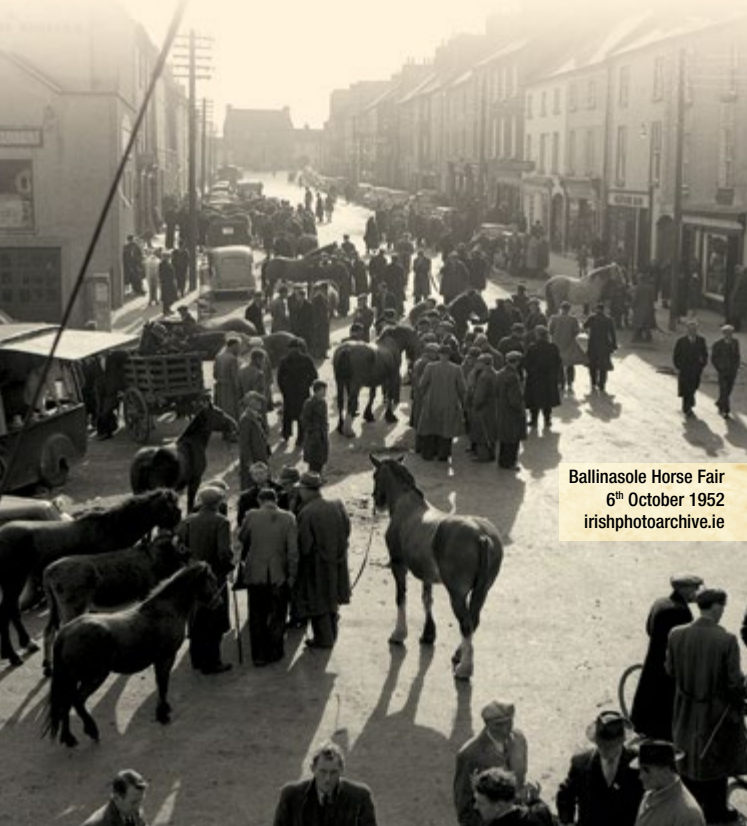


History of the Fair

The Ballinasloe October Fair is one of the oldest fairs in Ireland, at one stage renowned as the largest and greatest in all of Europe. While now predominantly associated with the horse, in its heyday the October Fair was an agricultural event of much greater significance, serving as a market for the sale of cattle and sheep by the farmers of the West to their counterparts in the East of Ireland. The abundant evidence provided by nineteenth-century accounts in newspapers and travel literature make it undoubtedly clear that the Ballinasloe October Fair was one of the greatest and renowned in Ireland and beyond. Indeed, the London Times described the Ballinasloe October Fair as “the largest of its kind in Europe” (1804), “the greatest in the British empire” (1816), and “the greatest one-day fair in Ireland” (1829). A range of other clues point to the fact, however, that the Fair is indeed ancient in origin. The most obvious is provided by the town’s original name in Irish, Béal Átha na Sluaighe, which translates as the “Ford-Mouth of the Hostings”. The “ford-mouth” refers to the crossing point the location offered over the River Suck and the “hostings” to those crowds. Thus, Ballinasloe provided a convenient and safe centre for the sale of livestock from Connacht to Leinster. In other words, animals raised in the West could be easily sold on to graziers from the East for fattening.

As the October Fair, like all fairs across Ireland, declined in importance from the mid-twentieth century onwards, attempts were made to revitalise it. In 1948 a committee was formed that organised a carnival to coincide with the Fair. Thanks to the efforts of this committee and those of those that followed the Ballinasloe October Fair has managed to survive where many others have faltered and vanished.

Dr Damian Mac Con Uladh article History of the fair



Ballinasloe Horse Fair
6th October 1952
irishphotoarchive.ie

FAIR & FESTIVAL EQUINE COMPETITIONS

SUNDAY 2ND OCTOBER – FAIR GREEN SAND ARENA

BALLINASLOE CREDIT UNION HORSE OF THE FAIR LUNGING COMPETITION

(Open to All 3 Year Olds / Entry will be taken on the Fair Green)

1st Prize €700 • 2nd Prize €500
• 3rd Prize €300

JIM DERWIN INTERNATIONAL HORSE DEALER

All Ireland Pony Lunging Competition (148cm or less 3 year olds only)

1st Prize €600 • 2nd Prize €250
• 3rd Prize €150

Entries taken at Fair Green Sand Arena office c. 11.30am
Contact Ciara - 087-6555631 • Entry Fee applies

MARE & FOAL CLASSES

SATURDAY 8TH OCTOBER – FAIR GREEN SAND ARENA

- **Class 1** Irish Draught Brood Mare in foal or with Foal at Foot.
- **Class 2** Irish Draught Colt or Filly Foal.
- **Class 3** Brood Mare in Foal or with Foal at Foot.
- **Class 4** Best Colt Foal.
- **Class 5** Best Filly Foal.

- Champion Foal & Reserve Champion Foal of the Fair.
- Open to all 1st & 2nd prize winners in foal classes)

1st Prize € 50 • 2nd Prize €40 • 3rd Prize €30 • 4th Prize €20

- **Class 6** Best turned out Class for Horse or Pony to be shown in hand.

1st Prize €45 • 2nd Prize €35 • 3rd Prize €20

Entries taken on the day at 11.30am at
Enquiries Tel **085 - 7695200**

KPW Ballinasloe (090) 96 42207

BALLINASLOE FAIR & FESTIVAL



CELEBRATING

300
YEARS

1722

2022

PROGRAMME

2ND - 9TH OCTOBER 2022

www.ballinasloeoctoberfair.com



As Chairperson of Ballinasloe Fair and Festival it is my honour and privilege to extend a Cead Mile Failte to each and everyone of our friends, National and International visitors who have travelled to join with us in celebrating a truly historic event, the 300th year of Europe's Oldest International Horse Fair and Festival.

Our hardworking Voluntary Committee in conjunction with Galway Co Council, Ballinasloe Municipal Authority, ISPCA, Civil Defence and An Garda Síochana, have worked tirelessly to ensure visitors have an enjoyable & memorable visit to Ballinasloe.

We are custodians of this unique event, described by President, Michael D Higgins as "The Community of the Horse" in his opening address in 2018. It is our duty to maintain this economic driver for Ballinasloe, its hinterland and horse breeders throughout Ireland. In the same address he hoped that UNESCO would recognize its significance, something which we are currently working on as committee. Without doubt it is the Jewel in the Crown of the Heritage of Ballinasloe.

We are truly grateful to Mr. Liam Hanrahan, Director of Services and his

team at Galway Co Co, to Cllr Evelyn Parsons and members of the Ballinasloe Municipal Authority for their support.

We could not have put together such an extensive programme of events, without the continued financial support from our sponsors, to them we extend our deepest appreciation and ask that you support them. Also this year we welcome the additional funding from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gealtacht, Sport and Media and Galway County Council.

The Great October Fair, which officially began in 1722, is so synonymous with Ballinasloe and such a significant event for the horse industry, Let's all work together to support, improve, strengthen and guarantee it into the future. On behalf of Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Committee we encourage people to come out and support the great programme of events to mark the 300th year celebrations.

Mal Croffy

Chairperson Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Committee

Trí chéad míle fáilte chuig Aonach Mór Idirnáisiúnta na gCapall mí Dheireadh Fómhair i mBéal Átha na Slua, ar an ócáid stairiúil seo agus muid ag ceiliúradh trí chéad bliain a bhunaithe. It is an absolute privilege and honour to welcome everyone to Ballinasloe, the Town of the Hostings, to celebrate the historic 300th anniversary milestone of the Ballinasloe International October Fair & Festival 2022.

As Cathaoirleach of the Ballinasloe Municipal District I'm delighted to invite you to enjoy the wide variety of exciting entertainment and festival events marking this hugely significant celebration. A spectacular array of all things equestrian await you, with every breed of horse and pony on display in the Famous Fairgreen from the beautiful Connemara Pony to trotting ponies and wonderful Irish draughts.

For those of you who have not been here before, I encourage you to explore our beautiful, welcoming, inclusive town with its warm hospitality, to partake of top class entertainment, music, fun events, stalls, fireworks, tug-o-war, meet our Queen of the Fair, attend our arts, crafts and children's events, and enjoy the fine

food and drink in our traditional pubs, cosy cafes, beautiful hotels. There's something for everyone, young and old, at the Great Fair and a real sense of community, heritage and hospitality here in Ballinasloe, the Town of the Hostings for centuries.

An event like this doesn't come together overnight. Recognition and gratitude must go to the dedicated coordinating committee of the Great October Horse Fair & Festival whose commitment, devotion, time, energy support and expertise will surely mark the 300 year Great Fair 2022 as the best one ever and so I want to express deepest gratitude to them, to sponsors and to all involved in this momentous occasion.

Go n-éirí go geal libh go léir agus bainigí sult agus taitneamh as Aonach Mór an Deireadh Fhómhair! Le gach deá ghuí,

Cllr Evelyn Parsons

Cathaoirleach Ballinasloe Municipal District



Ballinasloe Fair & Festival

Sunday 2nd to Sunday 9th October

FRIDAY 23RD SEPT

Queen of Fair Night

Gullanes Hotel – 8pm

SPONSORED BY GULLANE'S HOTEL

SUNDAY 2ND OCT

Ballinasloe Credit Union Horse of Fair Lunging Competition

FAIR GREEN ARENA

Jim Derwin Pony of Fair Lunging Competition

FAIR GREEN ARENA

Official Opening – 2pm

SOUND STAGE

Mike Denver Concert

(FREE) – 2.30PM – SOUND STAGE

Music on Sound Stage

FROM 1PM TO 7PM SOUND STAGE

MONDAY 3RD OCT

Equine Comp

see Facebook for detail

FAIR GREEN ARENA

Music on Sound Stage

1pm to 6pm

TOWN CENTRE

Misleor Illuminations

8pm to 10pm ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH

TUESDAY 4TH OCT

Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Heritage Day

Launch of Ballinasloe Sound

Map – 11.30 to 12.30

BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

Aleen Cust Exhibition

2.30 to 3.30

BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

Launch of Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Podcast & Video to mark Ballinasloe Fair 300 Year – 7.30pm

GULLANES HOTEL

Heritage Talk by Jonny Dillion

- A Day at the Fair - Folklore, Customs & Traditions – 8pm

GULLANES HOTEL

FUN FAIR IN FAIR GREEN ALL WEEK
FOX & MCFADDEN FUN FAIR

THURSDAY 6TH

Rachel Allen Cookery

Demonstration - A Night of Food, Fashion & Fun

Doors open at 7pm with Show at 8pm

Tickets €25 SHEARWATER HOTEL

FRIDAY 7TH

Pre Fireworks - Family & Kids Entertainment – 7pm to 8.30pm

MARINA / COUNCIL CAR PARK

Supermacs Monster Fire Works Display – 8.30pm sharp

OVER THE MARINA

Jiving Competition – 9.30pm

ST MICHAELS SQUARE (outside An Tain)

Sponsored by Ballinasloe Vintners

Tug of War – 9.15pm

MAIN STREET

SATURDAY 8TH OCT

Mare & Foal Classes

FAIR GREEN ARENA

Galway Sheep Breeder

(continuing the great Country Fair Day

Tradition of Sheep stalls on the green)

FAIR GREEN

Ballinasloe Fair & Festival

Sound Stage – 12noon to 6.30pm

TOWN CENTRE

Abbaesque Concert (Free)

8pm – ON STREET

SUNDAY 9TH OCT

Open Dog Show – 1pm

ST. MICHAELS SQUARE

Food & Craft Fair – from 11am

DUNLO STREET

Kids Zone – See Facebook/

Instagram for full listings

ST. MICHAELS SQUARE

Kids Arts & Crafts Competitions

FESTIVAL MARQUEE

Vintage Display

MAIN STREET & SOCIETY STREET

Street Entertainment

Stunt Bike Show – from 1.30pm

DUNLO STREET

Ballinasloe Fair & Festival Sound Stage Entertainment Programme

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SUN 2ND OCT | 1 pm <i>to 2 pm</i> | Music Commences <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 2 pm <i>to 2.30 pm</i> | Official Opening <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 2.30 pm <i>to 4.00 pm</i> | Mike Denver Celebration Opening Concert <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 4.30 pm <i>to 5.30 pm</i> | Rachel & Band <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 6 pm <i>to 7.30pm</i> | 4 Men & A Base <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| MON 3RD OCT | 1.30 pm <i>to 3.30 pm</i> | Shane Moore & Sabrina Fallon <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 4 pm <i>to 6 pm</i> | Sum Craic <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| FRI 7TH OCT | FIRE WORKS NIGHT | |
| | 7 pm <i>to 8.30pm</i> | Don King & Crew – Pre-Fire Works Entertainment - Family & Kids Fun <i>Marina Car Park</i> |
| | 8.30 pm | Supermacs Monster Fire Works Display <i>Marina Car Park</i> |
| | 9.30 pm | Jiving Competition - Gerry Tynan Entertainment <i>St. Michaels Square</i> |
| SAT 8TH OCT | COUNTRY FAIR DAY & NIGHT | |
| | 12 noon <i>to 1.30 pm</i> | Ballinasloe Town Band <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 2 pm <i>to 3pm</i> | Ballinasloe Comhaltas <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 3.30 pm <i>to 4.30 pm</i> | Emma Donoghue <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| | 5 pm <i>to 6 pm</i> | Saw Mechanics <i>Sound Stage Town Centre</i> |
| 8 pm <i>to 10 pm</i> | Abba Esque Celebration Concert <i>Sound Stage</i> | |



Presented in association of the Galway County Council Arts Office Ceol an Fhómhair season funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media's Local Live Performance Programming Scheme. #LocalLive"