

BILLINGSGATE GOSSIP

THE LONDON FISH AND POULTRY RETAIL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2004



It's a Shaw thing

It really is great to hear that, once again, a Billingsgate porter was the star attraction at this year's Lowestoft Fish



Fayre. With his 'hard hat' and 'gate barra', kippers, crabs, 'addocks' and lovely grub, it's hats of to Gary Shaw and 9,000 visitor agreed.

It's hoped that The Fisherman's Mission will be receiving a cheque in the region of £15,000. Well done Gary.

Our congratulations also to Ronnie Capps and his committee for a great show, even if a few showers affected the attendance.

Competition time



Above: Judge, Ian Macgregor, keeps a watchful eye over one of this year's competitors.

Below: One of the many fascinating displays that kept the crowds enthralled.



The National Federation of Fishmongers Annual Craftsmanship Competition

The National Federation of Fishmongers put on a superb show in conjunction with the Oyster & Seafood Fair at Hay's Galleria, Tooley Street, London from Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th September.

Friday saw the usual stunning displays of fish with demonstrations by Duncan Lucas which created great interest among the hundreds of visitors.

Saturday was a wonderful day for any fish enthusiast, with dozens of people demonstrating their skills, that could surely bring any show to a standstill.

Ken Welch (the National Federation Vice Chairman) showed unbelievable skills in skinning whole fish in a truly Scottish way, using a bone handled kitchen knife, truly amazing and well worth a trip to Edinburgh just to witness.

Martin Boyers, Chief Executive of Grimsby Market, showed how fish filleting takes place dockside.

Working at speed he explained to the watching public how and why the cost of the end product is down to the skill of the handler. Martin even mentioned machine filleting, but also reminded us that skill with a knife must not be forgotten.

David Ridley, an independent fishmonger from Hexham, left his business to show his skills in fishmongering (you may have

heard of the North South divide). David gave a very interesting insight into the different styles of fishmongering from the North East to the South.

We have highlighted just a few people, but to each and every demonstrator, a very sincere thank you for all your efforts.

On to Sunday, and the spectacle of the Craftsman Competition. What can be said about this? With 50 % more entries this year and with 10 competitions, all was set for a great day.

winners

The Competitors were all terrific, the nerves, the keenness and the friendship were great to see. Many had travelled great distances to take part. We have to say, and this is *not* sour grapes, where were all the independent fishmongers and why will you not enter?

Congratulations from The London Fish & Poultry Retail Association to everyone who took part, and hats off to the winners. To all others, please come back and try again next year.

This is The National Federation show, so please read the National Federation newsletter to find out the names of the winners, the sponsors and the many more companies and individuals who really do make this fantastic seafood show possible.

Seafish apprenticeship

We would like to think that you will read, in this edition, the advertisement for the proposed Seafish Training Apprentice Scheme for 2005. Please give this your attention and if you have a suitable candidate then encourage them to apply. This idea has got to be great news for any newcomer to the trade and you must surely also benefit. The London Association has always been keen for just such a scheme, so let's be among the first to apply!

Greater London Seafish - Group Training Association

Dear Colleagues,

More Fishmongering!

Due to strong demand and with funding from the Sea Fish Industry Authority the GTA is delighted to be able to offer more free places for a one day course at Billingsgate. The event has attracted a wide range of individuals who either want to try their hand at a new job or broaden their existing skills. As an example, we have had butchers attend who are currently diversifying into fishmongering; together with individuals establishing their own London seafood business. The day is lead by Charlie Caisey GTA member and LFPRA Secretary and includes an Introduction to Billingsgate and 'hands on' basic fishmongering knife skills. There is also time to discuss specific areas of interest such as purchasing and of course further training available through the GTA. If you fancy signing up for one of the limited remaining free places please get in contact.

Introductions to Fishmonger and Fish Frier Practice

Seafish offer an excellent portfolio of training manuals to support new members of staff while they learn about the trade. The Introduction for Fishmonger Practice (£15) and the Introduction to Fish Friers Practice (£18) are both a great way of helping new recruits learn about the job during their first few weeks. They are written in straightforward plain language with a series of self assessment questions (with answers at the end) to aid understanding. Both of these training aids are available through the GTA, if you would like a browse through please come and see us in Office 28.

The Seafood Awards 2005

The Seafood Awards are a new initiative from Seafish. From catching to processing, marketing to fish and shellfish preparation, The Seafood Awards will reward performance in every sector of the seafood industry. The awards ceremony will take place in front of hundreds of top industry personnel and media in March 2005 at a

prestigious west London hotel, and will be judged by an independent, expert panel of judges representing each industry sector. The entry process is free and straightforward, and you can enter as an individual, business, company or nominate someone else.

Training for Change

With funding from Business Link Training for Change are currently offering £200 towards the cost of developing your staff. There are several key training programmes available but as an example Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) certificates are available in:

Supervising Health & Safety Certificate

3 1/2 days £235 with funding (8,9,15,16 Nov).

Foundation Certificate in Health & Safety & Risk Assessment

2 days £175 with funding (7, 8 Dec).

For more details contact Training for Change on 020 7803 1620.

Food Hygiene Certificates the easy way!

Don't forget the easiest route to this 'must have' Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene is through the Seafish open learning 'Hygiene and Cleaning in the sea fish industry' open learning module. Work through this easy to read workbook in your own time and then take a multiple choice exam. The GTA will even come to your premises so you can sit the exam in your own offices - what could be easier!!

For further information about any of the items above or entries for Seafood Jobfinder, please come along to Office 28 or call 020 7517 3545.

Best wishes,
Adam Whittle.
GTA Development Manager.

Seafood Jobfinder

Salesperson Required

Viviers (UK) Ltd is currently recruiting for a London based salesperson to work at their Billingsgate Shop. To apply please contact Angela on Tel: 023 9275 3621, Fax: 023 9287 4444 or email viviersuk@btconnect.com for further information visit www.viviers-uk.com

Looking for work in the Seafood Industry

Geraint Jones is an experienced fishmonger at Hayens Fisheries in Oxford who is looking for work in Central London, preferably working 7am - 4pm, 5 days a week. His contact details are 3 Mandelbrote drive, Littlemore, Oxford, Oxon OX4 4XG or call 01865 771 286.

e-mail: gsteeljones@aol.co.uk.

Angus Martin is 38 and wants to work in the Seafood Industry. He has been working in sales, marketing and international trade for over 20 years, with four years seafood importing/ exporting

experience working for a Japanese company, based in Tokyo. Please contact Angus at 13 Coningsby Road, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 6QQ or call 07974 322 405.
e-mail: anmanija@btinternet.com.

Ali Syed has recently moved to London from Pakistan and is looking for work in the London Seafood Industry. He has 14 years experience of trading, processing, retailing, distribution, sales and marketing of various fish and shellfish. He holds a MBA General Management Degree from Boston University (USA). Please contact him at 22 Tenterden Road, Dagenham, Essex, RM8 1PX or call 020 8984 9852.

Perry Dean has some experience preparing fish and working at a Fish and Chips shop is looking at getting back into the Seafood trade. Perry is currently working but would be interested in fishmongering opportunities. Please contact him at 39 Surrey Road, Dagenham, Essex, RM10 9ES or call 020 8592 7537.



Eat fish at Eatfish

Entrepreneur Mike Keen, a regular buyer at Billingsgate, has recently established www.eatfish.co.uk to complement his restaurant, deli and events catering businesses. To help develop his staff Mike has made use of the free GTA 'Get into Fishmongering!' course.

"It is a great chance for our chefs to visit Billingsgate first hand and see the fabulous selection of seafood on offer," said Mike. "Although our chefs are preparing seafood, I think it is great to have the chance to see the business from a different angle and while there are many ways to prepare seafood good basic skills are vital."

"Eatfish was born from our passion for sourcing the best foods. In our restaurant, deli and event catering company we are constantly searching for new and better products. One of the most crucial elements in the selection of fish & seafood is freshness and this is why we buy much of our fish from Billingsgate. We offer wholesale fish to the trade and it is through this high level of turnover combined with our deli (in the Old Town,

National Seafood Week 2004

Seafood week (www.seafoodweek.co.uk) was launched on Friday 1 October, kicking off the largest UK celebration to highlight the many benefits of eating seafood. New research, indicated that on average, we eat well below the recommended minimum amount of seafood a week.

Antony Worrall Thompson was chosen to champion the celebration because of his love of seafood and his bid to diffuse the myth that it is difficult to cook. He said "The seafood caught off these shores is among the finest in the world, and it plays a significant part in providing a balanced, healthy diet".

Organised by the Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish), Seafood Week was fronted by the celebrity chef with support from other experts including Rick Stein and Mitchell Tonks.

Operating under the banner of 'Feeling Good with Seafood', the celebration promoted the health benefits of eating seafood - rich in protein, vitamins and minerals - and how quick and easy it is to cook, as well as demonstrating the vast variety available.

Now in its fourth year, the Week was supported by thousands of special events, tastings and promotions that took place throughout the UK, including a £600 million holiday giveaway through fish and chip shops and fishmongers. Those organising events during the Week included fishmongers, fish and chip shops, restaurants, seafood processors and supermarkets throughout the country.

To help alleviate pressure on traditional fish stocks, Seafood Week also encouraged consumers to be more adventurous and try some of the 100 different varieties available in the UK.



- The Eatfish website offers a wide range of products online

Hemel Hempstead) that we can also offer retail fish - pre-portioned, ready to cook or straight from the sea, the choice is yours. Our hands-on approach ensures that you'll get what you want!"

"Our Products section is updated weekly on the website, www.eatfish.co.uk, customers just have to mouse over the product name to get a brief description. If they click on the product they get a range of options on how to buy - from a basic scaled & gutted fish, to pre-portioned fillets of turbot - we even have freshly made sauces and accompaniments. If you can't make it to the shop, we offer a delivery service as well."

Mike can be contacted at 31 The High Street, Old Town High Street, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 3AA. Tel: 01442 268 606 or e-mail: sales@eatfish.co.uk

For enquiries about
The Greater London Seafish
Group Training Association,
please contact Adam Whittle,
Office 28, Billingsgate Market,
London E14 5ST

Tel: 020 7517 3545

Fax: 020 7517 3535

E-mail: info@london-seafish.org.uk

Web: www.london-seafish.org.uk

Gossip in the valleys

It seems that with each issue of The Gossip, our readership reaches more and more people. So here is a piece of cheerful news from a far distant land called Wales!

Nick Greene, a family member of the famous business of Coakley-Greene in Swansea Market, has taken over an existing fishmongers in the famous Mumbles, a prosperous suburb of Swansea City.

The shop has traded for the last 50 years, but has recently been allowed to run down. Nick, with his knowledge and belief in the trade and the potential of the area, decided to leave the family business of Coakley-Greene, Swansea, and take up the challenge. Here we have to say that Nick will never see his twenties again, I have known him for at least 30 years ! Just a great guy who is proud to be a Independent Fishmonger.

The future looks great and Nick's had a terrific response from the public in Mumbles.

"The business has changed dramatically over the last 20 years, the customers have become more sophisticated in their taste.

The range of fish was probably no more than 20 varieties, nowadays it will probably be 60 varieties of fish & shellfish or more " said Nick.

We keep being told that the fishmonger is disappearing from the high streets, our eating habits have changed. Indian and Chinese food have taken over and ousted our traditional national dish of Fish & Chips.

confidence

Nick warms to his theme "Confidence in the future of fish retailing, a good fishmonger who has expertise to offer the consumer a good range of fish & shellfish at a fair price and is well presented will always give the consumer the confidence to buy fresh fish.

Congratulations Nick. The family have been in the business since 1856! Good luck to your family, part-timer sons Richard, Michael, Andrew and wife Janet .

In his spare time!!! Nick has his own boat and catches Lobster, Bass, Dovers, Plaice, Cod and Mackerel.

Why are we happy to relay this story

Yet again we hear depressing figures of the decline in the Independents' fish sales. Isn't it about that time we questioned where these figures actually come from? Do we not continue to only talk of yesteryears? Should we not tell of our successes?

Without getting too political, there has never been a Government for the fish trade. Why not give more support to our associations and federations, to voice the concern, not only of ourselves, but for the future of the whole industry. Or we could find ourselves having to catch all of our fish 25 centimetres long to fit in a box !!!

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Fawsitt Fish would like to thank all their customers and suppliers for their support. With grateful thanks also, to their previous employers.

BILLINGSGATE SEAFOOD SCHOOL

September 2004 by Lyn Gower

The last few months has seen another upsurge in the number of courses and the introduction of lots of new ones.

We are forging stronger links with local schools on the Isle of Dogs in both primary and secondary schools. We have six of the primary schools due to visit us this autumn and we are part way through a ten week After School Cookery Club for teenagers from George Greens School on the Isle of Dogs. The youngsters are learning to do

simple fish preparation like skinning and pinboning and how to cook healthy and tasty meals with fish and shellfish. They also get some instruction in Food Hygiene and will take their Foundation Certificate at the end of term. This new course has been made possible with sponsorship and funding from The Cooks Livery Company.

achievement

Even closer to home, Steve Durden and Spencer Lewis who both work for Koch, have completed and passed their City & Guilds Profile of Achievement Award, Steve achieved a "Merit" grade, (though the work still has to go to City & Guilds for verification). Well done to both of you, a great achievement, we'll have a party when your certificates come through.

By the time this Gossip is printed, we'll have had our second Open Day, so hopefully

you will all be aware of the plans for the new kitchens and classroom which will be built next year. If you didn't get to Open Day – why not? Let me know and I'll show you the plans!

Now, hot off the press are advance details of the new Seafish Scholarships (see below) to be launched early next year. There will be various categories within the "seafood trade" umbrella, and training will take place in one of five venues countrywide. We are proud to have been chosen as one of the training centres for this great new initiative. Seafish are offering training sponsorship for students either from within the industry or for those who want to join it. The training will lead to a nationally recognized Seafish qualification in either fishmongering, catching, processing or frying. For further details contact Lyn, Perle or Adam on 020 7517 3548

seafish scholarships

- Want to train or re-train for a job in the seafood industry?
- Turned on by seafood?
- Keen and enthusiastic?
- Determined to succeed?

**If the answer to all of the above
is YES, then read on...**

Seafish has up to £1,000 available for successful applicants to undertake an agreed programme of training, commencing in January 2005.

APPLY NOW!

For further details and an application form please contact
Seafish Training Adviser Richard Wardell on 01482 327837 or log on to

www.seafish.org

SEAFISH



backpage

Spread your word

Contact us to find out how advertising your company here could reach an estimated 1100 readers* across the UK and overseas.

Thankyou, thankyou...

We are sure that many people will receive thanks from the National Federation of Fishmongers, but the Gossip would like to raise their hats to a few 'Gate' people and others. Firstly, John Sullivan, (Vin Sullivan's, Abergavenny) for his time, hard work, organisation and his promotion for the fish trade. Helen Leftwich, our National Secretary, the lady who worries for all of us! Malcolm Macleod, Superintendent of Billingsgate, and all of his Staff. Tony Lyons for all his help in receiving many packages on behalf of the Federation. Alan Neighbour, Billy Lyons, Michael Desmond, John Stone, Ray Sandys & Staff, Ian Macgregor, 'Micky' Harnett (F. Berndes), Stan Kay and our many sponsors from the Market floor. Charlie Caisey would personally like to thank the many porters and Duncan Lucas & Gary Hooper for their patience with the 'old boy'. A special thank you must go to Charlotte, who had a long hard Saturday and an even longer and harder Sunday, eventually finishing at 9.30 p.m!

Special thanks also go to our our two TV stars! Frank David and Billy Hallet. Two great adverts for Billingsgate porters. Thankyou gents for your great support and we hope that you can still get your porters hats on.

We hope you will accept our apologies if we have missed anyone, but we do give our sincerest thanks to everybody involved in making this show possible.

Your Elected LFPPA Council Members 2004

- Mr. R. SandysChairman
- Mr. K. CondonTreasurer
- Mr. C. Caisey.....Secretary
- Mrs. S. LyonsJoint Secretary
- Mr. E. Saunders
- Mr. D. Shepperdson
- Mr. G. Sage
- Mr. B. Bunkell
- Mr. L. Mash

Artistic Billingsgate

Following on from our recent story of resident artist Virginia Powell, we have discovered another hidden talent at Billingsgate.

This shy, retiring character wishes to remain anonymous, but it appears that his great talent is to brighten the work wear of his fellow workers. His favourite colour is yellow and his canvas ? A pair of boots preferably nailed to the floor . A clue to his identity? He used to be good at football!

Give us your Goss'

Drop us a line and you could be in the next issue of The Gossip! Send your letters, pics or general gossip to: The Gossip, 67 Albany Road, Hornchurch, Essex, RM12 4AE. Or e-mail: gossipnews@macmail.com

Aren't we the lucky ones?

A letter from Charlie Caisey

Are you fit, healthy, wealthy and wise? Did you enjoy your holiday? Did you enjoy your Sunday lunch? Why would I even ask such a question? (I could go on, and I usually do!)

Well, twelve years ago, the fish trade lost a remarkable, well respected man, Ray Cayless. I was privileged to become a very close friend of Ray's. Even in his 81st year, he was still very active in organising and badgering people to improve the lot of the fishmonger, who ever they may have been. He was quietly generous to a fault and many times, to my knowledge, paid expenses for people to attend events, from his own pocket.

I've been involved with many projects through Ray's inspiration, but the fact that I became a committee member of The Fishmongers' and Poulterers' Institution, is one of those that I am most proud of.

Along with other names that you will recognise from Billingsgate, David Butcher OBE, Simon Newnes and Tim Siverthorne are all representing the trade.

And point of this letter? Have you ever heard of this charity? It was founded in 1835 to help people in the fish or poultry trades.

Alms Houses for old folk from Billingsgate, Smithfield and Leadenhall have long since disappeared, but still we try to help. We provide a small pension for people all over the country, we help people to replace items to give a little comfort to their everyday lives and and many more things.

Now, read my first paragraph again, and if you can answer yes , please will you consider making a donation to this charity, or read on...

Here is a wonderful chance to show your support for this worthwhile charity and enjoy a unique experience by attending *The Fishmongers' & Poulterers' Institution Gala Dinner* at Fishmongers Hall, No.1 London Bridge, London EC4. Wednesday March 16 2005. This is a Black Tie event and tickets are priced at £100 each. For information telephone 020 7606 4106.



Still listening?

Just recently, a young lad doing a spell of work experience at Billingsgate was asked if he had enjoyed seeing the way the market operated. "Yes, but what I don't understand is why in the 21st century fish is sold in the middle of the night?". He could not understand why, if you owned a business, you couldn't sell the product when you wanted to. Out of the mouths of babes...

So glad to see notice boards are now in place, but is this the place for recipes? No disrespect to Seafish intended but Billingsgate is a wholesale market.

After taking part and watching various courses in the Billingsgate Seafood School, I have to say it is great to see the keenness shown (but I could be biased). The young ladies seem to have great enthusiasm to learn more about hands-on 'mongering'. I look forward to my fellow 'mongers' dropping their macho image. Let's have more equality!