Newtownabbey. All our treats, bakes and cakes are additive and preservative free. Everything we make is made with love and approved by Murphy our golden mountain dog. If he doesn't give them a sniff of approval then they don't get sealed. Our treats also come veterinary approved so you can be assured that your pooch is being treated to healthy goodies and where possible we grow our own herbs for use in ingredients e.g our minty men.



All in all, if you want to understand how to make the most of what's in your game bag or your freezer, and how to enhance the flavours with the best of Irish food and drink, Birr Castle is the place to be this June.

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Tel: (01) 4298645



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