



Newmarket, celebrating 350 years in poetry

27th April 2016 - This year is very important for the town of Newmarket Racecourses as we celebrate the landmark of 350 years of making history; an anniversary which highlights the development of the internationally acclaimed Home of Horseracing since 1666.

The official launch of this very important birthday will take place over the QIPCO Guineas Festival and will include the 350 Opening Ceremony on Saturday, the first day of the two day Festival, from 1pm in the Parade Ring.

Opening with a Spitfire Flypast, concentration will then switch to the Parade Ring where a specially commissioned poem will be recited by Henry Birtles, author of the masterwork as well as an independent sports business innovator in a number of fields.

Alongside his thriving sports media rights company, Henry's poetry skills have proven more than popular in and out of horseracing with recent highlights including; the 2013 "The Harvest" commissioned by Westminster Abbey and read by Damien Lewis as part of the Harvest Festival celebrations, the 2014 World Cup Poem "That Time Again" as seen on BBC Worldwide with contributors Hugh Grant, Elizabeth Hurley, Damien Lewis, Nathaniel Parker and Rishi Persad and the 2014 Royal Ascot poem read by Joanna Lumley and Tom Conti.

Henry Birtles, Managing Director of Henry Birtles Associates (HBA) and poet, said:

'As a diehard fan of the turf, to be asked to write a poem marking the 350th anniversary of Racing at Newmarket by The Jockey Club was both a challenge and a huge honour. The challenge was to condense 350 years of history into two minutes and a few lines. The honour speaks for itself. I hope I got it right.'

We hope you are #partofsomethingsspecial this weekend and join in the festivities around this amazing anniversary at the QIPCO Guineas Festival.

Still need a ticket? Premier Enclosure tickets are now limited and racegoers are urged to book now to avoid disappointment. Ticket prices start from £15 if booked in advance. For more information and to book tickets, please visit www.newmarketracecourses.co.uk or speak to a member of our dedicated sales team on 0844 579 3010.

The poem "Newmarket"

The Merry Monarch called a tune which soon became a masterpiece
And anthems sprung and songs were sung of heroes, villains, victories won

Of heartbreak, scandal, fortunes lost...and deals done
 Of blessed hooves on blessed turf; where thunder isn't thunder
 But a symphony on earth
 And here on Suffolk's vast expanse lies Newmarket, The Citadel; this chosen site
 Where back in 1666 our glorious sport took wing, and shone a light for Horse and Man
 Yes, this is where it all began
 From matches out on Racecourse Side, the message spread like rampant fire
 And fuelled a primal urge to race; this somewhat unassuming place had launched a trend
 A sport, a way of life; a neverend that feeds the dreams of dreamers still
 And reaps the souls of those who thrive
 On noble elegance and power; The Game, the thrill
 Who make their way in hopeful Spring to Headquarters for Guineas week
 To once again find comfort in familiar sights, familiar speak
 The Rowley Mile, The Bushes and The Dip, The Rising Ground
 The Brigadier, the wall of sound, the yesteryear
 As diehards make comparisons with greats of yore
 New Champions will stake their claims to join that pantheon of names
 And we will pause to breathe it in, to feel its pulse once more

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About Henry Birtles

Henry Birtles is MD of Henry Birtles Associates (HBA), the established leader in the promotion of Horse Racing to the sports television industry and the main conduit for racing media rights in the Middle East. We handle the rights to many of the world's most prestigious races including The Breeders' Cup and the Emirates Melbourne Cup.

Federations and broadcasters HBA represents and works with include Eurosport, the Victorian Racing Club (Melbourne Cup), Breeders' Cup Ltd, the Japan Racing Association, Singapore Turf Club, the German Jockey Club, Italian Racing, Dubai Media Incorporated, Abu Dhabi Media, SKY Channel Australia, TVG, South African Racing, the New Zealand Racing Board, IMG and Racing UK.

Birtles also champions the sport in his role as The Racing Poet as well as managing the interests of select members of the world's most prestigious racing syndicate Highclere Racing.

Henry cut his teeth in Sports TV with Sunset + Vine in 2000 where he headed up the international division before leaving in 2006 to set up HBA.

As a Sports Innovator, Henry Birtles conceived and registered **The Advantage** which what has been recognised in the British press as the most viable alternative to one of sport's biggest conundrums: football's Penalty Shoot-out. Presented to senior FIFA executives, it remains under consideration.

Recent Poetry Highlights

2013 Presented to Her Majesty The Queen at **Buckingham Palace** at a Reception of Contemporary Poetry

2013 The Harvest commissioned by **Westminster Abbey** and read by Damien Lewis as part of the Harvest Festival celebrations

2014 **World Cup Poem** 'That Time Again' as seen on BBC Worldwide and with contributors Hugh Grant, Elizabeth Hurley, Damien Lewis, Nathaniel Parker, Rishi Persad

2014 **Royal Ascot** read by Joanna Lumley and Tom Conti

The Derby Commissioned by Epsom and voiced by Brian Blessed, played out across Epsom Downs during the Derby Parade minutes before Dettori recorded his victory on Authorised

Treve Written for Sheikh Joaan al Thani and presented at Goodwood

Suffolk Punch Written for HRH The Princess Royal

Best Mate Commissioned by the Queen's Master of the Horse, Lord Vestey, for his sister-in-law and trainer of Best Mate, Henrietta Knight.

In Years to Come Commissioned by Epsom Racecourse to commemorate Frankie Dettori's Derby victory on Authorised, read with Frankie Dettori at Derby Launch Party

Ouija Board Written for Lord Derby and Ed Dunlop, the poem features in Lord Derby's book on the Earl's great mare

The Tears of O'Sullivan Written in honour of Sir Peter O'Sullivan and recited at a lunch in the Royal Box during the Cheltenham Festival to celebrate the great man's 90th birthday

The Ashes Commissioned by Shane Warne & Elizabeth Hurley for their Charity Fundraising lunch to celebrate the start of the 2013 Ashes Series

The Contender Features in Highclere Racing's 20th Anniversary Book

An Irish Mare (Dawn Run) features in 2013 book 'Literary Cheltenham'

Arkle's Battlefield Commissioned by Cheltenham Racecourse and recorded by Channel 4 Racing for their 2009 Gold Cup Day coverage

The Ascot Bell Commissioned by Ascot Racecourse and recited at a Dinner in the Jockey Club Rooms, Newmarket

Website links www.hbaracing.tv and www.henrybirtles.co.uk or 01666 822769.

About Newmarket Racecourses

Newmarket's two magical racecourses, the Rowley Mile and the Adnams July Course, together form the greatest venue in the East of England. 2016 is truly a year of celebration at the Home of Horseracing as it marks 350 years of making significant history in both the sport of racing as well as English heritage. King Charles II returned to Newmarket 25 years after his last visit following Restoration to the Throne and spearheaded the development of the town, Racecourses and industry into what is affectionately known today as the global headquarters of racing; the Home of Horseracing. Still run to the present day, the Town Plate, a race which by law, passed by King Charles II, must be run "for ever", is still staged on the same three-and-three-quarter mile course on which it was inaugurated on in 2016 (according to official records) three and a half centuries ago and is the one and only time each year that the 'Round Course' is used.

Alongside the exhilarating excitement of world class Flat racing, pulsating music nights, great value family days, award-winning restaurants and exceptional conference & events facilities, Newmarket Racecourses will also be celebrating 350 years of extraordinary royal patronage and defining historic moments through our special commemorative events. For more information, please visit www.newmarketracecourses.co.uk or for

more information around the 350 celebrations please visit www.newmarket350.co.uk and use #weare350 to share your memories.

The Jockey Club runs the largest racecourse group in the UK by turnover (2014: £162.9m), courses (15) including those at Aintree, Cheltenham, Epsom Downs and Newmarket, attendances (2015: 1.95m), total prize money (2015: £43.9m), contribution to prize money (2015: £19.9m) and quality racing (Group and Graded races); more than 3,000 acres of world-class training grounds in Newmarket, Lambourn and Epsom Downs; The National Stud breeding enterprise and education provider; and the charity for racing's people in need, Racing Welfare. Governed by Royal Charter, every penny The Jockey Club makes it puts back into British racing. More information is available at www.thejockeyclub.co.uk.

About QIPCO British Champions Series

The QIPCO British Champions Series is designed to throw the spotlight on Britain's best Flat races and will climax on 15 October 2016 with the richest fixture in British racing history, QIPCO British Champions Day at Ascot.

The Series features 35 Flat races staged at ten of the UK's leading racecourses: Ascot, Doncaster, Epsom Downs, Goodwood, Haydock Park, Newbury, Newmarket's July Course, Newmarket's Rowley Mile, Sandown Park and York.

It encompasses the top races at British racing's key festivals, including the QIPCO Guineas Festival at Newmarket, the Investec Derby Festival at Epsom, Royal Ascot, the Newmarket July Festival, The Qatar Goodwood Festival, the Welcome to Yorkshire Ebor Festival at York and the Ladbrokes St Leger Festival at Doncaster.

The QIPCO British Champions Series comprises five easy-to-follow champion categories - Sprint, Mile, Middle Distance, Long Distance and Fillies & Mares.

For further information please contact:

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