

The Vikings are coming to town - but to party not to pillage

advertiser
In brief...

Work ongoing
on changes
to Fair Deal
scheme –
Canney

BY KERNAN ANDREWS

The Claddagh boatmen's Bádóiri an Chladaigh Regatta 2017 will not only showcase the finest Galway hookers and gleoiteogs in the West of Ireland, but brave an invasion of two Viking longships, thereby giving this year's event a decidedly Nordic feel.

The annual regatta, which this year will encompass the inaugural Claddagh Traditional Boat Festival, runs from Wednesday May 24 to Sunday 28 in the Claddagh Basin. As well as the Viking ships, there will be 20 uniquely Galway and traditional Irish boats, including five Galway hookers and gleoiteogs which have been built and refurbished by Bádóiri an Chladaigh to date.

The ship builders are on track in their plans to build a total of 14 of these iconic vessels, representing the 14 Galway Tribes, in time for 2020, when Galway will be the European Capital of Culture. The Viking ships and their crew are from Ardglass in Northern Ireland. The Claddagh Basin will also host a Viking village for the period of the festival and weather dependent, there



will be a full Viking 'invasion' of Salthill on Saturday 27.

The traditional hookers, gleoiteogs, and púcanas have been described as "moving sculptures, living and usable artefacts of our heritage". This will be the first opportunity to see their likes and number, in full sail, gathered and moored at the Claddagh Basin since

1920. The restoration has been supported and funded by the Department of Social Protection. The Galway City Council and the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board are also financial supporters of this endeavour.

"There is no image that could represent Galway more

beguilingly than the red sails of a hooker gliding up the Claddagh Stream on the evening tide," said Galway city arts officer James Harrold. "Our maritime city is well represented by the iconic working boats of Galway Bay."

The festival will also host concerts of Irish traditional music and songs and dance on

the streets, as well as music on the quayside, with the help of local branches of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann.

Fourteen primary schools in Galway, Kinvara, and Connemara will 'adopt' one of the 14 main traditional boats to be moored in the basin. The pupils will learn the history of the boats, and the boating traditions of the Claddagh and the Vikings. They will then take a trip to the Claddagh Basin to see the boats for themselves.

More than 150 primary schools children will also don in Viking and mediaeval costume will, and with the Ardglass Vikings, stage an 'attack' and 'defence' of Galway, from Lynch's Castle, to Quay Street to the Spanish Arch on Thursday 25 at 12 noon, Friday 26 at 12 noon, and Saturday 28 at 3pm. Weather depending there will be a further invasion in Salthill on Saturday 28 at 6pm.

The Latin Quarter, Galway's West End, and The Village Salthill business groups are sponsors of the event. Support for the 14 traditional boats has also come from individual Galway city and Salthill businesses.

East Galway TD and Minister for OPW and Flood Relief, Seán Canney TD recently discussed with Helen McEntee TD, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People the need for changes to the Fair Deal scheme to allow farming families access the scheme.

"At the moment, farm families are having huge difficulties in accessing the Fair Deal scheme. The nub of the issue relates to how working farmland is treated and assessed under the scheme. The issue has been highlighted in recent months by the IFA Farm Family committee and I have raised this issue with Minister McEntee.

"At a recent discussion with Minister McEntee on the subject, I was informed that new proposals for the treatment of working farmland are to be considered in coming weeks and I am hopeful that some progress will be made on the introduction of a modified system which will enable farm families to access the Fair Deal scheme."

'Third world conditions' at UHG A&E says 'appalled' Charity

BY MICHAEL COLE

Independent Cllr James Charity has called for the provision of the new A&E at University Hospital Galway to be

fast tracked immediately after witnessing what he referred to as "third world conditions" at the hospital this week.

Cllr Charity visited the hospital on Monday

night and was appalled at the situation there. "There were well over 100 people in the waiting area outside the A&E at one point, with not even a place to sit for many

people in who attended," said the councillor. "A queue of patients that had been brought in on trolleys by ambulances lined the point between the entry door to the

waiting area and the A&E itself, as there was evidently no trolley space inside the department."

Cllr Charity went on to say: "I counted 14 patients on trolleys lined up along the corridor just before midnight and God knows how many more in every inch of space that can be squeezed out. Trolley watch figures suggested as many as 25 patients were on trolleys. There were no chairs for elderly patients to sit once admitted inside the A&E and even by midnight, there were still over 50 people out in the waiting area.

"One woman I talked to had been in the A&E since 8am Monday morning and was still on a trolley in the corridor approaching midnight", added Cllr Charity. "Another was a cancer patient who had received a phone call at home to urgently attend the A&E after the results of a blood test taken earlier raised concerns, only to find no one knew

why he was here on arrival.

"I also watched as a young man was led along the corridor by a junior doctor, who proceeded to ask a number of people sitting on a bench whether they were a patient or an accompanying party and found a space to place the patient.

"A drip was then applied to the patient which was hung off a coat hanger above the bench. The entire facility, from the waiting area to the department itself, is evidently unfit for purpose."

Cllr Charity stressed that the application process for a new A&E department needs to be fast tracked and work commenced on a new A&E as soon as practicable. "Any delay on this is simply unacceptable," he adds.

Garda
warning about
bogus callers

Gardai in the city have warned people to be wary about bogus callers who are operating in the area.

They have also asked people to watch out for any vulnerable neighbours who may fall prey to these callers, masquerading as representing an agency or a company.

"We would like to remind people to be aware of bogus Callers to houses especially to be mindful of those living alone and who are elderly and maybe vulnerable to such callers," Gardai stated.



David Collins, GPAS Business Consultant, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Simon McKeever, CEO, The Irish Exporters Association, (IEA), and Olwyn Long Head of Ulster Bank Markets at The Irish Exporters Association Supply Chain Seminar at the Clayton Hotel. Photo: Andrew Downes, xposure