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## EDITOR'S LETTER

**Y**ou may not know it, but only one pack of hounds has been created since the Hunting Act 2004: the Woolaston Bassets. Henrietta Rutgers tells their story on p26 and it's as plucky as the hounds themselves. On p48 we have the incredible story of a hunting horn playing a decisive role in an action of the Great War. The feature is a part of our Countryside in War series and our thanks go to the Chase Project for the tale.

In the last issue we promised a celebration of our late Vice-President, the Duke of Westminster, who died in August, and bring you that touching tribute on p31.

Our Head of Shooting, Liam Stokes, believes that grouse shooting can learn a thing or two from hunting's public relations story (p23). With grouse shooting under fire, so to speak, it is a good time to promote its numerous benefits, including on the plate, and Gift of Grouse is doing just that (p12). Steven Pidgeon of the celebrated Arundell Arms Hotel in Devon is also doing his bit for game and has kindly given us his venison and chocolate recipe (p41). The Rural Oscar-winning produce and story of Norfolk Butcher GF White gives faith in our dynamic small rural businesses, so please support yours this Christmas (p18). Elsewhere, Sarah Lee looks at how our rural tourism sector can improve (p39). There is no shortage of dynamism but the problems with communications and transport must be addressed.

We thank our fundraising heroes on p34 and on p44 bring you a photo gallery of the London Wine Auction which was held at the Victoria & Albert Museum in October. We can't function without our fundraisers' generosity - thanks to everyone for supporting us this year.

Merry Christmas

**Jill Grieve, Editor**

**Follow me on Twitter @CAjilly**

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*Here come the bassets*



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# Review

Round-up of the stories that matter to you.

BBC BIAS

## The occasional presenter?

BBC Trust ruling on Chris Packham defies logic

In September, the BBC cleared Chris Packham of any wrongdoing following a Countryside Alliance complaint. The BBC Trust, as we feared it might, decided not to uphold our complaint about Packham's article in the September 2015 edition of *BBC Wildlife Magazine* referring to those involved in hunting, shooting and wildlife management as the 'nasty brigade'.

In 2015, Packham worked for the BBC for 119 days. He describes himself as a BBC presenter and is widely perceived by the viewing public as being a BBC presenter. However, according to the BBC Trust, Mr. Packham is not a 'regular presenter' but a freelancer, and as a consequence he does not have to abide by the BBC's editorial guidelines on impartiality like other 'regular' presenters do. In short, Mr. Packham is free to continue taking the BBC's/taxpayer's money whilst espousing his personal views.

Our chief executive, Tim Bonner, made clear his own views on the BBC decision in a comment piece for the Conservative Home website and writes about the BBC and charter renewal on page 30 of this issue.

The Countryside Alliance would like to assure supporters that it will not be taking the matter lying down. In September, culture secretary Karen Bradley confirmed that the BBC Trust would be abolished and that its regulatory function transferred



to Ofcom. The Countryside Alliance will consider resubmitting its complaint to Ofcom.

Earlier this year Mr. Packham ally Mark Avery established a petition to ban driven grouse shooting. At the third time of asking, the petition met the 100,000 signature threshold triggering a debate. Ahead of that debate the Petitions Committee called for oral evidence and our head of shooting, Liam Stokes, gave evidence alongside the Moorland Association.

The petition is deeply misleading about driven grouse shooting and this evidence session and debate have given us the opportunity to get our evidence over to the MPs and correct any fallacies created by those who believe in banning it.

## Welcome from our chief executive



As we hurtle towards the end of the year, it's a time to reflect on the year just passed. Having completed my first full year as

Chief Executive I am very pleased that the organisation is on a sound financial footing and able to invest in campaigning on the issues that are so important to you as we enter 2017 which will be a special year. In July 1997 I, like many of you, travelled to London and the Hyde Park Rally to discover this thing called the Countryside Alliance which had just been created. In the 20 years since that first great demonstration the Alliance has become one of the most recognised and effective campaigning groups in the country. We achieved that status and retain it because of the hard work and generosity of you, our members and supporters. In this issue you will find grateful thanks to those who have helped raise vital funds for us in 2016, whether attending an event, riding a bicycle, running the Marathon, tying a fishing fly or allowing us to

**"In the 20 years since that first great demonstration the Alliance has become one of the most recognised and effective campaigning groups in the country..."**

use artwork for our Christmas card collection. In 2017 we will celebrate our anniversary, but we will also continue our high profile frontline campaigns to protect the countryside you love. I thank everyone who supports our work in any way.

**Tim Bonner, Chief Executive**  
Follow me on Twitter @CA\_TimB

**"...this evidence session and debate have given us the opportunity to get our evidence over to MPs"**



**A TRIBUTE TO OUR LATE VICE-PRESIDENT, THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER...P31**

**SHOOTING**

# Securing improvements to firearms licensing

In March, the Countryside Alliance called for the Government to make the most of a golden opportunity to improve firearms licensing as the Policing and Crime Bill passed through Parliament.

The two key amendments that the Countryside Alliance called for were changes to make it easier to extend the life of a certificate and for expanding ammunition (as used for deer stalking) to be moved back to section one of the 1968 Firearms Act.

On April 26 our proposals were debated in Parliament and in late September the Government announced that they had taken on board our suggestions and would be tabling amendments.

One amendment proposes an eight-week extension to the life of a certificate as long as the renewal

documents are submitted eight weeks ahead of the certificate's expiry, to prevent firearms owners from being penalised if their licensing department does not turn their renewal around in good time. The second amendment moves expanding ammunition of the kind used for deer stalking back to Section one of the 1968 Firearms Act, removing the need for a specific police exemption to possess it.

Following the Government's decision, Tim Bonner, said: "We are pleased that the Government has taken steps to make the most of the opportunity the Countryside Alliance highlighted back in March. We are very grateful for the hard work and leadership of Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP, the Minister Brandon Lewis MP and the BSSC's David Penn."

## The Quarter

OUR HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST THREE MONTHS

### SEPTEMBER

● **A good month** for The Countryside Alliance Foundation. Its Casting for Recovery programme held its final retreat of the year at the Forbes of Kingennie resort near Dundee while its Fishing 4 Schools programme held an open day for 60 schoolchildren at Norfolk's Lenwade Pike Club.



### OCTOBER

● **Former Grand National** winning jockey Ryan Mania scorched to victory at our Aintree Race Day this month. In a close finish, Ryan was closely followed by bloodstock agent David Redvers and Aintree staff member Molly Dingwall. Director of public prosecutions, Alison Saunders, published new guidelines aimed at tackling online abuse, harassment and intimidation via social media. We praised the move.



Aintree Race Day this month. In a close finish, Ryan was closely followed by

### NOVEMBER

● **Cheltenham Countryside Race** Day was a huge success — thanks to everyone who came along on this unmissable day. The Rural Oscars closed to nominations and judging is now underway, with our winners' reception set to take place at Parliament in the New Year.



**SHOOTING**

## Shooting badges and sweepstake cards now available

This season's shooting badges are available now, this year in a dark blue. The badges are available in two types – the £100 season badge in solid colour and the £15 supporter badge in camouflage. Our new season sweepstake card takes up the colour scheme with illustrations of game birds by Ben Hoskyns.

The badges and sweepstake cards are once again brought to you by Pol Roger Champagne and a bottle will be sent to all who raise £1,000 for the campaign and every £1,000 thereafter. To order your badges and sweepstake cards please visit [www.countryside-alliance.org](http://www.countryside-alliance.org) or contact [caroline-brough@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:caroline-brough@countryside-alliance.org) or call 0207 840 9298.



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POLITICS

# Amendment secured to aid police when dealing with masked hunt sabs

Responses to a Countryside Alliance Freedom of Information request showed that police powers to remove face coverings from violent hunt sabs were not being used. In fact only Derbyshire Constabulary had used the law to unmask saboteurs. Part of the reason is that if a police officer on the ground wants to use the power he needs prior written authorisation from a senior officer.

The Countryside Alliance has led a campaign for the law to be made simpler. Sir Edward Garnier MP tabled an amendment to the Policing and Crime Bill in the Commons and Lord Dear, a senior former police officer,

tabled a similar amendment in the Lords. The amendment would allow verbal permission to be given where written permission was impractical, with a record being made subsequently. The Government has recognised the need for greater clarity and indicated that it will address the issue at Lords Report Stage, on the basis of Lord Dear's amendment. We hope that this change in the law, combined with new Home Office guidance, will improve the ability of the police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Alliance will continue to campaign to ensure this change is delivered. It cannot be right



that intimidation and offences go unpunished. We hope these changes will deter those who should have until now been unaccountable for their shameful behaviour.



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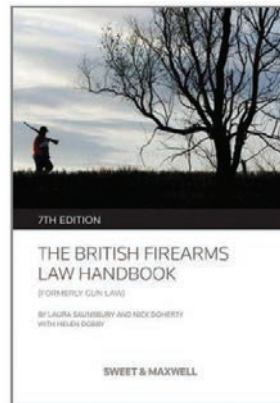


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SHOOTING

## Working dogs tails - docking victory in Scotland

→ News broke in early October that Scotland's outright ban on tail docking for dogs is to be ended – we look at this outbreak of common sense by the Minister.

Environment secretary Roseanna Cunningham announced in October that vets are to be allowed to shorten the tails of spaniels and hunt point retrievers when they are puppies, with legislation expected to be brought before Holyrood early next year. The move is part of a series of measures aimed at improving animal welfare which will mean that electronic training collars will only be permitted to be used under the guidance of an approved trainer or vet.

The Scottish Government brought in the ban on tail docking as part of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, which also makes it illegal to take a dog out of Scotland to have its tail removed (the Animal Welfare Act 2006, applicable in England and Wales, includes exemptions for working dogs including spaniels, hunt point retrievers and terriers.)

Roseanna Cunningham said: "We have seen evidence that some working dogs are suffering tail injuries, so I have decided to allow vets to shorten the tails of spaniel and hunt point retriever puppies where they believe it will prevent future injuries amongst working dogs."

Ninety-two per cent of those who took part in a government consultation supported docking for these breeds. Almost two-thirds (62 per cent) of those who responded said the current total ban has had a negative impact on commercial dog breeding in Scotland, with the same proportion saying they knew of people who were buying working dogs with docked tails from elsewhere.

Jamie Stewart, Director of the Scottish Countryside Alliance said: "We welcome this decision and the releasing of the analysis of responses to the Scottish Government's consultation on the proposal.

"It has been a journey to get to this point, with many individuals and organisations working together to support an exemption based on animal welfare concerns."

Scottish Gamekeepers Association chairman Alex Hogg said: "The benefit that this exemption to the law will convey in terms of the welfare of working spaniels and hunt point retrievers all over Scotland cannot be underestimated. It is a major improvement to animal welfare legislation in this country and one we welcome."



SHOOTING



#loveofshooting

### Social media campaign – tell us about your #loveofshooting

Shooting's inclusiveness has the ability to bring people together from an array of backgrounds and age. On an average day there will be at least 20 people out in the field, with guns, beaters and pickers up all enjoying our beautiful British countryside. These 20 people have all come to love shooting and their days out in the field for different reasons. The Countryside Alliance is keen to highlight these reasons through a social media campaign that showcases the true definition of the love of shooting. As well as the shooting itself, factors at play include the fresh air and exercise, the wildlife, the socialising, or the enjoyment of working a dog or dogs.

Since starting the campaign in September we have heard from over 100 participants keen to tell their story of how they got involved with shooting and what keeps them coming back season after season. Promoting these stories helps us to promote shooting and inform others who might like to get involved. It also allows us to understand the motivations of you, our members, the better to represent you.

To get involved and tell us your story, email us at [shooting@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:shooting@countryside-alliance.org) or through facebook and twitter using the hashtag #loveofshooting.



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# Charter renewal and Auntie's rural output

→ **TIM BONNER** looks at the BBC's attitude to the countryside and how it can best represent those who live and work in rural areas.



The Countryfile team

**T**he BBC and the countryside have a strange relationship. On the one hand programming about the countryside has become one of its most successful growth areas. *Countryfile* is the unlikely hit of Sunday night television with over seven million viewers for many episodes. A host of other popular programmes from *Coast to Autumnwatch* focus on the beauty of the British countryside and its flora and fauna. On the other hand the BBC is nervous of much of what we do to manage the countryside and often feels remote from the communities that live in it.

The Alliance has usually found BBC journalists to be fair and straightforward in dealing with news stories, but it should be no surprise that the BBC has a predominantly urban outlook when it is largely based in London and Manchester. At our BBC-focussed fringe meeting at the Conservative Party Conference in October, Peter Heaton-Jones, a BBC journalist for 20 years before being elected to parliament as MP for North Devon, explained that even the BBC regional network grew out of city-based local radio stations. That conference debate focussed on whether the BBC was delivering for the countryside in the context of the upcoming charter renewal, and the 2014 BBC Trust report which concluded that the BBC's rural coverage had a 'metropolitan bias'.

Unfortunately, the BBC refused our invitation to take part citing a policy of not participating in party conference



**Tim Bonner** is the chief executive of the Countryside Alliance. Having formerly headed up the press office he has appeared on many BBC tv and radio programmes over the years and has long been vocal about the corporation's rural output.

events (although a BBC director did take part in another conference fringe event). We did, however, have a knowledgeable panel made up of *Country Life* Editor Mark Hedges, who has just participated in a BBC documentary about the magazine, Peter Heaton-Jones and Sophie Chalk of the Voice of the Listeners and Viewers, who has worked for the BBC as well as many other broadcasters.

Introducing the debate I noted the extraordinary growth in popularity of programmes like *Countryfile*, but suggested that the fundamental question is whether BBC programming as a whole properly represents rural people, or is a lot of that programming 'about' the countryside, rather than 'for' the countryside.

Mark Hedges suggested from his experience that the BBC does not like, or want to realise, that things do die. He made the comparison with a supermarket, where the chicken you see wrapped in plastic, and the chicken you see walking around, have somehow become two separate things. Largely the panel agreed that there was a need for more recognition within the BBC of the separate requirements of rural communities, that BBC local radio had a real opportunity to fill part of that demand and, perhaps most importantly, that the current debate over the renewal of the BBC charter provided the platform to make the case for the BBC to better serve the rural community.

The draft BBC charter currently being debated in Parliament requires the corporation to: "reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all of the United Kingdom's nations and regions." Clearly, if the Trust's rural review is to be believed, there are at least questions about whether the BBC has been fulfilling that duty as far as rural communities are concerned. Of course we understand that people who live in the countryside are not homogenous,

far from it, and it can be difficult to determine exactly how to 'represent and serve' them. This is, however, equally true of other communities and is certainly not an excuse for not trying.

Perhaps the most worrying aspect of the BBC Trust's recent whitewash of a complaint we made against Chris Packham for calling those of us involved in farming and land management "the nasty brigade", was that the Trust essentially ruled that rural issues are not important. It concluded, for instance, that an interview by Mr. Packham with the journalist and campaigner George Monbiot on 'rewilding' was not a 'public policy issue' despite the obvious and direct impact such policies would have on the lives of people in the countryside.

If the BBC is to 'reflect, represent and serve' it will, therefore, need to fundamentally change its attitude to rural communities and issues. It will need to reflect not just the picturesque and the quaint, but also how the picturesque and the quaint are created and maintained.

We know the reality of life in the countryside which can sometimes be dirty, dangerous and unpleasant, but if that reality is not represented then the myth that the countryside is a self-perpetuating idyll in which man's intervention is only negative will continue to grow. Our great challenge is to explain the constant human intervention which maintains our countryside in the face of a public which is largely distant from it. If the BBC, which has the single greatest influence over public attitudes, fails to reflect and represent that reality then that challenge will be all but insurmountable. ●

**"COUNTRY LIFE EDITOR MARK HEDGES SUGGESTED FROM HIS EXPERIENCE THAT THE BBC DOES NOT LIKE, OR WANT TO REALISE, THAT THINGS DO DIE."**

# Making the most of Scotland's grouse

→ The Gift of Grouse project exists to promote and showcase the great work being carried out on Scotland's grouse moors.



Renowned restaurateur, celebrity chef and food campaigner Nick Nairn is set to take his brace from the hill to the kitchen

This year's grouse shooting season got off to a flying start on the Glorious Twelfth, when renowned Scottish chef Nick Nairn joined a shooting party on a Perthshire estate, shot a brace, then moved to Crieff town centre to show the locals how to cook a delicious grouse dinner.

August 12 provided the perfect platform from which to prove the qualities of grouse as a delicious and sustainable food source, with Nick demonstrating its 'hill to plate' credentials.

This was just one of many events that the Gift of Grouse campaign has been behind over the past year to help showcase the work carried out on Scottish grouse moors and the people and communities that thrive on them thanks to the shooting industry.

The Glorious Twelfth marks the start of the grouse shooting season and is considered the highlight of Scotland's world-class country sports offering. The date, however, is just the culmination of year-long work by gamekeepers and estates to care for Scotland's moorland. The Gift of Grouse campaign has been highlighting how this work creates a rich moorland that supports tourism and leisure, employment, environment and conservation, and accessibility.

Daniel Parker, factor at Abercairny Estate, said: "It was terrific to welcome Nick to the estate to mark the start of the grouse season. The reality is that it takes continuous effort to keep our moorland vibrant so that it can support a rich range of wildlife, not to mention tourism and employment.

"As we have seen, that brings a range of benefits to rural areas, with many

different local businesses – from hotels to garages and restaurants – benefiting from the country sports tourism that estates such as ours generate."

Recent research found that country sports in Scotland supported more than 8,800 FTE jobs – many of which are gamekeepers looking after the nation's moors. There can be little doubt that the grouse season is one of the major catalysts behind the creation of gamekeeping jobs across Scotland.

Gamekeepers have a real passion for looking after moorland and the species it supports, but it is the tourism that is generated by country sports that funds these employment and conservation opportunities. Scotland is renowned for its whisky and golf, but the grouse season is another world-class attraction that is unrivalled anywhere across the globe.

## GROWING POLITICAL ENDORSEMENT...

This is the second year of the Gift of Grouse campaign and there has been a notable increase in political support being given to those who manage Scotland's grouse moors.

The value of shooting, stalking and fishing to Scotland's rural communities was endorsed at this year's Highland Field Sports Fair by Fergus Ewing MSP, Scottish

**"OUR TOURISM SECTOR IS A VITAL STRAND OF THE RURAL ECONOMY AND COUNTRY SPORTS REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF THIS." FERGUS EWING MSP**

Government Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity.

With Scotland leading the way in fieldsports—drawing visitors to the country from the UK, Europe and further afield—recent research has placed the current value of this tourism to Scotland at £155million per annum, estimated to rise to £185million by 2020. A healthy rural economy is very important to Scotland given the other economic pressures it is facing and we strongly support the efforts of Fergus and other politicians to stimulate rural businesses.

Fergus says: "Our tourism sector is a vital strand of the rural economy, and country sports represent a significant proportion of this. Fieldsports are a huge draw, with both domestic and foreign audiences enjoying the wealth of world-class opportunities available in Scotland. And forecasts suggest this area is set to continue to grow over the coming years, which will bring further gains to rural communities in terms of employment and economic benefits."

One estate where the income generated by country sports is used to drive investment is Culachy Estate.

A traditional Highland shooting and stalking estate, Culachy is in its 10<sup>th</sup> season under head gamekeeper Scott Bremner, who started working at the estate in 2002 and developed the shoot in 2006 – before Scott was appointed, 14 years ago, the estate hadn't been kept for 25 years. Culachy now draws visitors to Fort Augustus from all over Europe including Germany, Sweden, Austria and Holland as well as throughout the UK.

The value of this tourism has allowed the creation of a new—build cottage at Culachy

for student gamekeepers, which now takes the total number of keepers working at the estate up to four – headkeeper, underkeeper, and two students. Additional properties built on the estate include; a new house for the underkeeper, dog kennels, a larder, and sheds.

Culachy has also been committed to work in partnership with local businesses to ensure they can capitalise on the popularity of country sports tourism.

The estate has also erected a large quantity of fencing to help with deer management, working with local fencer Michael McNally, as well as restoring stone walls throughout the estate which has had a positive knock-on effect for the local business, Tom Nelson Stonework, in Milton near Drumnadrochit.

A small family-run business, the investment by sporting estates in the last few years has allowed owner Tom Nelson to employ two local school leavers. Last year the business' workload was almost exclusively on estates, but generally it is the tourism and investment generated by country sports that has underpinned his wider trade.

Scotland's estates are at the forefront of driving progress in Scotland's rural economy, and country sports are a significant contributor to that success. Through income generated by fieldsports, estates are showing great commitment to reinvesting in their local area and environment: supporting education; building employment; developing business partnerships; providing housing; delivering biodiversity and conservation gain. It is clear that rural economies close to sporting estates recognise the value they create for the area and estates are committed to furthering that cooperation.

However, the recent calls from pressure

groups for changes on driven grouse moors demonstrates the fact that the industry is still fractious, and more collaboration is needed to tackle the misconceptions many still hold.

#### SHIFTING THE FOCUS TO MORE EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION...

A petition to ban grouse shooting reached 100,000 signatures earlier this year, and as a result was recently debated in the UK parliament.

Scottish Moorland Group director Tim Baynes believes that whilst legislation on grouse shooting is a devolved matter, the effect of any ill-conceived changes to legislation in England could lead to serious issues for the gamekeeping profession throughout the UK and would certainly not be in the interest of rural economies in Scotland or England.

Tim says: "Grouse shooting has huge social, economic and environmental value to rural communities across the UK and this is an opportunity to reaffirm the substantial positive case for grouse moor management and the £100 million of investment per annum that it delivers to remote rural areas."

Tim believes that specific moorland management issues, especially relating to hen harriers, were the driver for this petition.

Tim continued: "The issue of hen harriers and grouse moors existing side-by-side is one that is long-running and the centre of much debate. What is certain, however, is that removing the keeping delivered through grouse moor management is not the way to resolve such conflicts – in fact, it will cause the loss of harriers as was shown in the Langholm Project.

"This is a complex situation which needs a balanced solution. In Scotland, we have seen a much greater focus on collaborative



initiatives such as 'Heads Up For Harriers', the 'South of Scotland Golden Eagle Projects' and the 'East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership'" which all focus directly on raptor conservation. More generally, the 'Understanding Predation' project is pointing to adaptive management as a way out of predator/prey conflicts. We believe that collaboration and compromise is the only sensible way ahead and it is starting to bring results in Scotland.

"Rather than talk of bans or licences, the focus must be on delivering collaboration that can see harriers and moorland management continue side-by-side. It can be delivered if all stakeholders are committed, but unfortunately those behind the current petition at Westminster are doing their level best to undermine any attempt to find common ground and a workable solution. They need to get behind the DEFRA—led Hen Harrier Action Plan and help to make it work."

The Scottish Moorland Group (part of Scottish Land & Estates) is working with the Countryside Alliance and other organisations to brief MPs about the importance of grouse moor management to the upland economy and environment. Also, by learning the lessons from the hunting debate in the 90s, open engagement with the public is vital and the Scottish Moorland Group has helped to set up seven regional moorland groups across Scotland. These groups are led and run by moorland gamekeepers and concentrate on explaining their work to people in each region through social media, moorland visits, school sessions, charity events and shows. The regional groups also work closely with the Gift of Grouse to deliver a comprehensive campaign to promote and protect grouse shooting and all that goes with it.



Fergus Ewing MSP (left), Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity, speaking to gamekeeper Scott Bremner and assistant at the Moy Game Fair



Read more about The Gift of Grouse project at [www.giftofgrouse.com](http://www.giftofgrouse.com)



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# Top brass

→ From coronets and curlicues, to foxes and hares in full flight, hunt button designs are varied and many. But one thing never changes, the pride and honour attached to being awarded your button. **CHARLOTTE COOPER** takes a look at the history of these links to hunting's past and their place in the field today.



**W**e do it without thinking, sneaking a look at the buttons of those around us on the hunting field and thinking how much better our own coats would look with the addition of three black or brass buttons with our hunt's emblem upon them. But how do you go about doing this and what do buttons mean?

Hunt buttons hark back to the liveries worn by servants of aristocratic houses and mark the difference between merely being a subscriber to a hunt and a member. At some hunts they entitle you to wear a coloured hunt collar on your jacket, and for a man, gaining your button also means you may wear a red coat.

However, you cannot apply for hunt buttons, they are awarded to you at the discretion of the masters and what you need to do to get your button varies from hunt to hunt and master to master. Some hunts seem to shower them on everyone who has subscribed for a certain number of years or allowed the use of their land, others recognise acts of courage or selflessness, but most buttons are earned by making yourself very helpful, both on and off the field – so a campaign of gate-opening, trail-laying and helping out at every event and fundraiser could potentially pay off.

Though still in her early 20s, Grove and Rufford supporter Faye Wilson could be said to have gone beyond the call of duty – having managed to walk nine couple of hound puppies in the brief four years she



Faye Wilson wearing her Grove and Rufford hunt buttons

has ridden with the hunt.

“The Grove and Rufford whelps a lot of litters each year and I walked three couple last year alone,” said Faye. “I enjoy helping the hunt in this way and also help out with the supporters’ club and the hunter trials.

“The hunt is like a big family and receiving my button was exciting and a real privilege. I really feel part of things.”

Grove and Rufford senior master Jane Strawson added: “Who gets buttons can

“HUNT BUTTONS... MARK THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MERELY BEING A SUBSCRIBER TO A HUNT AND A MEMBER.”

be quite a contentious issue. I don't give many out – maybe one or two each season – but Faye is a good example of someone who really supports the hunt.”

Hunting artist Tania Still admits to being slightly obsessed by hunt buttons, ever →



**Charlotte Cooper** wrote for *Horse & Hound* for many years and more recently has worked at the Countryside Alliance. She lives in Derbyshire and hunts with the Barlow.



Photo: Angie Lock

Former Bicester and Whaddon Chase huntsman Patrick Martin displays his huntsman's buttons

**"I WAS SO EXCITED TO RECEIVE THEM - IT REALLY MAKES YOU FEEL PART OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE HUNT AND YOU SIT A LITTLE BIT PROUDER."**

her wrists and the part they play in her chosen profession - and her interest in hunt buttons has continued. For the past three or four years all her hunt paintings have featured the button of the pack featured alongside her signature and last year she amalgamated all those buttons into a design she had printed as material and made into a dress.

"I wore it to Ascot, but nobody twigged what the design was - I was a little miffed!" she said. She also displays her Zetland hunt buttons on the black coat she wears for exhibitions with a red waistcoat to which she has added the hunt's cuff buttons.

"It means I get to wear them regularly. I was so excited to receive them - it really makes you feel part of the community of the hunt and you sit a little bit prouder."

Another artist whose work regularly involves hunt buttons is the photographer Nico Morgan. Nico said: "It's never planned, but if the light falls on them in a certain way and they catch my eye I can't resist photographing them. The combination of new, brass buttons on a red coat is very special." The cover of this magazine is proof.

Flying instructor Chris Childs could not wait for the opening meet of the Ashford Valley Tickham this year as it was his first opportunity to wear his new red coat

with buttons and collar.

Chris has been a staunch supporter of the Ashford Valley Tickham for the past six years. He is on the hunt committee, helps organise the Christmas party, hunter trials, point-to-point and is generally always available to help the hunt. But he is also a master in all but name, with responsibility for his own bit of the hunt country for which he organises 23 meets each year and liaises with farmers and landowners.

"It is a real honour and privilege to be awarded your button and I can't wait to start wearing them," he said, prior to the new season. "I value the part the hunt plays in the countryside and having my button means I am a part of that." ●

### Hunting buttons - the lowdown

Hunt buttons are relics of the livery of noble families from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Each hunt has its own distinctive button and there may be different designs for those worn on hunt coats and (evening) dress coats.

Hunt buttons may only be worn by those who have been awarded them by the masters of a hunt. It is an honour to be awarded the button and is a visible recognition of service to the hunt.

It is seen as rude to wear the buttons of one hunt when following another, except as a visitor.

On receiving the button a man is entitled to wear a red coat with brass buttons, and ladies continue to wear a black coat with (usually) black, vulcanite or plastic hunt buttons and the hunt collar.

The number of buttons you wear is also proscribed. These are the normal rules - but there are of course exceptions!

- Three buttons - hunt subscribers;
- Four buttons - masters;
- Five buttons - hunt staff, huntsman and whippers-in;
- Six buttons - the whip and huntsman of some hunts, with links to old aristocratic families - like the North Cotswold, which is linked to the Earls of Coventry.

A collection of more than 900 hunt buttons amassed by the late Neil McShane, an avid hunting man and amateur jockey, and covering most packs in the UK and Ireland, sold for more than £5,000 in 2013.

since receiving hers from the Zetland on her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

"I'd hunted with them since I was about 12 and it was a sort of birthday present from the hunt. I'd also recently donated a painting which had made some money for them. Sadly I never got to hunt wearing them, but I did used to have an old brass hunt button of my grandfather's sewn under the lapel of my hunting jacket, where no-one could see it!"

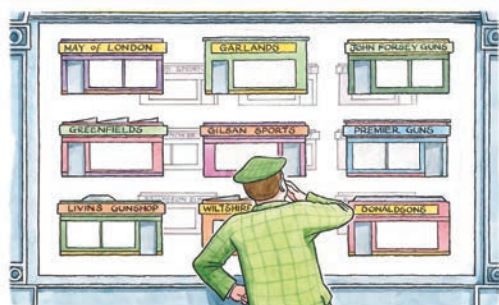
Tania still follows the Zetland - on foot now in deference to the welfare of



Celebrated artist Tania Still (left) wears a dress in a hunt button print of her own design



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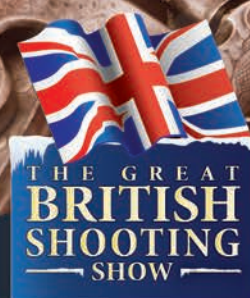
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# In praise of 'The Ginger Butcher'

→ Third-generation butcher Crawford White picked up a Countryside Alliance Rural Oscar for Britain's Best Butcher earlier this year. Here **JILL GRIEVE** reports from a visit to the team at the shop.



Crawford & Ben, butchery's Norfolk pirates

Photo: Chris Taylor Photography www.christaylorphoto.co.uk

On visiting G.F. White the butchers earlier this year, the first, and fairly startling, impression was of Crawford White himself. He looks like a ginger pirate. "It started off for Movember between me and the team" he explains of his facial hair, "and then we thought we'd keep it all on until your visit." Suffice to say that a year later the hirsute look is still very much in place for Crawford, his master butchers and his apprentice – rural business is all about finding your own unique selling point, after all.

The products are, forgive the pun, the heart of the enterprise, of course, and as Crawford explains: "We have adapted and remained relevant since 1855 and have gone from owning our own herd and slaughterhouse to sourcing these skills locally so that we can concentrate on butchery. Why? We are able to source all of our products within 13 miles from farms operating under the highest welfare standards for whom we often buy 100 per cent of their production and we are 10 miles from a slaughter house. There is no benefit to managing these jobs in-house, which means that we can focus our energies on producing great local meat." And great it is – Rural Oscar-winning great. As one fan puts it: "Brill. No more to be said. Apart from great staff. No more to be said. Apart from great meat. No more to be said," and the wry humour and patience displayed by the team is clearly appreciated by customers, many of whom dropped by the shop to wish the

team well for the Countryside Alliance's judging visit.

The shop was initially established in 1855, with Crawford's Grandad buying it just after the Second World War. Crawford himself is now in his early 40s and was brought up around the shop and slaughter house. "I used to earn my pocket money boning out ox heads for pet food when I was about 10," he says. "I became a butcher on leaving school at 16, studying first at Meat Norwich qualifying with a distinction, and then serving my apprenticeship in a Norwich shop leaving there at 19 to join the family business. I was put through my paces and eventually took over the shop in 2000."

All of the meat on sale at G.F. White is sourced within a 13-mile radius of the shop from local farmers and producers with the sole exception of haggis. Many of the shop's suppliers are family farms such as poultry from the Pearts at Hindolveston and pork from Morleys, another third-generation farm, based at Aldborough. Crawford works with several local gamekeepers and his venison is shot to order. Some of the game on sale in the season is shot by Crawford himself, and several members of his team also shoot. In fact, Crawford was keen during my

**"SOME OF THE GAME ON SALE IN THE SEASON IS SHOT BY CRAWFORD HIMSELF, AND SEVERAL MEMBERS OF HIS TEAM ALSO SHOOT."**

visit to talk about the ongoing lead shot debacle, and we had a good, long talk about the best possible way of shooting feathered game to ensure the bird is in good condition when processed.

Crawford explains that his own pedigree in the area helps with his suppliers. "I'm a third generation butcher and I have known these suppliers all my life. They've worked with my Grandad and Father and understand our shared commitment to quality which comes before price. The slaughterhouse is 10 miles from the shop. Shorter travelling times reduce stress to the animal which improves the quality of the meat. We insist our animals are slaughtered first to minimise stress. Using local, known suppliers means that our customers can see what they're eating in the field. If a customer wants to view our suppliers an immediate visit can be arranged." Commitment to quality sees Crawford visit or speak to his suppliers at least twice a week.

"Low food miles and short distances to slaughter are key to the start of a good product," says Crawford. "Provenance,



Photo: www.andersonphotography.co.uk

traceability, visibility (you can see our stock in fields that surround the town), excellence and education are our key values. In fact, the only things we don't produce on site are the eggs, the sausage skins, and the haggis - which a lovely lady in Scotland makes for us."

In addition to the shop and the business is Crawford's commitment to nurturing the butchers of the future. In conjunction with Meat Ipswich, NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3 are offered - teaching basic and advanced food hygiene, first aid, meat management, shop management and book keeping.

As Crawford says, "We invest in training. Last year our shop manager completed a three-week course in Denmark on production development. We're committed to the future. We've taken on another apprentice - our third in the last two years. In the last year we've invested in a new bespoke (unfortunately eye watering expensive) freezer, and in the last three years fitted bespoke display counters, new fridges, machinery, and a delivery van - all at a time when another supermarket (the third) has opened in town. We already had a Tesco! We're driven by our customers' experience which has enabled us to brazen out such competition. We could produce cheaper and lower quality meat, but that's not what we stand for and clearly - and thankfully - our customers agree. In fact, we have increased trade by 28 per cent in the last three years which is testament to what and how we do things".

The business' butchers have over 80 years' experience between them, acquiring their knowledge on the job and embracing the high standards of quality and production. All staff start out at the

**"ALL STAFF KNOW OUR LOCAL SUPPLIERS, HAVE SPENT TIME WITH THEM ON THEIR FARMS, AND ARE ABLE TO DISCUSS PROVENANCE AS WELL AS BEST CUT AND BEST COOKING METHODS."**



back of the shop learning traditional cutting methods and manufacture of the products. It's only when they've grasped a skill that they are allowed to move onto the next stage, and this process takes about two years. At this stage they are allowed to be front of house, and this is where the real hard work begins.

"Our customers expect and deserve for us to know their names (always Mr, Mrs and Miss and only ever a Christian name if invited to do so!) their children's names, their favourite cuts, what thickness they have their bacon, where they've been on holiday, whether they've got a gas cooker or an Aga. All staff know our local suppliers, have spent time with them on their farms, and are able to discuss provenance as well as best cut and best cooking methods. All our meat is cut to order so our staff need to be competent and quick in their knife skills as well as being knowledgeable about cooking, freezing, storing, best cuts... the list goes on!"

The staff at G. F. Whites, like the meat, tend to be local. "They're 'country boys' so they care about the products," says Crawford. "They know the producers, and they know how the meat should be prepared to get the right solution for our customer. They will refuse to sell a cut if they think it's just not right for the job."

Of course, the provenance of the meat is important, but the Rural Oscars also celebrate rural communities and the varied and important roles our businesses play. Crawford agrees that this is vital, saying: "Being a third-generation butcher with a young family who lives locally to the shop, we are of course heavily involved with the local community. Most days we feel more like a walk in centre listening to and helping our customers with their problems. I know the grandparents, parents and children of most of my customers and they know all my life's ins and outs, so, now and then

offer advice on all sorts."

In a more official capacity, Crawford takes seriously his role as food ambassador for Norfolk, supplying local National Trust properties with hampers featuring the best the county has to offer. Crawford also gives lessons to the local high school on basic food technology. Butchery lessons are offered to individuals or groups, and talks and shop tours are put on for local food groups. Crawford also subsidises Broadland District Council's 'Tots to Teens' group which runs Cookery Fun Days for children aged five and upwards during the school holidays, recognising the role our butchers need to play in educating the next generation about food and cooking. And with cooking and food there also comes an awareness of health and fitness, so G. F. White also sponsor two local runs - reflecting also the fact that Crawford's wife, Kirsty is, in his words, "a running freak!"

Crawford, Kirsty and the team are worthy recipients of the Rural Oscar, a shining example of the way a business can bring together high standards in animal welfare, a support for farming and the community and, vitally, delicious produce. "We don't do gimmicks," Crawford laughs, "we just do great meat and great service." ●

The 2016 Rural Oscars are now at the judging stage and we will reveal the winners in a future issue.

### G. F. White Traditional Butchers

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# The 2016 Countryside Alliance Christmas card artists

→ The Countryside Alliance's 2016 Christmas card collection is now available to order. We have eight beautiful Christmas card designs to choose from, as well as the Countryside Alliance 2017 calendar which features some stunning photography. Here we ask just a few of our talented Christmas card artists to explain their work and how they arrived at their card design. You can view the full collection both online and in the order form within this magazine.

## Imogen Man

"I have always loved drawing and painting. I was forever copying pictures from books and loved drawing flowers as a child. After school I studied portraiture for three years in Florence, Italy, learning a new technique to draw people. It was only having left that I was asked to draw my aunt and uncle's three dogs, and that is how I fell into animal portraiture commissions.



"I draw in pastel. I always start with an outline in pencil to make sure I'm happy with the size and positioning of the drawing on the paper. Then once I'm happy with it, which often involves me sticking it to the wall and standing back, I begin

with the pastels. At the start it's all about getting coverage on the paper so I do a lot of smudging, but I'm also careful not to exceed the pencil marks and drift into the background as once smudged you can't rub pastel out. Then I use the pastels, layering colour upon colour to make the correct shade and tone that I want. To get the finer detail like the highlights in the eyes and the whiskers I sharpen my pastels on sand paper into a point. Then the final step is to clean up the background using a rubber.

"I love animals and have a particular fondness for British farm animals. I am always drawn to humour like the individual hairdos on cows, the feathery feet on waddling chickens, the awkwardness and bumbling nature of a runner duck... I also find the colourings in nature

incredible, and depicting this in the form of feathers, horns and hair is a real joy.

"As a child I have fond memories of being read fairy tales by my parents around Christmas time. One of my favourites was the goose that laid the golden eggs. So when I saw this gaggle of geese on a farm in Norfolk I loved the idea of drawing them and thought it would work perfectly to feature as a Christmas card."



Imogen Man - Toutes Directions

## Annabel Pope

"I got into drawing at an early age as my mother is very artistic and always encouraged sketching and doing scrap books during the holidays. I went to Cambridge Arts tutorial for A levels, then a foundation term in London which set me up to go and do a degree in Fine Art and Environmental Biology at Oxford Brookes University. I worked as an interior designer for a couple of years then did a year PGCE in Secondary Art and was able to teach as well as paint, and travel during the holidays. A few years later it was time to focus 100 per cent on my own art,



as galleries were taking my work for shows and had commission work coming in, so I gave up teaching and from then on I never looked back!

"I love using a variety of mediums, watercolour mostly and also pen and wash. A new style a few years ago was charcoal, paste and acrylic. This technique enabled me to add surface texture to my paintings through the paste which works well when doing wrinkles on elephants or hair on warthogs.

"My favourite subject would have to be African animals as I have travelled every year for many years to this continent and the wildlife is fascinating to watch and paint in a stunning environment. I worked in Zambia and Kenya which gave me

the time to study the animals and birds also.

"Having been brought up on an arable farm in Norfolk I have always loved hares, and my Christmas card for the Countryside Alliance has been influenced from my studies on the farm. I wanted to show the different poses of hares and the wonderful large ears and eyes of the middle hare".



Annabel Pope - Frosty Whiskers

## Debbie Harris

"I did a foundation course at Worcester Art College but am primarily self-taught. I currently live in Dorset and have a studio at home. For the last 15 years



I have exhibited at High Goal Polo matches, Badminton Horse Trials, the French Game Fair in Chambord, and annually at the Society of Equestrian Artists Exhibitions in London. I have had a solo exhibition in the Cotswolds and Stockbridge.

"My paintings reflect my lifestyle. As a family we have horses and dogs, play polo and go hunting, therefore these are my subjects. I am more interested with painting the emotion of my subjects, so my paintings tend to be an interpretation of a theme rather than carefully depicted representative work. That said, my own personal tastes are very traditional, with my greatest influences being Sir Alfred Munnings

and Lionel Edwards, for the former's boldness of brush stroke and use of light to the latter's mastery of draughtsmanship.

"My horse and hound paintings tend to be painted in a very loose way, yet with high concentration placed within the eyes. I seek to depict movement – even if the subject is stationary – as with any living thing there is always motion.

"There is always a wealth of composition ideas with horses and hounds. I favour oil paint over other mediums due to its earthiness of pigments and versatility. When painting my monochrome work, I do like to use charcoal and oil pastel alongside the oil paint as then I am able to blend with my fingers as well as the brush and create sometimes surprising textures and detail.

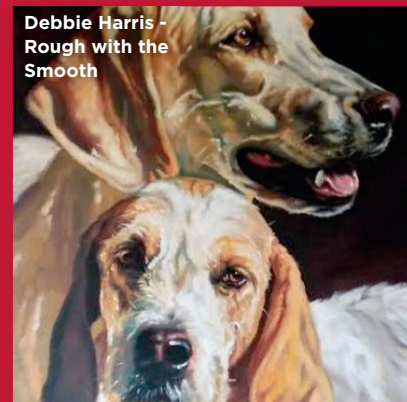
"In my paintings I endeavour to portray emotion without pastiche. When I paint I am totally immersed in the animal I am portraying, hence the need for the eyes to have life in them as without it the work

would have no soul. One client has described my work as "having a heartbeat" and to me, this is the best accolade I could wish for."

His Old Demesne, by Munnings



Debbie Harris - Rough with the Smooth



## Katie Scorgie

"Painting and drawing have always been my passion. I completed a foundation course at Bournemouth and Poole College of Art & Design and some



years later studied for an honours degree in Fine Art from the University of Plymouth. This was a fantastic opportunity – I was able to really develop my painting and we had some inspiring tuition, including that from John Virtue, a well-known monochromatic landscape painter.

"I have always had the same drawing and painting style, it is not something I consciously decided upon, but rather a natural expression of myself. The style lends itself well to capturing movement and if I had to describe it, I would say it is expressionistic and illusionistic with a contemporary yet traditional feel. Strong and accurate drawing underline it.

"I work from life and photos,

making my own interpretation. During my degree I was drawn to painting landscapes and it was only in the final semester that I began to produce paintings of horses in the landscape, which was a natural progression of my work.

"Although when younger I had drawn horses, this was the start of being an Equestrian Artist, which I have been doing ever since. I have continued to develop my monochromatic oils, but also love working in colour and enjoy switching between the two. As well as covering all aspects of equestrianism, I enjoy painting dogs and hounds. I am currently working towards an exhibition called Hound & Horse which I am sharing with sculptor Amy Goodman ([www.amygoodman.co.uk](http://www.amygoodman.co.uk)) at Duke's Auctioneers in Dorchester, November 9-25 ([www.dukes-auctions.com](http://www.dukes-auctions.com)), and am producing quite a few hound paintings for this.

"When the Countryside Alliance approached me to produce a painting for this year's Christmas cards and

said they would prefer a subject with snow in, I contacted Mark Thistlewood, a talented photographer who takes some extraordinary shots ([www.equestrianactionphotography.co.uk](http://www.equestrianactionphotography.co.uk)). He kindly gave me permission to use a striking photo and I have added a bit of artistic license and made a few alterations."



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MAKING HISTORY

# How shooting can learn from hunting's mistakes

→ The animal rights lobby have their sights set on grouse shooting. **LIAM STOKES**, having spoken to our animal welfare consultant and campaigning veteran Jim Barrington, argues that lessons can be learned from the frontline battle with anti-hunting propaganda.



Photo: Verity Johnson www.verityjohnson.co.uk

**T**he benefits associated with all forms of game shooting are undisputable, but the benefits of grouse shooting surely clearest of all. There are entire landscapes that simply would not exist without it. Yet it is a desire to ban grouse shooting that has recently inflamed the passions of the animal rights community, and from there has spread to former bastions of common sense that really should know better. Not since the events leading to the Hunting Act have we seen one of our countryside pursuits so singularly persecuted with propaganda and activism, but crucially the context is very, very different. We have seen the tactics before, we know how to respond, and if we do so correctly we won't end up with another piece of dreadful, unworkable, unnecessary legislation to undo.

We at the Countryside Alliance are uniquely placed to learn the lessons of the fight for hunting and to apply them to the current challenges facing grouse shooting. We were, and remain, at the forefront of the campaign for hunting, and are taking a similar role in the promotion of grouse moor management.

So what have we learned? To address this question I sat down with Jim Barrington, former Executive Director of the League Against Cruel Sports (LACS), current animal welfare consultant to the Countryside Alliance, and the man best placed to analyse what went wrong for hunting. Together we identified three

**"WE AT THE COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE ARE UNIQUELY PLACED TO LEARN THE LESSONS OF THE FIGHT FOR HUNTING AND TO APPLY THEM TO THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING GROUSE SHOOTING."**

key areas in which grouse shooting can benefit from the experiences of the hunting community.

## WELCOMING IN THE PUBLIC

A big failure back in the late '60s and '70s was the reluctance of the hunting world to engage with the public. There was a sense at the time that if people could just keep their heads down the scrutiny and the animus towards hunting would eventually pass. By not welcoming the public certain, deeply unhelpful narratives were allowed to grow, not least an idea that hunting was the preserve of the wealthy and was of no interest to them. An interesting comparison can be drawn with falconry, which today is almost wholly uncontroversial probably due in no small part to the prevalence

of falconry displays and falconry 'experiences' being seen as accessible to all. Today of course, hound parades are increasingly common at a growing range of events, but this was not the case pre-ban.

It is vital grouse shooting does not allow itself to be similarly portrayed as insular and remote. We know its opponents seek to deploy the rhetoric of class war, just as they did against hunting. Tweeds and plus-fours are just as incendiary as red coats and horses to a certain kind of activist. Shooting's answer to this must be both to seek out the public and to bring them to us. We must take the pro-shooting argument to where the general public are, events such as Countryfile Live, and deliver them in an engaging manner. More crucially we must bring the public onto grouse moors, introduce them to gamekeepers, show them the conservation successes and explain the relevance of shooting to the whole community. We have begun arranging just such events, and the barrier-busting conversations we've seen have been a joy to behold.

Welcoming the public to Blanchland and explaining moorland management



Photo: Verity Johnson www.verityjohnson.co.uk



**Liam Stokes** is Head of shooting campaigns at the Countryside Alliance. A former lecturer in conservation and wildlife management, Liam wants to ensure hunting and shooting have a long and vibrant future.

**CHALLENGE THE ANTIS**

By the time the anti-hunting movement was seriously challenged politically and scientifically, a great deal of the damage had been done. Politically, LACS had a free run at all the party conferences (Labour in particular) for years, and yet had some suitable pro-hunting person been put on a hunting stand it might have at least neutralised some of the opposition in the eyes of sensible politicians. A consequence of this, as far as the Labour Party is concerned, is a view that: "You stuck with us through hard times, we'll stick with you when in power." In campaigning for grouse shooting we have to be fearless in taking our message to all points on the political spectrum. We had a Labour MP, Angela Smith, join a panel debate on the contribution of hunting, shooting, fishing and farming to conservation at the 2015 Labour Party Conference. Through conversations like these we can try to avoid the abolition of grouse shooting becoming a rallying point for any one party.

Scientifically the anti-hunting movement was not sufficiently challenged in the early days of the debate. The science used as the basis for the ban can now be shredded, but this was not done soon enough. The antis were able to paint shooting as the 'humane alternative to hunting' rather than the equally-humane alternative that it is, without presenting evidence to back their claims up. Similarly spurious claims are now being levelled against grouse shooting,



Initiatives such as Hunting Newcomers Week help inform and involve those who would like to know more about hunting



Photo: George Gunn Photography  
www.georgegunn.com

**"TWEEDS AND PLUS-FOURS ARE JUST AS INCENDIARY AS RED COATS AND HORSES TO A CERTAIN KIND OF ACTIVIST. SHOOTING'S ANSWER TO THIS MUST BE BOTH TO SEEK OUT THE PUBLIC AND TO BRING THEM TO US."**

and it is vital that these are countered by deploying the enormous body of economic and ecological research that supports moorland management.

However, this cannot simply be a rear-guard action. The question of what should replace hunting in the countryside was never really put to the antis during the years before the Hunting Act came in, and that mistake cannot be replicated. It cannot be the case that abolitionists are allowed to avoid telling us what their replacement might be, particularly where banning driven grouse shooting seems destined to result in either thousands of hectares of sheep grazing, intensive forestry or scrub.

**REFORM**

In any human activity there will be failings. There can be good and bad in shooting, hunting, farming and conservation practices; addressing faults and failings should be the aim of reform, not a series of laws that ban one activity only to move on to the next.

In the past there was a reluctance

from some to accept that anything might be wrong with any of the hunting practices or practitioners, whereas reform would have done the campaign for hunting a big favour. It is important that shooting does not fall into the same trap. The Hen Harrier Joint Action Plan, and the new willingness of Natural England to issue individual licences to control birds of prey where absolutely necessary, mean gamekeepers now have recourse within the law if they really need it. There can be no doubt that occurrences of raptor persecution are toxic, and close the public's ears to the powerful ecological, economic and social arguments in shooting's favour. There can be no tolerance for criminality or bad practice of any sort.

As long as these lessons are heeded, grouse shooting will have a bright future. Although it is certainly in the antis' sights, the campaign is nowhere near the fever-pitch that saw the introduction of the Hunting Act. There is still plenty of time to win hearts and minds and ensure the valid arguments for proper moorland management are given a fair hearing. Once heard, those arguments will ensure there are plenty more Glorious Twelfths to come. ●



Photo: George Gunn Photography  
www.georgegunn.com

This article first appeared, in an edited form, in *The Field*, the monthly glossy dedicated to those brave souls who shoot, fish and hunt way beyond the call of duty. 50% off a subscription for Countryside Alliance members. Please go online at [www.thefieldsubs.co.uk/11sh](http://www.thefieldsubs.co.uk/11sh) or call 0330 333 1113 and quote code 11SH.





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# A dream come true

→ The Woolaston Bassets were only founded in 2014, but as **HENRIETTA RUTGERS** discovers, there is already solid support for hunting's newest pack.

**I**magine forming a new pack of hounds. What a daunting task and where would you start? This is exactly what the committee that make up the Woolaston Bassets did and they now proudly hold the accolade of the first new hunt to be formed and registered in the UK since the Hunting Act came into force in 2005. This pack is by no means a one season wonder, and with a vast registered country - comprising much of South Monmouthshire right down to the Bristol Channel plus a swathe of new country in West Gloucestershire between the Rivers Wye and Severn which hasn't seen working hounds for over a century - they are certainly not short of places to lay trails and work hounds. Trails are laid over open countryside, not in coverts, to mimic the quarry that bassets hunted before the introduction of the Hunting Act (the hare) and therefore not only do followers get an uninterrupted view of hounds working, it enables both the hunting and shooting fraternities to operate, which is vital for the survival of both.

Joint Masters are husband and wife team, Norman and Hannah Matthews who founded the pack in 2014, describing it as "a dream come true". Norman has been involved in hunt service all his life from the age of 15 when he left school and went to Ireland to work for the North Down Harriers. He has since worked for other packs such as the Cotswold, North Staffordshire, Tivyside and five seasons as



**Henrietta Rutgers** is part of the Countryside Alliance hunting team. While her local pack is the Golden Valley she has stated an ambition to get out with the Woolaston as soon as she can.



Joint Master at the Curre and Llangibby. Hannah has also hunted all of her life and was once secretary to the Curre and Llangibby, so between them they have a wealth of experience which they are clearly putting to good use passing on knowledge to young hunting enthusiasts. Hannah tells me that they already have a core of young whippers-in learning the necessary skills and developing a passion to keep the pack going.

Describing setting up a new pack of hounds as "analogous to creating a new regiment in the Army," in so far as Hunts and Regiments have "always been there" and therefore setting up a new one is unheard of, treasurer and secretary John Carter steered the committee through the administrative process. This involved registering the pack with the Masters of Basset Hounds Association and improving the old kennels at Woolaston. It took about nine months to get probationary



**"NOT ONLY DO FOLLOWERS GET AN UNINTERRUPTED VIEW OF HOUNDS WORKING, IT ENABLES BOTH THE HUNTING AND SHOOTING FRATERNITY TO MUTUALLY ENJOY THEIR SPORTS WHICH IS VITAL FOR THE SURVIVAL OF BOTH."**

registration and once the kennels were inspected in November, 2013, the Woolaston Bassets were granted full registration in April, 2014.

Whilst John handled the paperwork, Norman got on with forming the pack from hounds that some of the other registered basset packs in England generously drafted to get this one started. Hannah says: "This involved a lot of hard work trying to convince people - you cannot be a registered pack without hounds, and other packs loathe to give hounds away to unregistered packs - a chicken and egg situation!" The Four Shires drafted one couple of hounds and then two and a half couple of whelps which started the ball rolling. The Westerby gave an older hound called Teacher, and the Leadon Vale gave a bitch called Fable to whelp - she had four couple of pups - and then the East Lincolnshire drafted three entered hounds. The pack was formed!

The inaugural opening meet was held



at The Old Rectory, Woolaston in October, 2014, and over a hundred people turned out to follow this embryonic pack of three and a half couple which amazed and delighted the committee.

In July, 2015, the Woolaston attended their first ever hound show at the Festival of Hunting in Peterborough. Anyone who has ever been to the Festival of Hunting will know that it is a very correct affair – men in suits, women in dresses and hats – where hunting’s elite come together to judge the champion dog and bitch hounds. The prestige of winning here is great, as are the picnics that adorn the car park at lunch time and the atmosphere I would describe as daunting for any first-timer showing hounds. Nothing was expected of this new pack against the seasoned professionals, with Norman describing the day as a “show our face” exercise. The hounds stole the show with Falco placed third in the Unentered Doghounds class and Olive winning the Best Entered Bitch class and going onto

stand Reserve Champion Bitch. Quite a performance! Their success continued again this year, with Nando winning Best Under Fifteen Inch Doghound and Teacher winning Best Single Entered Doghound, as well as receiving prizes in most other classes they entered.

John is rightly proud when he talks of this season, their third, “with 15 couple in kennels including two and a half of our own new entry”. With three and a half couple of Woolaston-bred puppies also at walk this winter the pack is still growing and laying solid foundations for the future. Not to mention the 21 subscribing family members and 32 single subscribing

**“OVER A HUNDRED PEOPLE TURNED OUT TO FOLLOW THIS EMBRYONIC PACK OF THREE AND A HALF COUPLE WHICH AMAZED AND DELIGHTED THE COMMITTEE”.**

members who John is very quick to thank as “their support and generosity keeps us financially viable”. The Woolaston also have a very active Facebook group with over 350 members and have recently created a small and enthusiastic hunt supporters’ group.

So what is the secret to their success? When I put this question to both Norman and John there was one parallel in both of their answers and that is the stars of the show, the hounds themselves. Having spent a day with them on our stand at Countryfile Live this year I can quite see why; approachable, endearing, enthusiastic and quite frankly enchanting. They are just the right height for children to cuddle and for the rather more aged of those amongst us to follow at a slightly reduced pace and safely on terra firma! John also mentions the social reward and satisfaction of joining together for a common purpose and to have fun in our beautiful countryside, which is common ground shared by all people that follow a pack of hounds.

It is a testament to their success that 30 per cent of their members had never hunted or even supported hunting prior to a day following the bassets and with a highly ambitious committee plus these diminutive hounds they are sure to continue to thrive and fulfil Norman’s dream of teaching young people how to care for and hunt hounds long into the future. ●





# Dogs for Good Hazel - happy to be working

→ JIM BARRINGTON'S *Dogs with Jobs* strand continues as he updates us on the progress of Hazel, the little cocker spaniel pup destined to become a life-changing assistance dog at Dogs for Good.



Hazel with her handler, Helen

Since we first met, Hazel has left her volunteer puppy socialiser, who taught her basics like lead-walking, sit, stay and recall and introduced her to as many new environments and situations as possible, and has started her formal training programme at the charity's Banbury HQ. The charity itself has rebranded as Dogs for Good, the new name for Dogs for the Disabled, which more accurately reflects the range of its excellent work.

I visited the Dogs for Good headquarters in Banbury to see how Hazel is progressing and met press officer Catherine Goddard and Helen Williams, Hazel's current trainer, who showed me the different methods used in its reward-based training programme. Helen's job is to develop Hazel's obedience, ensuring she's responding to commands accurately and consistently, and teach her the skills she'll need as an assistance dog. Simple things, such as being able to walk carefully and confidently next to someone in a wheelchair, are important.

Retrieving items will be familiar to many dog owners, but assistance dogs must not only pick up items on command and return them to hand, but to also hold back when necessary; a person with a condition affecting their legs may not want paws on the lap, whereas to others who can't reach forward it may be vital. Hazel will learn to pick up a range of items including phone, TV remote, mobile phone, keys, purse/wallet - anything a person with a disability might drop.

Helen demonstrated some other skills

**"GUNDOG BREEDS ARE MOST OFTEN USED AS ASSISTANCE DOGS BECAUSE OF THEIR WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND WORK WITH HUMANS, PLUS THEIR LOVE OF CARRYING AND RETRIEVING."**

Hazel is learning, such as the less obvious 'push' command needed for pressing access buttons to shops and road crossings, plus turning lights on and off. Learning to 'pull' as well as 'push' on command will enable Hazel to master opening and closing doors, help with dressing and undressing, and emptying the washing machine.

Dogs for Good's HQ is a purpose-built centre that enables a whole host of different situations to be recreated. Bedrooms are used not only for training the dogs, but also enable new clients to spend a whole week on an intensive training course with their new assistance dog, before going home together to continue training with their instructor over a further period of weeks at home. As Catherine explained, gundog breeds are most often used as assistance dogs because of their willingness to learn and work with humans, plus their love of carrying and retrieving.

"I think all the Countryside Alliance Magazine's gundog owners will be fascinated to see how we harness a dog's natural, gundog-bred skills and extend and adapt them so that our dogs can work to help an adult or a child with a disability or a child with autism," says Catherine, who has experience in journalism, as a volunteer for Riding for the Disabled and picking-up with her own gundogs. "Slowing Hazel's natural enthusiasm for her work is something they'll all understand. She's obviously a highly intelligent young dog and keen as mustard."

Hazel's journey started in 2014, when, as a three-month-old pup, her progress was overseen in the then Dogs for the Disabled centre in the North West by puppy coordinator Jess Hardiman and was looked after by puppy socialiser Joanna Bennett, who says: "I was instantly hooked. To combine my love of dogs and my desire to help people and give something back to society was a dream come true."

As an actress, having appeared in

numerous television dramas (*Jericho*, *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale*, *Peaky Blinders*, among others) she is well-placed to give Dogs for Good a valuable public profile boost. "To play a small part in providing people with life-changing assistance dogs is so rewarding."

I met Hazel again at the CLA Game Fair last year as a 10-month-old pup and it was clear that her puppy socialising was giving her a great grounding in experiencing new environments - not so easy with such a wealth of new sights and smells all around. Now, at two years of age and under the watchful eye of Helen Williams, she is really picking up the necessary skills and displaying the confidence needed to become an excellent assistance dog. During her time at the Banbury HQ, Hazel will have to face three assessments in order to progress to advanced training before she's ready to be partnered with someone who will benefit from all her acquired skills.

What all this shows is just how carefully Dogs for Good handles the various stages required in honing the natural skills of the dog into those needed to be an assistance partner for humans less able to undertake even some basic day-to-day tasks.

The next time we meet, Hazel will have been taken on by a Dogs for Good instructor to finalise her training and then match her with her new human partner to ensure mutual suitability. Finally, after careful and intensive training together, both will be assessed to see that partnership reaches the high standard set by Dogs for Good, because, as Catherine says, "Our dogs' welfare is as important as that of the clients, for the simple reason that only a mutually beneficial partnership will work."

Hazel's story goes on. ●

Find out more about Dogs for Good and how to sponsor a puppy like Hazel here: [www.dogsforgood.org](http://www.dogsforgood.org) or call 01295 252600.

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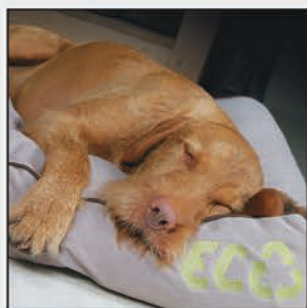
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# Remembering the Duke of Westminster

December 22, 1951 – August 9, 2016

→ Countryside Alliance vice president, the Duke of Westminster, died in August. Here we draw on a tribute published by the Grosvenor Estate in memory of a consummate countryman.

**G**erald Cavendish Grosvenor 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Westminster KG CB CVO OBETD CD DL, who died in August aged 64, was vice president of the Countryside Alliance among his many other roles and interests. He supported the Countryside Alliance from its inception in 1997, and was one of the driving forces behind the Countryside Movement prior to that.

A passionate countryman, committed soldier, an excellent shot, a true entrepreneur, Gerald went out of his way to be courteous and humorous with all people, regardless of status or wealth.

Distinctly down-to-earth, the Duke of Westminster was rarely seen without a Diet Coke and a cigarette (later electric). Not much of a sleeper, one might expect emails from him at any hour of the night and an average week would see him up and down from home in Chester to London and all over the world to visit soldiers, businesses, charities and rural estates while representing and promoting numerous organisations.

His birth in Northern Ireland in December, 1951, was a celebrated occasion (his father being the last direct male descendant of the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Westminster). In his own words his childhood was “idyllic”, growing up with two sisters Leonora and Jane. Gerald and his sisters enjoyed much happiness and freedom playing in the islands of Lough Erne.

It was here that he learned to fish and to shoot at his father’s side. Gerald’s father served as Member of Parliament for Fermanagh and South Tyrone and spent a good deal of time during Gerald’s early childhood at the House of Commons. During these frequent absences Gerald was taken under the wing of the estate gamekeeper, Wesley Scott, with whom a deep friendship grew and this countryman’s earthy wisdom and knowledge was imparted to Gerald at an early age. An empathy with country folk and a deep understanding and love of the natural world shaped his views thereafter. →



This idyll was rudely interrupted at the age of eight when he was sent to boarding school for which he was little prepared. He was schooled at Sunningdale and then Harrow. He was a natural sportsman and as a youth excelled on the football pitch with an ability to strike the ball equally well with either foot but was discouraged to pursue this further by his father. He was also a good cricketer, but his abiding love was for country sports and he was acknowledged to be one of the finest Shots in the country.

When Gerald was 16 a *Daily Mail* reporter visited his school. The 4th Duke had died and the title was passed to his brother, Robert, Gerald's father. This meant that Gerald inherited the courtesy title 'Earl Grosvenor'. It was the first he had heard of it and immediately rang his father asking what it was all about. The reply was: "Ah yes, we need to talk about that!" It was a double blow for Gerald who adored his uncle, but also realised that his life was to change forever.

On leaving Harrow he went travelling with his good friend Johnny Hesketh. On his return he threw himself into learning everything he could about the property business and the intricacies of the Grosvenor Estate. He travelled in Canada, America, New Zealand and Australia, where, in 1975, he bought a 10,500-acre Estate in New South Wales known as Bull's Run and learnt to manage land and run a farm of his own.

In 1978, Gerald married Natalia 'Tally' Phillips at Tally's family home, Luton Hoo, and they spent their honeymoon at Bull's Run. Gerald inherited the dukedom in 1979. The property crash of the early '70s and the heavy mortgaging of the London Estate to pay death duties had left the business in dire straits. Along with the 120 hectare London Estate that came into the Grosvenor family in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Gerald inherited the heavy burden of responsibility, which was to breathe life and purpose back into the Grosvenor Estate. He also inherited two inestimable qualities from his father, a sense of duty and a keen appreciation of what was right and fair.

Surrounded by excellent people, his youth and enthusiasm provided the impetus to drive the Grosvenor Estate forward to become one of the largest and

**"A COUNTRYMAN AT HEART HE WAS NEVER MORE CONTENT THAN WHEN HE WAS ON THE GROUSE MOOR WITH A SHOTGUN IN HAND."**

most entrepreneurial privately-owned international property companies in the world. His openness coupled with a natural charm endeared him to many. Laughter was never far away in any conversation and many were the times when a joke relieved the tension at a difficult meeting or in an awkward situation.

Like many of his forebears he was an accomplished soldier. In April, 1992, he took Command of his regiment the Queen's Own Yeomanry based in Newcastle. He thought this to be the pinnacle of his Army career, instead it served to fan the flames of his future ambitions in the Army, not for himself, but for the volunteer soldier and the public's recognition of their contribution.

His military experience was reflected in Gerald's approach to the Grosvenor Estate, where his loyalty to his staff, whether a senior executive or a young gamekeeper, was unprecedented and all knew that the Duke would be there to support them when the going got tough.

Gerald, the countryman, had a natural affinity with the countryside. In 1992, he published a report entitled *The Problems in Rural Areas*, highlighting the difficulties being experienced in remote and isolated rural communities. In recent years he lobbied to get broadband access for isolated communities, something he knew to be a commercial and educational lifeline.

In 2004, he was made the Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff for Reserve Forces and Cadets. This put him in charge of Ministry of Defence policy for the reservists and cadets of all three armed forces. Having started his military life as a trooper thirty-five years before, he was promoted to Major General - making him the first reservist 'two star' since the 1930s.

When his term as Head of Reserve Forces came to an end in 2007 he re-focused his attention on the Grosvenor Estate but was once again "called up", taking the new appointment of Deputy Commander Land Forces in 2011.

When the Duke left the Reserve Army after over 40 years of service, he wanted to do something for the many young people he had seen who had paid a very heavy price for serving the nation. This quickly turned into the idea of continuing the success of the clinical rehabilitation at Headley Court by creating a 21st century version of it on a new site now called the Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre, a charity which was initiated by the late Duke and of which he was the main benefactor, which will be opened at



Simon Hart MP, chairman of the Countryside Alliance, paid tribute to the late Duke, saying: "He was a consummate countryman

and had been involved in rural campaigning for many years, helping to set up the Countryside Movement, the precursor to the Countryside Alliance. Vice president since our inception, the Duke was passionate about standing up for the countryside, especially fieldsports as they came under increasing political scrutiny. He was also a noted conservationist and took his role as custodian of his estates extremely seriously. We will remember him with huge gratitude and affection."

Stanford Hall in 2018.

He was a man of duty. He was loyal, unforgiving, decisive, stubborn, a fearsome opponent, prejudiced, opinionated and a brilliant strategist. He was a contradiction. He was brave and yet wild horses could not drag him to the dentist. He was both intolerant and open-minded, a loner and the best company, self-indulgent and hugely generous; he could be boastful about small things and unassuming about magnificent things. He would not accept weakness of any kind, particularly in himself, even when suffering with depression he refused to see a doctor and decided to "heal himself".

He hated the tags 'environmentalist' and 'philanthropist' believing that 'caring' was a better word and particularly hated those who endeavoured to protect his good name and would thwart their efforts at every turn. Like many who had to grow up too quickly he maintained a childlike quality, a smutty sense of humour, and a great sense of the ridiculous. He never lost his love of the outdoors - a countryman at heart he was never more content than when he was on the grouse moor with a shotgun in hand.

He is survived by his wife Tally, their four children, Tamara, Edwina, Hugh and Viola; grandchildren, Jake, Louis, Zia, Wolf, Isla and Orla. He is succeeded by his son, Hugh - who becomes the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Westminster - and leaves him a well-ordered Grosvenor Estate. ●



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# Thanks to our fundraising heroes of 2016

→ Fabulous fundraisers have amassed around £50,000 for The Countryside Alliance Foundation this year, but what makes them saddle-up a racehorse, run a marathon or cycle long distances for us? **CHARLOTTE COOPER**, who rode in this year's Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 for TCAF, finds out.



Charles Buckle  
raced at Newmarket

**T**he Countryside Alliance Foundation (TCAF) runs three projects you may have heard of - Fishing 4 Schools, Casting for Recovery and Falconry for Schools. As a member of staff I have seen all three projects in action, the tremendous dedication of the volunteers involved and the end results.

Fishing 4 Schools provides an alternative to classroom learning, teaching science and maths through angling. It pays particular dividends for young people who have behavioural and learning challenges, even offering them a future career in fisheries management. Falconry for Schools brings birds of prey into the classroom, to teach young people about the natural world and these amazing birds. And Casting For Recovery is a scheme that offers short, healing retreats of gentle angling exercise and counselling in beautiful surroundings to ladies with, or who have had, breast cancer. Its effect on those taking part can be striking.

However, none of these projects would be able to go ahead without our fundraisers who took part in the London Marathon, rode in charity races at Newmarket and Aintree, and cycled the 100-mile Prudential RideLondon event, as well as a few who undertook other challenges.

Top marks, this year, go to Mark Simpson from Devon. Mark raised more than £8,000 for us by running the Marathon and in so doing shed many stones and found a new passion for running.

"I think I had a bit of a mid-life crisis last November," recalled Mark. "I received the Alliance e-newsletter asking for people to run the Marathon and before I knew it I was signed up. I went home that evening and told my family and they fell about laughing. I was about 19 stone and had probably not done any real exercise for 25 years!"

But by March he'd run his first half marathon and he completed the London event in 4hrs 51mins.

"I was definitely not an athlete, so it shows that anyone can do it if they put their mind to it," he said. "I think I raised so much money because no-one could believe that I'd even think of doing it."

Charlie Buckle, of Semer, near Ipswich, was one of the riders who raced at Newmarket in a charity race in June, raising £1,058 for TCAF. An experienced point-to-pointer, he relished the opportunity to compete at such a prestigious course.

He said: "I'm used to getting changed in a tent in the middle of a field, but there I was in the changing rooms at Newmarket with jockeys like Frankie Dettori. And to race on the July Course was amazing. I'd definitely do it again. I



**Charlotte Cooper** is one of our many fundraising heroes of 2016 having been one of the team to ride for us in the Prudential RideLondon in July.



Garry, Alan and Simon of Crawley Fly Fishers Club present a cheque to Casting for Recovery's Sue Shaw and Sally Pizii.

2016 Roll of Honour



Mark and Sophie pose during the Marathon

**“KNOWING I WAS DOING IT FOR ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES WILL BE CHANGED BY OUR CHARITIES GAVE ME THE INCENTIVE TO KEEP GOING.”**

think charity races could be addictive!”

Angela Lee cycled the RideLondon 100-mile sportive for us in July, specifically in support of Casting for Recovery, raising £2,308. “My sister had recently died of breast cancer so it was definitely a cause close to my heart,” she said. “I loved the event – the crowd was so supportive. It was a fantastic experience.”

And I can concur with that. As a not terribly fit nor experienced cyclist, it was tough and go whether I could cycle 100 miles, but knowing I was doing it for all those people whose lives will be changed by our charities gave me the incentive to keep going.

You could be our next charity hero. If you would like to run the Marathon,

contact [hattie-roger-smith@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:hattie-roger-smith@countryside-alliance.org), for RideLondon email [pippa-chambers@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:pippa-chambers@countryside-alliance.org) and to take part in a charity horse race, contact [sara-rutherford@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:sara-rutherford@countryside-alliance.org) ●

Thanks to Norfolk-based fishery owner Sally Acloque for supporting Fishing 4 Schools in many ways this year. A hostess to open days, a donor and an organiser, we are grateful to Sally for her huge contribution.

Huge thanks to Hector Chamberlain who raised £4,000 for us by running three marathons in three days along the route of WW1’s Operation Market Garden, the action immortalised in the film *a Bridge Too Far*.

Virgin Money London Marathon, April 24

- Thomas Eyles
- Emma Larminie
- Eleanor Martin
- Rachael Ward
- Sophie Dale
- Penny Middleton Burn
- Mark Simpson
- Phoebe Taylor

Newmarket Charity Race, June 23

- Victoria Pendleton
- Stuart Radbourne
- Charles Buckle
- William Harford
- Kristina Dalborg
- Samantha Burbidge
- Chris Lawson
- Jon Day

Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100, July 31

- Angela Lee
- Andrew Shutler
- Ronnie Cheape
- Monty Browne
- Toby Sallitt
- Charlotte Cooper

Aintree Charity Race, October 23

- Ryan Mania
- Charles Clark
- David Redvers
- Oliver Dale
- Richard Tyacke
- Polly Portwin
- Molly Dingwall
- Tessa Dollar
- David O’Brien

Thanks to the team at Mount Falcon Estate, Mike and Gail Forbes of Forbes of Kingennie, Paul Little, Clay and Sue Brendish, Keith Passant, Frazer Russell and also Simon Young, Garry Poole and Alan Purnell of the Crawley Fly Fishers Club, Wendy at the British Fly Fair, everyone at iFish and also the Worshipful Company of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators for your terrific fundraising efforts for Casting for Recovery in 2016. Thanks are also due to everyone who has helped on our charitable projects this year, from instructors to medics, counsellors, fishery owners and fly tiers.

# Christmas GIFT GUIDE

Treat your loved ones to these countryside Christmas gifts...





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# “The ordinary paradise of the English countryside.”

→ England is a beautiful place to live and work – but are we doing enough to introduce tourists to a great national asset? In a timely piece as the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee runs an inquiry, **SARAH LEE** argues that there is much more we can do.



Burnham on Sea Food Festival is popular with locals and tourists alike

**T**he first thing to do when considering tourism and the countryside is to refrain from spouting poetry about our beautiful countryside – hard enough, especially if you are from Shakespeare’s Warwickshire, as I am. Instead we have to consider the issue on a practical level. The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee recently launched an inquiry into the role tourism can play in supporting the rural economy, and we submitted our own thoughts into how best we can boost this vital sector.

Rural tourism itself underpins local economies, but it also contributes to our national economy, while supporting local farmers, producers and making the most of our country’s natural assets. The areas for growth include food and drink tourism, which can generate a year round tourism offer, and the opportunities shooting and fishing offer, which not only bolster local economies but enable people to engage in the natural environment.

As you will know from your own experience of the English countryside, there are plenty of challenges holding back this growth. Poor public transport and broadband are top of the list, but business regulations also impact negatively on small tourism businesses, and must be addressed.

Rural tourism, playing its fullest part in the international market, is a huge economic opportunity. The UK is the eighth most visited country in the world and people come to visit locations which have deep rooted connections with democracy, industry and the arts. Yet only around 17 per cent of visitors manage

to leave London and the major cities to visit the countryside. This is a missed opportunity both for visitors and for the rural tourism businesses losing out on potential income. Our own Rural Oscars have a tourism category to help promote the hard work and imagination that goes into rural tourism, and a cursory glance at social media shows how popular our countryside, its food, its villages and its people are around the world. The English countryside is photogenic and culturally important, but it is inaccessible to many – only 6 per cent of tourists use public transport to visit the countryside.

Rural tourism in England contributes at least £10 billion per year to the economy, making up a substantial part of the overall £73 billion value of tourism in England. It makes a significant contribution to the rural economy, supporting village shops and services, jobs and businesses, and it is crucial to ensuring the long-term sustainability of our countryside. The jobs which are supported by rural tourism – 380,000 in England alone – encourage people to live, work and bring up their families in these rural communities.

In areas such as West Somerset, particularly reliant on rural tourism, where a quarter of all jobs are in tourism. This is due in part to a good relationship between the private and public sectors, with the National Parks working well with local hostleries and activity enterprises. A further reason behind its success is the draw of country sports enthusiasts from here and abroad to participate in hunting, shooting and fishing in the counties of Devon and Somerset.

Country sports are not only part of Exmoor’s heritage, but, as our own research shows, they also account for 90 per cent of winter tourism in the area. This maintains employment in otherwise challenging circumstances and provides hotels, bed and breakfast establishments and pubs with vital income in the winter months. Indeed, many businesses would

not survive without this trade.

We must ensure that those who want to come to Britain as tourists are able to do so, and that we can ensure a minimum of bureaucracy so that the warm welcome, stunning scenery and world-class produce are what they remember most. ●

## Our recommendations for tourism in rural England

- Promote the natural environment and country sports as part of a tourism strategy to encourage more people, both from within the UK and abroad, to visit rural England for longer and year-round.
- Tailor support for farmers and rural residents to diversify into tourism and grow their businesses. Include support for innovation, training, marketing, funding advice, mentoring and networking.
- Review business regulations related to tourism ensuring they are proportionate and reduce red tape.
- Raise awareness of the benefits of buying local produce amongst visitors. A strong local food and drink offer can enhance the quality of the local tourism product.
- Promotion of specialist produce, e.g. game and cheese, should be at the heart of tourism strategies and promoted online through an interactive map.
- Improve broadband infrastructure and digital skills to ensure tourism businesses are making the most of the opportunities afforded by the digital world.
- Public transport must be integrated with tourism attractions in rural areas.

● The committee’s enquiry is about England only. The Countryside Alliance represents Wales, Ireland and Scotland, too.

“The ordinary paradise of the English countryside” is a quote taken from AS Byatt’s Ragnarok.



**Sarah Lee** is the Countryside Alliance’s head of policy and is also a director of the popular Countryside Alliance Awards, which boost rural businesses and communities.

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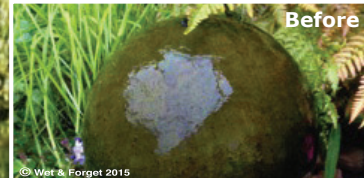
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Master Chef of Great Britain, Steven Pidgeon is head chef at the Arundell Arms, the famous sporting hotel at Lifton in Devon. Seasonality, outstanding local produce and creativity are all high on the agenda throughout the Arundell Arms' fine dining, brasserie-style and hearty pub classics menu options. Steve is a true Devonian, having lived and worked in the county all of his life. His restaurant has been awarded two AA Rosettes for 20 years continuously and he is one of only 80 Master Chefs of Great Britain. Steve says: "We are so fortunate to live and work in this wonderful part of the world. I particularly enjoy preparing our local game and fish which is something our customers enjoy." Steve has kindly shared his recipe for venison and chocolate casserole which is a hearty winter classic.

Follow Steve on Twitter @stevenpidgeon

GET INVOLVED  
*Recipe of the quarter*



{An alternative to traditional dishes}

## Venison and chocolate casserole

### YOU WILL NEED...

- 500g venison haunch (diced)
- 2 tsp flour
- 6 tsp olive oil
- 3 banana shallots (peeled and chopped)
- 4 garlic cloves (peeled and crushed)
- 4 carrots (peeled and cut in half)
- 1 stick of celery (finely chopped)
- 3 flat mushrooms (roughly chopped)
- 1 tbsp thyme (chopped)
- 1 tbsp rosemary (chopped)
- 700ml red wine
- 500ml beef stock
- 30g dark chocolate buttons (good quality)
- 40g butter
- 2 tbsp red currant jelly
- salt and pepper

### METHOD

(Pre-heat oven to 160 degrees or Gas mark 2)

● Pour half the olive oil into an oven-proof dish and gently warm, add the bacon lardons and cook for 4 minutes and remove from the heat.

● Put the diced venison and flour in a bowl and toss well. Once coated, shake off any excess flour, then place the dish back on the heat and place the venison in the pan until browned all over.

● Add the rest of the olive oil, garlic, shallots and celery and cook for 1–2 minutes, then add the carrots, mushrooms and herbs and cook for 15 minutes. Then add the red wine and bring to the boil, add the beef stock and season with salt and pepper. Place a lid on top and cook in the oven for 1<sup>3/4</sup> - 2 hours or until the meat is tender.

● Once tender, remove from the oven and strain the meat and vegetables in a sieve, keeping the liquid. Put the liquid back in the pan and re-boil. Once boiling, whisk in the red currant jelly, butter and chocolate, then pour over the venison and vegetables and stir well. It's now ready to eat.



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➔ **PLEASE SEND** emails to [news@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:news@countryside-alliance.org) and letters to Editor, Countryside Alliance magazine, 1 Spring Mews, Tinworth Street, London, SE11 5AN.

{ RURAL VOICES }

## Your letters

Send us your grassroots views

### Casting for Recovery “humbling”

Hello, just to say a big thank you to one and all for a fabulous weekend at Kingennie. It was a wonderful experience. Yes we had tears but we also had many laughs and felt at ease with each other. It helped me tremendously even after all the years.

Jill's team of warriors were fantastic, caring, compassionate and treated us all with such dignity. It's a pleasure to belong to such a special club.

I felt quite humbled by the kindest of the men that gave up their Sunday morning

to come along and support us in our attempts to catch those trout, but I'm sure they enjoyed the hilarity as much as we all did!

It would be lovely to keep in touch and perhaps plan a get together somewhere in the future.

**MARIAN PYKE**  
**Casting for Recovery**  
**Participant at Kingennie,**  
**Angus, Scotland.**

*Editor's note - ladies who have, or have had, breast cancer, should turn to p47 for 2017's fly fishing retreat schedule, with details on how to apply.*



### Dear Fishing 4 Schools

Dear Fishing 4 Schools. Thank you for spending your time on us at Lenwade. This will be a lifetime memory. It has been my dream to go fishing. Thank you so much, it was awesome and I wish it could happen again. It was peaceful and pretty. I am so glad I moved to Norfolk from London.

Hugs and fishes,

**ABIGAIL**

**Young participant at Lenwade Open Day in Norfolk, September 2016.**

### Three's Discovery programme teaching digital skills to all

Sir. Discovery is Three's digital skills initiative, established in 2014 with one primary aim; to increase the digital skills of the communities we live and work in, nationwide. We now have three Discovery spaces in Swansea, Maidenhead and London with a further 64 stores across the country offering free-of-charge sessions. These are available to everyone, not just Three's customers.

Digital skills are such an important part of our society and we want to support as many people as possible so they feel confident they have the skills to be online. We have been delighted to work with 7,000 people to improve their digital skills since opening.

From school children studying GCSE Business Studies and creating presentations through videos, parents discovering about online safety, charities including Reading

Blind Association supporting accessibility, and community groups like Communities First in Wales. We work with a diverse range of organisations to deliver our sessions, both on and off site.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss with any interested individuals, groups or organisations looking to develop their digital skills. We work with the most basic level, those who have never even been online before, through to people who want to develop their skills in other areas such as social media. Increasingly we are supporting small businesses with their digital skills and I am looking forward to our developing this work in 2017.

Information can be found on our website, where people can book on to our sessions - [www.three.co.uk/discovery](http://www.three.co.uk/discovery). Alternatively call

0800 1300 333 to speak to one of the team.

I look forward to working with the Countryside Alliance and its members further.

**JESSICA TOMPKINSON**  
**Community Engagement Manager**  
**Three, Star House, 20 Grenfell Road,**  
**Maidenhead, SL6 1EH**



# Annual Wine Auction Dinner at the V&A

→ The 21st annual event raised £200,000 for our campaigns in 2017 and beyond.

The Countryside Alliance held the 21<sup>st</sup> London Wine Auction Dinner on Tuesday October 4<sup>th</sup> in The Raphael Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Over £200,000 was raised in the auction which was sponsored by Roxtons Field Sports. The dinner was chaired by Simon Mackenzie Smith of Bank of America Merrill Lynch, and was attended by over 350 guests including; Hugh Morrison and Amanda Wakeley OBE, Richard and Cindy Royds, and Lord and Lady Gerald Fitzalan Howard. Rory Bremner delighted the audience with his speech and dinner was by Word of Mouth and sponsored by Fortnum & Mason, Boozy Udders ice cream, and Prestat Chocolates. Wines were supplied by Berry Bros. & Rudd and Goedhuis & Co. Top lots were a day's shooting at Alnwick donated by His Grace The Duke of Northumberland, and a classic handmade Yorkshire leather pig made by Omersa. ●



Simon Mackenzie Smith, Hugh Morrison, Amanda Wakeley OBE, Simon Hart MP & Rory Bremner



Mrs Peter Mullen, Mrs Richard Corfield & Peter Mullen



Hugh Morrison



Oliver Pawle



Mrs William Asprey



Duncan Clark

All photos: ©Jon Hawkins of Surrey Hills Photography www.surreyhillsphotography.co.uk



FEATURE  
LONDON WINE AUCTION



Michael Bannister,  
The Lady Mancroft & Bill McLean



Jim Rutherford & Carole Cable



Amanda Wakeley OBE



Kate O'Neill & Simon Mackenzie Smith



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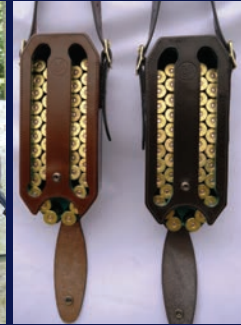
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➔ **MORE EVENTS** Our online listing is updated regularly and can be found at [www.countryside-alliance.org/events/upcoming-events](http://www.countryside-alliance.org/events/upcoming-events)

{ WINTER 2016 }

## Get involved. Top events for the next few months



### Casting for Recovery UK & Ireland's 2017 retreat programme

Casting for Recovery UK & Ireland is the popular charitable programme run by The Countryside Alliance Foundation which offers ladies who have (or have had) breast cancer an all expenses paid weekend retreat where counselling and medical support combine with fly fishing. Weekend retreats are run at some of the most

beautiful locations across the UK and Ireland and we are delighted to advertise the retreat programme for 2017.

Ladies can apply to attend at [www.castingforrecovery.org.uk](http://www.castingforrecovery.org.uk) and retreats will open to applications on a rolling basis. Please note that places on retreat are allocated by ballot and are subject to medical clearance.

In 2017 we will run the following retreats:

■ **April 7-9** - The Coniston Hotel Country Estate and Spa near Skipton, North Yorkshire.

■ **April/May (date tbc)** - Mount Falcon Estate, Ballina, Co. Mayo.

■ **July 21-23** - Kimbridge on the Test near Romsey, Hampshire.

■ **September 22-24** - Forbes of Kingennie, Broughty Ferry, Angus.

■ **October 20-22** - The Arundell Arms, Lifton, Devon.

➔ **SAVILLS COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE POINT TO POINT** at Badbury Rings, Sunday, February 26. This popular day will include terrier racing, a patron's tent, rural crafts, local food and drink and some top-quality point to pointing. For more information, please visit [www.capointtopoint.org.uk](http://www.capointtopoint.org.uk)



Photo: Sarah Farnsworth  
[www.sarahfarnsworth.co.uk](http://www.sarahfarnsworth.co.uk)

### Some early 2017 dates for your diary

■ **February 10-12**  
**The British Shooting Show**  
at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire.  
[www.shootingshow.co.uk](http://www.shootingshow.co.uk)  
@BritishShooting

■ **March 14-17**  
**The Cheltenham Festival**  
at Cheltenham Racecourse,  
[www.thefestival.co.uk](http://www.thefestival.co.uk)  
@CheltenhamRaces

■ **May 3-7**  
**Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials**  
at Badminton House, Gloucester.  
[www.badminton-horse.co.uk](http://www.badminton-horse.co.uk)  
@bhorsetrials

■ **June 8-10**  
**South of England Show and Hound Show**  
at Ardingly, West Sussex.  
[www.seas.org.uk](http://www.seas.org.uk)  
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■ **June 16-17**  
**Field & Country Fair,**

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[www.fieldandcountryfair.com](http://www.fieldandcountryfair.com)  
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■ **June 22-25**  
**The Royal Highland Show**  
at Ingleston, Edinburgh.  
[www.royalhighlandshow.org](http://www.royalhighlandshow.org)  
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■ **July 11-13**  
**The Great Yorkshire Show & Hound Show**  
at the showground Harrogate  
[www.greatyorkshireshow.co.uk](http://www.greatyorkshireshow.co.uk)  
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**Wednesday, July 19**  
**The Festival of Hunting,**  
Peterborough.  
[www.festivalofhunting.com](http://www.festivalofhunting.com)  
@FestofHunting

■ **24 - 27 July**  
**The Royal Welsh Show**  
at the showground in Llanellwedd.  
[www.rwas.wales/royal-welsh-show/](http://www.rwas.wales/royal-welsh-show/) @royalwelshshow

### ➔ TUMBLERS' CLUB OPEN TO ENTRIES!

The third annual Countryside Alliance Hunt Tumblers' Club in association with Pol Roger Champagne has opened to entries. The competition aims to celebrate the daring and elasticity of those who hunt while capturing tumbler's moments of misfortune forever. Please send photos to [hunting@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:hunting@countryside-alliance.org) including your name and address. If the photo is not of you, please do make sure that you have permission to send it to us from the tumbler in question and also the photographer. Please remember to send us your photos in as large size as possible so that they will reproduce for publicity purposes (1MB minimum).

The competition will close on March 1, 2017. The best three photos will be chosen by a judging panel featuring representatives from Pol Roger, the Countryside Alliance and *The Field*, alongside three-day eventer Harry Meade. A winning tumbler and photographer

will be awarded a magnum of Pol Roger Champagne while second and third placed tumblers and photographers will each receive a standard size bottle of Pol Roger.

The Countryside Alliance and Pol Roger will not be responsible for any injury, loss or damage of any kind suffered by any person or horse featured in our competition. Please DO NOT send us your photo if serious injury has occurred as a result of the fall.



### ➔ BOXING DAY

Boxing Day is traditionally one of the biggest dates in the country calendar when hunts meet at pubs, town squares, and great houses and shoots take place in all corners of the country. Please send us your photographs to celebrate this important day and we will share them on social media. You can either email us direct from Facebook or via [digital@countryside-alliance.org](mailto:digital@countryside-alliance.org)

# The Hunting horn of the Somme

→ The Chase Project recounts an exceptional tale and asks for help in recovering a lost regimental artwork.

For its 10<sup>th</sup> annual regimental reunion in February, 1929, the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire) Regiment unveiled a memorial canvas of the regiment's exploits during the Great War. It was 69ft long, consisted of 11 panels and provided the focal point for regimental reunions in Hanley until after World War II, and into the 1990s at Fallings Park (Wolverhampton) Territorial depot.

The Chase Project military research group has been attempting to find out what happened to the canvas since it was last seen five years ago. They have researched many of the characters mentioned in newspaper reports on the reunions, and were intrigued by several of their sobriquets. Five men who attended the reunions were awarded the Victoria Cross (including stretcher bearer William Coltman, the most decorated Other ranks of the Great War) and two, in particular, caught the attention of Richard and Lee: Alan 'Pyjama VC' Jerrard; and, even more intriguingly, Lieutenant Colonel John 'Tally Ho VC' Campbell.

On September 15, 1916, a bizarre event took place on the Western Front, culminating in the awarding of a Victoria Cross to Lieutenant Colonel John Vaughan Campbell of the Coldstream Guards. One-hundred years later, that story is told in full by Richard Pursehouse and Lee Dent of The Chase Project, who are also members of the Wolverhampton branch of the Western Front Association (which meets every second Saturday at 2 pm at St Peter's Collegiate School, Compton).

On Thursday, September 15, 2016, an unveiling ceremony of a Victoria Cross Paving Stone took place at Victoria Embankment Garden, Westminster, to commemorate the action for which Campbell was awarded his medal. His hunting horn was played at the service by the band of the Coldstream Guards, which also played *Homage to Colonel Campbell*, a piece specially written to be played on the horn, by the band's director of music, Major

Simon Haw. The paving stone was formally unveiled by his granddaughter, Elizabeth Carney, and the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Steve Summers. The horn was also blown as the ceremony finished by playing the National Anthem.

However, Richard and Lee were puzzled by Campbell's Medal Index Card and they are of the opinion that Oswestry could have an equal claim to be considered for one of the paving stones – as the card states Broom Hall Oswestry as his correspondence address (the London address being presumably the Coldstream Guards, barracks). Prior to the Great War Campbell had been Master of Hounds for the Tanatside Hunt (vales of Severn, Vyrnwy and Tanat) from 1909 – 1926, running with the hounds from Oswestry. After the War he was Aide De Camp to King George V.

## THE GUARDS DIVISION'S ATTACK ON THE GINCHY-LES BOUEFS PLATEAU ON THE SOMME

Shortly after 3:00am as dawn broke on a misty mid-September morning in 1916, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Coldstream Guards, commanded by acting Lieutenant Colonel John Vaughan Campbell took up its 'jump off' position in the British front line trenches.

As part of the attack towards Ginchy on the Somme, Campbell's battalion formed the left flank for the attack, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Coldstream Guards on the right flank (with a battalion of The Irish Guards in the centre). The time for the start of the attack – 'Zero' hour – was designated at 6:20am. All three battalions waited apprehensively in the trenches together as the mist cleared and



would attack in four waves in 'single rank' (i.e. a staggered straight line), with 50 yards between each wave.

The much vaunted tanks failed to arrive to support the attack and so The Guards' objectives had to be reached without assistance from these "Formidable, Unstoppable Metal Behemoths" as one official journalist described them. Later that day, further south at Flers, the tanks wreaked havoc on the unsuspecting German defenders – the first time that tanks saw action in the Great War.

The plan of attack was finalised on the maps of the officers two hours before the attack and consisted of three objectives, with the Irish Guards 'leap frogging' (passing through) to a fourth and final objective.

The attack was launched at 6:20am. Officers' 'Acme' whistles – still manufactured in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter today – exhorted the Coldstreamers to climb out of their trenches into the chthonic, noisy, acrid-smelling battlefield. Almost immediately the second in command of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Major Vaughan, and Captain Cubitt (adjutant) were killed, less than 100 yards from the British trenches. (Major Bentinck second in command of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion on the right was severely wounded). Campbell, however, pressed on.

Captain F Longueville (commanding 2<sup>nd</sup> Company 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion) made it to a sunken road on the left (from where enemy machine guns were firing at the Coldstreamers) with only four men. A pause in the artillery barrage intended for the tanks meant surviving German defenders in the sunken road were able to fire into the flank of the Coldstreamers,

**"PRIOR TO THE GREAT WAR CAMPBELL HAD BEEN MASTER OF HOUNDS FOR THE TANATSIDE HUNT FROM 1909 – 1926, RUNNING WITH THE HOUNDS FROM OSWESTRY."**



NORTH STAFFORDS' RE-UNION.—Col. J. V. Campbell, the "Tally Ho" V.C., attended the annual re-union dinner of the 5th North Staffordshire Regiment in Hanley on Saturday, and a striking reminder of wartime heroism was given during the evening, when the lights were extinguished and a searchlight flashed upon a panoramic drawing on canvas of the battle front from Tynes to the Somme. In the above group (left to right) are Col. H. Cline, the Mayor of Newcastle, the Lord Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent, Col. A. E. Bilsard (who presided), and Col. Campbell, V.C.



scything the men down. Something had to be done, and quickly.

The Official History of the Coldstream Guards prosaically described what happened next. Colonel Campbell intended to blow a 'Double' (a series of short, sharp notes) as he, "very quickly realised that the attack on the left must be pressed home at all costs, and that the sunken road must be cleared of the enemy. He had his hunting-horn with him, and one note was sufficient to rally the leading waves, dangerously thin by this time, and to carry the line forward in one headlong and irresistible rush. Of waves there were none, the fourth (i.e. Irish Guards) wave strove to beat the remnants of the first wave in the race for the Flers-Ginchy road. Within a few minutes of that note Coldstreamers and Irishmen had got to work with the bayonet."

Private Charles Cole later testified: "I saw that VC won. If ever a man deserved it, that man was Colonel Campbell."

The charge was successful and the Coldstreamers captured or killed large numbers of Germans and captured four enemy machine guns. The momentum continued and the attack swept over the sunken road, down the valley and up the other slope, capturing more prisoners. Casualties were very heavy.

Somewhere in this mêlée Captain Raymond Asquith (the son of the then British Prime Minister) was hit in the chest while leading a Company of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Grenadier Guards in the attack further south. Captain Asquith apparently lit a cigarette to prevent his men from realising how badly he had been hurt (in fact, he had been fatally wounded).

The intrepid conduct of Colonel Campbell was fitly recognised by the Victoria Cross which was promptly bestowed upon him - the fourth VC awarded up to that date to the Coldstream Guards since 1914 (and the 753<sup>rd</sup> VC awarded since its inception).

*The London Gazette* citation for his VC on October 24, 1916: "His personal gallantry and initiative at a very critical moment turned the fortunes of the day and enabled the Division to press on and capture objectives of the highest tactical importance."

His father, Captain Honourable Robert Campbell of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Coldstream Guards, would have been awarded the VC during the Zulu War on March 28, 1879 (when his son was three years old), but having been killed during the fighting at Hlobane Mountain, the VC was not bestowed, as initially the medal

**"THE BRITISH GENERALS HAD NOT EXPECTED THE 137TH (STAFFORDSHIRE) BRIGADE TO SUCCEED. HOWEVER, NOBODY HAD THOUGHT TO TELL CAMPBELL OR THE MEN HE COMMANDED. DESPITE THIS LACK OF CONFIDENCE SHOWN BY THEIR SUPERIORS, THE STAFFORDS BROKE THROUGH AT THE STRONGEST FORTIFIED SECTION OF THE HINDENBURG LINE DEFENCES."**

was not awarded posthumously (this was amended in 1905). The award to his son for rallying his men with his hunting horn went some way to adjusting that anomaly. Campbell donated the hunting horn to the Coldstream Regimental Headquarters at the Wellington Barracks in London, and he was provided with a replica.

Campbell could be described as a 'firebrand', having won a Distinguished Service Order medal during the Boer War in South Africa in 1900. He was presented his Victoria Cross by the King on November 14, 1916.

Campbell went on to command the 137<sup>th</sup> (Staffordshire) Brigade, and was a regular visitor to post-war regimental reunion dinners organised by the two Staffordshire Regiments; in 1930, his car broke down en route which led to several impromptu comments involving his not adhering to strict 'jumping off' times. One year he claims to have used his horn in thick fog to avoid other vehicles — or was this another excuse for his tardiness? Reports from the reunions (up to 500 attending) mention his blowing a 'double' on his hunting horn to silence the room for those attending to toast absent friends.

After the failed diversionary attack at Gommecourt (on the Somme) on July 1, 1916, the reputation of the men of the 46<sup>th</sup> (North Midland) Division would remain tarnished until late 1918.

The 137<sup>th</sup> (Staffordshire) Brigade, smashed the German defences of the Hindenburg Line by forcing the crossing of the St Quentin Canal at the Riqueval Bridge, a feat of arms described by Wolverhampton University lecturer and military historian, professor John Bourne as "the day the men of Staffordshire won the war." The successful capture of the Riqueval Bridge is the central focal point on the 69ft-long, 11 panel regimental memorial canvas displayed at the regimental reunion dinners. Former Staffords officer Nick Deakin

remembers the panels being hung at the Fallings Park events.

The British generals had not expected the 137<sup>th</sup> (Staffordshire) Brigade to succeed. However, nobody had thought to tell Campbell or the men he commanded. Despite this lack of confidence shown by their superiors, the Staffords broke through at the strongest fortified section of the Hindenburg Line defences.

Campbell moved to Benwell House, Woodchester (near Stroud) where he died, and was cremated on May 24, 1944 at Cheltenham. His ashes were scattered into the River Findham from the Bancher Bridge, Drynachan on the Cawdor Estate near Nairn. There is a memorial to him in the nearby Cawdor Parish church. At his 'alma mater' Eton, he is named on their Victoria Cross Memorial. His hunting horn featured in a BBC TV interview with officers currently serving with his regiment. The interview took place during commemorations for the Somme and was filmed at the location he rallied his men in a fitting tribute to a great character. ●



Photo: The Staffords Regiment Museum.

Richard Pursehouse and Lee Dent are attempting to locate the memorial canvas displayed at the reunion dinners John 'Tally Ho VC' Campbell attended. If found, the Museum and The Chase Project hope to replicate the original canvas from old service blankets and uniforms, with volunteers recreating each section, similar to one already created covering the history of Whittington Barracks, home of the Staffordshire Regiment Museum. Jeff Elson at the Museum is currently writing a book on the 1/5<sup>th</sup> South Staffords during the Great War (his fourth and final in the series) and provided permission for the Museum's photographs to be used. The Chase Project search has the backing of seven local MPs and two MEPs.

The Chase Project and Jeff Elson can be contacted via [thechaseproject@gmail.com](mailto:thechaseproject@gmail.com).

**ALAN BEITH**  
retired in 2015 after  
42 years as MP for  
Berwick-on-Tweed.

He is a former  
Deputy Leader of the  
Liberal Democrats,  
and is now an active  
member of the House  
of Lords.



Alan Beith with his  
gamekeeper son-in-law

**M**y countryside is found among the grass and sheep of the Cheviot Hills, in the wide, open spaces which separate Northumberland's villages and castles, in coastal communities where fishermen take daily risks to supply our tables, and in the verdant and productive acres of the Tweed Valley. Mining has also left its mark, not only where pits were working till a few years ago, but also in some of the most rural and remote areas where seams ran out generations ago. It is a land of country shows, where great British cakes and pies were being tasted and judged long before the BBC had thought of the *Bake-off*, where sheep, stick dressing, Cumberland wrestling, vegetable displays and fell races are the highlights of the day, and where each village competes with the next to put on the best of events. As I write it is also a time of country harvest festivals in churches and chapels; the numbers are depleted, but the spirit of thanksgiving still rings out in harvest hymns, with plenty to be thankful for in the ample tea or supper which is generally part of the proceedings.

It has been a privilege to represent these places and people for over four decades in the House of Commons, and it is still where I live. I have described it



with the kind of enthusiasm which Robson Green has shown much more effectively in his TV programmes about the North-East, and they have been a real boon to our vital tourist businesses. But rural Northumberland is also an area of much change and many challenges. Farms in North Northumberland are large, and many have ten or twenty cottages where I used to canvass farm workers or retired workers in my election campaigns – now very many of the farm cottages are holiday homes, and a much lower year-round population cannot sustain all the traditional services and activities. Housing is priced beyond the reach of young families on local wages. Schools are under threat from low numbers, and the idea of choosing between competing schools has no relevance at all when the next nearest secondary school to yours is 30 miles away. Public transport in most villages, if there is any at all, cannot get you to or from work.

I have supported the Countryside Alliance since it started, because it understood the extent of this crisis in rural areas, recognising that the countryside needed different policies from the towns, and because it defended the right of country people to continue traditional sports which are one of the few stable sources of employment and income in many country areas. Hunting and shooting are not among my hobbies in a busy life, but as a Liberal I instinctively defend the right of others to maintain activities which are so important to the countryside. And that was a view I held long before my daughter married a gamekeeper and ensured that my grandchildren have a real country upbringing!

**“... I instinctively defend the right of others to maintain activities which are so important to the countryside... a view I held long before my daughter married a gamekeeper and ensured that my grandchildren have a real country upbringing!”**

When you add to all this the huge uncertainty which Brexit has brought – to farm incomes, to export markets and to the funding which has come to the countryside through EU schemes – you have to recognise, whatever view you hold on the merits or otherwise of EU membership, that huge attention is going to have to be paid to rural areas when so much policy will have to be reshaped. And you can be pretty certain that without strong voices for the countryside in both Houses of Parliament, and without a lot of lobbying from Countryside Alliance and other rural organisations, it will be the outlook from the middle of London and some of our cities which will prevail – often because of ignorance of how different life is in the countryside, rather than ill-intent.

But everything we love about our countryside reminds us that it really is worth fighting for. ●



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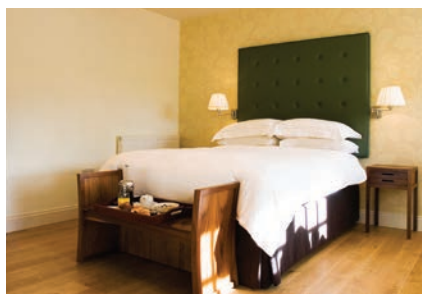
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Here at our **award winning** shooting ground, we are offering a different kind of Christmas Party! With packages available for corporate events and family & friends. All packages come **inclusive of everything** you need to have a fantastic time shooting.

Have a look at our website to explore the different options for **festive fun**.



**NEW** Rizzini, B Round Body EL Anniversary £5,450

**NEW** Blaser F3 Grand Luxe £10,995

**NEW** Beretta Jubilee II £13,500

**S/H** Perazzi MX20 SC3 £7,995

**S/H** Perazzi MX12 SC3 £11,995

**S/H** Browning B25 B2G £10,750

**NEW** Browning B15 Grade B £10,195

**NEW** Beretta 687 EELL Game £12,995

**NEW** Krieghoff Renaissance Scroll £23,065

**NEW** AYA No. 1 Extra Deluxe Matched Pair £46,995

**S/H** AYA No. 1 Deluxe POA

**NEW** Miroku MK60 High Pheasant £2,750



Voted **Best UK Gun Shop** at the Shooting Industry Awards in **2015 & 2016**



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