

BILLINGSGATE GOSSIP

THE LONDON FISH AND POULTRY RETAIL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2002



NFF Craftsman Contest 2002

The National Federation of Fishmongers Craftsmanship Competition will again take place at Hays' Galleria, Tooley Street on Sunday 1st September and will run alongside The Oyster & Seafood Fair, due to run from 30th August until 1st September.

This is the 50th Anniversary Craftsmanship Competition and it is hoped that some new categories will be introduced which will be aimed at all levels.

Tony Dickinson (Chamberlain & Therwell) did us proud last year so why not a team from Billingsgate to give the independent 'mongers a big boost.

It'll be a terrific day as always with trophies and cash prizes up for grabs and a chance to show off your skills.

So get your diaries out and keep a look-out for entry forms. We want a good response from London

Contact any Council member for details and don't let "I didn't know about it!" be your excuse!

Gossip Towers have heard a rumour that this years Craftsmanship Competition will be the subject of a fly on the wall documentary.

If you want the chance to become a star, be there on September 1st.

Billingsgate Barrow's SOLD

By Mick Harrod

Specially commissioned by the Lowestoft Trawl Fish Merchants Association, a replica of a traditional costermongers' barrow has been made by a Lowestoft disabled group. Authentic in every detail, the barrow is an exact copy of those used by porters through the ages in Billingsgate Fish Market.

Representatives of the local group - Special Objectives for the Local Disabled (SOLD), who actually made the barrow and members of the Lowestoft Fish Fayre committee were present at the handing over ceremony at Lowestoft fish market recently. The Lowestoft Fish Fayre is held annually with proceeds going to the RNMDSF. The only costermongers' barrow at last year's fayre was kindly loaned from fish merchants and restaurateurs, Donny and Michael Cole from their Barnby, Suffolk, fish restaurant, The Swan Inn. It needed refurbishment, but served the purpose at the time. Now the SOLD initiative has also rebuilt the Coles' barrow to it's original condition.

tradition

The new costermongers barrow took around six weeks to build and is made from english oak. SOLD manager Stephen James, a carpenter by trade, said "We thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and had to research the making of the original barrows. Making the wheels was the most difficult part and we found that the genuine barrows had ash spokes with elm hubs and oak rims". Traditionally the elm used came from the straightest grained ash pieces that could be found. The steel rims had to be fitted hot in true wheelwrights' tradition. each steel rim was heated to around 500 degrees centigrade! Authenticity



Richard Masterson (left) and Keith Rains of RNMDSF (right) with members of the SOLD group who built the barrow

decreed that the barrow be finished in Oxford Blue, though it did look terrific in its natural oak finish.

Many who remember the old Billingsgate will recall the cries of "Up the hill" as porters struggled with heavily laden barrows up nearby hills. People nearby were expected to give a hand on the cobbled inclines - and they did!

Billingsgate porter, Gary Shaw (pictured below) was at the Lowestoft Fish Fayre on June 22nd, selling fish to the public from the barrow.

"This is fantastic" he said, "the group who made this can be very proud"

Inset above: Richard Masterson of the Lowestoft Trawl Fish Association hands over the barrow to Supt. Keith Rains



Are caption competitions a flash in the pan? See back page.

Greater London Seafish - Group Training Association

Dear Colleagues

BILLINGSGATE SEAFOOD TRAINING SCHOOL

The Greater London GTA has now been given the job of running the Seafood Training School at Billingsgate. The main aim of the School is to promote the awareness of fish among young people, and to increase the knowledge of those already working in the industry.

As a charitable company, the School will run commercial courses to help fund free courses for school children. Obviously children are not only potential future customers for all fish businesses, but could also help alleviate problems with recruitment and retention of staff if they are given the chance to witness what the fish industry does first hand, and hear what career paths are available to them.

Want to help?

For the industry to have a future we need to educate these youngsters now. If you are interested in talking to visiting children, whether you are from the retail, wholesale or frying sectors, or helping in other ways with the School, please contact either myself, Adam or Perle in Office 28.

Additionally if you are not sure what the school does, and would like to find out more, please come in and see us.

Industry Courses

We also aim to run courses for the industry, following on from our popular knife skills courses last year. If there anything you want to come and learn, then please come and tell us!

Computer Courses

Our free computer courses continue at Billingsgate, in the IT Suite in Office 3. New England Seafood and Formans have recently completed tailor-made Excel courses, while Bennetts have several groups of staff embarking on a variety of instructor-led courses.

We are still running our weekly courses for beginners & improvers, with space available on each, plus our Website Design Course on Thursday afternoons.

These courses will only be available until the end of the year, so come and sign up now before it's too late!

Billingsgate Fun Day

Finally, a big congratulations to the Football boys and everyone else that put so much time and effort into organising the Billingsgate Charity Football Match & Fun Day – well done lads!

*Libby Woodhatch
Development Manager*

Scottish Quality Salmon invites you to join The SQS Club

The SQS Club was launched last summer and membership is open exclusively to you, the independent fishmongers, in the UK. The aim of The SQS Club is to offer Marketing and PR support and advice to independent fishmongers - vital business building skills to help you grow your businesses and your sector in today's market.

What are the benefits of SQS Club membership? You will receive regular updates from SQS on issues affecting the Scottish salmon farming industry, a text link to www.scottishsalmon.co.uk and there is a section of the website dedicated exclusively to The SQS Club. You will also be eligible to participate in seasonal promotions - only by being a member of The SQS Club are you entitled to promotional support from SQS; and Marketing and PR factsheets are also available on request covering the topics on which you tell us you want support and advice. All of this FREE OF CHARGE!

Applying to become a member of The SQS Club is easy and details are available from Scottish Quality Salmon. To request yours either

- email info@scottishsalmon.co.uk
- telephone 01738 587000
- write to Scottish Quality Salmon, Durn, Isla Road, PERTH PH2 7HG
- or fax us on 01738 621454

Looking for a good catch

For those looking for an opportunity to get into the fish business two companies are on the scout for new recruits:

Selfridges are looking for a full time Fishmonger to work in their food hall for a competitive salary and benefits package. Knife skills and a passion for product are essential, fish experience would be preferred. Wet your appetite? Then send your application to Ruth Gee, HR, Selfridges, 400 Oxford Street, London W1A 1AB or ruth.gee@selfridges.co.uk.

Trainee Fishmongers Wanted

Walter Purkis & Sons are on the look out for two trainee fishmongers in two of their north London shops, if you would like to find out more contact Walter Purkis, 52 Muswell Hill Broadway, Muswell Hill, London N10 3RT, or call 020 8883 4355, wallypurkis@ukonline.uk.co

First Season Ends On Fun Day

2001/2002 has been a brilliant season all round. Since my last report, Billingsgate reached the junior cup final. The game was played at Barkingside F.C. and the support at the ground was breathtaking – a good 200 merchants and buyers turned out to support the team. We suffered our first defeat 2-0.

Then came the league, we needed to beat the leaders in the second from last game. We didn't manage the win only holding them to a draw. The final score was 0-0

We were the only team in the league to finish the season unbeaten, only suffering one defeat and that was in the final. This

was the first Billingsgate football team for more than 15 years.

I would like to thank the players and the football staff and supporters for giving up their afternoons and time to turn up and play or support the Market. Well done!!

On Sunday 19th May came the Billingsgate Charity Fun Day. The main event was Billingsgate F.C. v Celebrity team. The celebrity's side contest of Bobby Barnes (ex West Ham), Martin Delany (Family Affairs), the world ball skills champions and world champion boxers, Steve Roberts (WBF), Francis Ampolo (IBP) and top amateur, Tony Cesay, to name but a few.



Bobby Barnes (ex West Ham) being chased down by the Billingsgate boys.

We could not have asked for a better day with such attractions as face printing, bouncy castle, ice cream van, club house open all day. In the evening we had a DJ (Paul Lewis from John Koch) and an auction for charities.

First the match: more than 2,000 people turned up for the day.

The match was played with great spirit, the celebrities were 2-0 up at the first half. The match ended 4-4 so to penalties and, guess what? We won 3-1. The evening featured a buffet, DJ and prize raffle, plus auction which included a signed West Ham shirt and signed Arsenal shirt. The auction raised an amazing

£2,000+, the Arsenal shirt alone raised an amazing £1,400. The whole day raised an incredible £4,500 for charities such as Cancer Research and the Deep Sea Fisherman's Association. A big thank you to our organisers, Lee Fawsitt (Leleu & Morris) and Lee Barr (Network), who put so much of their spare time in making the day so successful – it broke up three marriages but that's football for you!

Billingsgate football team will be back next season with a few changes and hopefully some silverware. (Once we get five of our players back from the World Cup!)

Dean Lewis

Fish oils thought to help calm down hyperactive kids

Thanks to Brian Holmes of the Transport and General Workers' Union for bringing an interesting article onto the Gossip's desk. Taken from the Observer and written by Dr John Briffa, the article entitled 'Sink or Swim' tells of recent research that shows fish oils can help calm down hyperactive children.

The brain is a relatively fatty organ, and is especially rich in unsaturated fatty acids. Found in oily fish such as mackerel, trout and salmon, these fats are believed to play a pivotal role in maintaining health in the brain's intricate circuitry. Hyperactive children tend to be short on these fats. A recent test with 41 children taking a fish oil supplemented diet saw over 70% show measurable improvement in their symptoms.

Billingsgate boys run Marathon

Matthew Hart (of S & A Hart) and Mark Weighill (Corporation of London) did Billingsgate proud when they completed the recent London Marathon.

For Matthew this was his third time and no easier than the previous two efforts.

"This year I ran for Childline and completed the 26 miles in 4 hours 27 minutes," explains Matthew. "It was made more difficult as I decided to do the run in fancy dress. The cow costume was to help promote Childline's Cow Parade. The six months training took a lot of time 3-4 days a week, roughly 2 hours a day. However, I did manage to raise £1,600 for charity

which helped sooth the blisters!" Mark also completed the marathon for charity raising over £700 for Cancer Research and Greenwich Hospice.

"It took me over four years to get the chance to take part as so many people want to run.

I finished in 5 hours and 45 minutes after picking up a injury which slowed but didn't stop me!

At half way I felt that I was dying. It was only the kind help from a member of the public who handed me a Mars bar, I could have kissed her. It gave me just the boost I needed."

For enquiries about The Greater London Seafish, Group Training Association, please contact:
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Billingsgate Market,
London
E14 5ST.

Tel: 020 7517 3545
Fax: 020 7517 3535
Mobile: 07968 775272.

E-mail: fishgtaldn@aol.com
Web: www.london-seafish.org.uk



thebackpage

High Flyers

Did you see any of the flyers that were posted on all vehicles in the Market stands? Your Chairman and all his council members would like to thank Frank Davies and all the other cart minders (what would we do without them?) for their help in 'posting'.

Several enquiries have been made and it is hoped that we will perhaps get a few new members.

For £69 you won't find any better value

Dinner Dance 2002

We have been asked for details for the 2002 Dinner Dance. Arrangements are in hand and details will be released in the very near future. Allocation of tickets will be at a premium as some LFPRA members missed out on tickets for last years Dinner Dance. So watch this space and don't miss it!

Abandon ship! NFF members first!

An eventful weekend was had by all at the annual get together of The National Federation of Fishmongers. This year our hosts were Peter Mann and his wife Jeannie. We assembled at The Hilton, Sheffield, on Saturday 4th May and it was good to meet up with old friends from across the country. London had good representation with John and Ann Masters, Ray and Jill Sandys, Gordon and Mo Sage, Ken and Pat Condon and Charlie and Barbara Caisey. On Sunday Peter Mann arranged a coach trip around the Derbyshire Peaks through some beautiful villages and towns, stopping off at Matlock to visit Sherwood House, the old headquarters of the NFF.

After a pleasant hotel lunch, the coach dropped us off at a marina where we joined on a narrow boat for a cruise back to The Hilton which is situated on the quay. Halfway through the cruise, the skipper, who resembled an anorexic Captain Birdseye, was noticed looking nervously at his feet. We then discovered that we were taking on water. Major panic was averted when

Ray Sandys, an experienced sailor, calmed the passengers and helped them to the safety of the towpath, women and children first.

A past president commenting on the boat incident expressed the view that "Perhaps it should have been NFF members first as they are not so easily replaced!"

Half an hour and some furious bilge pumping later, the boat had risen enough for us to rejoin the boat and head back to the hotel to prepare for the Sunday evening buffet and dancing.

On Monday, following a trip to Bakewell and a date with a tart, we made our way home finishing a very enjoyable and extremely memorable weekend.

A big thank you

At the Dinner and Dance on Sunday 5th May The National Federation President and his wife Jeannie included a raffle with all profits going to The Fishmongers' and Poulterers' Institute. A cheque for £294 was warmly welcomed.

Caption competition



Following the recent renovation of the Billingsgate toilets and the success of our Ken Livingstone competition we were handed this photograph and thought that it made an ideal candidate for our 2nd caption competition.

Send your entries to Office 28, Billingsgate Market or e-mail them to: thegossip@mac.com

Recipe for success

The Fishmongers' Company have recently launched a new publication. The Fishmongers' Company Cookbook is a beautifully produced book full of fantastic photographs and wonderful recipes by Stephen Pini, Executive Head Chef of The Fishmongers' Company. A must for all aspiring fish connoisseurs and a collectors item that would grace any coffee table for all to enjoy, browse and enjoy.

The book is available by mail order (£28 inc P&P) from Homeway Limited, Wiltshire, Tel: 01980 622552 or contact Mr Christopher Leftwich.



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