



Christmas



at *Castletown House*

History of the House

This I believe the only house in Ireland to which the term palace can be applied!

Richard Twiss, 1775

Castletown is Ireland's largest and earliest Palladian style house. Built between 1722 and 1729 for William Conolly, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons and the wealthiest commoner in Ireland, to demonstrate his great wealth. The façade was almost certainly designed by Italian architect, Alessandro Galilei, while Irish architect Edward Lovett Pearce added the wings. The house remained in the hands of the Speakers descendants until 1965 when the house was purchased by a property developer. Fortunately the house was saved in 1967 when, along with 120 acres of the demesne lands, it was purchased by the Hon. Desmond Guinness, founder of the Irish Georgian Society.

The house was opened to the public in the same year and restoration work began, funded by the Irish Georgian Society

and private benefactors. In 1979 care of the house passed to the Castletown Foundation, a charitable trust which was established to own, maintain and, to continue the restoration of the house. In 1994 the house with the exception of the contents, was transferred to State care and it is now managed by the Office of Public Works. The transfer to State ownership has paved the way for a major programme of restoration and conservation work of the house and demesne lands.

Through restoration, conservation, acquisition of parkland and development of visitor facilities, the long term objective is to preserve for future generations one of the most important houses in Ireland and one of significance in terms of European architectural heritage.

CHC at The West Wing

Fittingly located in the original double height kitchen of Castletown House, CHC at the West Wing is the perfect place to relax with friends for coffee and scones, breakfast or all day lunch.

Surrounded by Georgian splendour the menus offer traditional fare. We are presently serving our Winter menu with wonderful dishes like Beef and Guinness pie. Over the Christmas season, traditional Christmas fare will feature as specials on our menu commencing on the 9th of December.

CHC will have delicious Christmas Hampers on sale and last orders is the 21st of December for collection on the 23rd/24th December. Christmas is all about creating traditions, so why not make a family breakfast on Christmas

eve, a group lunch or Christmas party with CHC at the West Wing, Castletown House part of your Christmas traditions.

Larger groups and private parties can be catered for in the Housekeeper's Room, a delightfully atmospheric private dining room. For all reservations please contact: Attracta or Emma for menus or take a look at our website www.clairehanley.ie

CHC at the West Wing will close on December 24th and will re-open when the house opens for tours on 17th March 2009.

Winter opening hours are:
Tuesday-Friday 11am - 4pm
Saturdays and Sundays 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Closed on Mondays.



AT THE WEST WING

Foxford Living at Castletown House

Since 1892 Foxford has been weaving throws and blankets that reflect life then and now, together with an eclectic mix of accessories.

We have now arrived at Castletown House and we invite you to join us in the Foxford experience.

Open hours:

Tuesday to Friday 11am-4pm

Saturday and Sunday 10am-5pm

Closed on Mondays.

FOXFORD

Christmas at Castletown



Come and enjoy the festivities at Castletown on each Sunday in December and avail of some seasonal shopping at Foxford Woollen Mills, meet family and friends for breakfast or lunch in the unique atmosphere of CHC Restaurant at the West Wing.

Festive hampers with an assortment of homemade goodies will be on sale.

Take a tour of Ireland's finest Palladian style house with our friendly and enthusiastic guides and savour Christmas cheer with our festive musical interludes in the great Front Hall.

Children will be delighted to see the squirrel tree post is back where they can post their letters to Santa, this will be located next to the Nativity scene in front of the West Courtyard and Santa will make occasional appearances throughout Sunday afternoons.

We look forward to seeing you at Castletown this Christmas.

Gala Christmas Concert | County Kildare Orchestra

“Performing the greatest music for the widest audience”

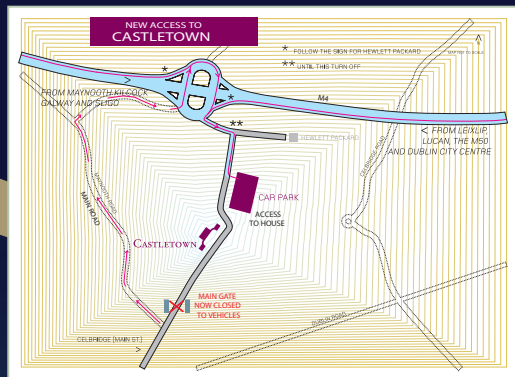
Annual Christmas Concert with special guest soloists Saturday 13th December at 8 p.m. Music by Mozart, Elgar, Haydn and more together with festive music and carols.

The County Kildare Orchestra was founded in February 1998 and is committed to developing and promoting a love of classical music whilst aspiring to an excellence in performance. Its mission statement is to “perform the greatest music to the widest audience”. The Orchestra’s repertoire spans the great musical eras from the Baroque (Bach and Handel), the Classical (Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven) to the Romantics (Sibelius, Rachmaninov, Schumann, Bruch and Elgar). From symphonies and concertos, the Orchestra has also performed operatic highlights from Rossini, Verdi and Mascagni in addition to waltzes

and polkas from Strauss and Lehar. The C.K.O. has played widely throughout Co. Kildare and also in Kerry, Galway, Westmeath and Dublin. Major highlights were two performances at the National Concert Hall and at Islands Music Festival in Karvina in the Czech Republic. The Orchestra also performs regular concerts with German-based concert pianist, Seiko Tsukamoto, a prizewinner at the Dublin International Piano Competition.

The County Kildare Orchestra is proud of its long association with Castletown, stretching back over the last nine years. Due to public demand and enthusiasm for music in this great and important house, the C.K.O.’s performance during Heritage Week initiated the annual Gala Christmas concert.

Castletown House | Celbridge | Co Kildare



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Castletown House is open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays during November and December 10am to 5pm.

Access to the House is by Guided Tour only, for admission fees: see www.castletown.ie
The House is wheelchair accessible.

The house is located 20km from Dublin off M4 Sligo Road, exit R449, Celbridge West/ Leixlip West. Cars access the house from the the new entrance off the motorway.
Pedestrian Access: 67/67a from Pearse Street, Dublin-Celbridge/Maynooth, via main avenue from Celbridge town.

Design: Jurga Rakauskaite
Photography by: Con Brogan