

# The CHRISTMAS GOSSIP

THE LONDON FISH & POULTRY RETAIL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2005

## LFPRA Dinner Dance 2005

Thank you for everyone who attended our Dinner Dance at the Stifford Hotel in October - it was a great success and I trust everyone enjoyed themselves.

Unfortunately our principle guest, The National Federation's President, Ken Welch and his wife Anne were unable to attend as Anne was taken ill while having her hair done the day before they were due to travel to Thurrock. Anne, we were all disappointed not to see you and Ken, but wish you a speedy recovery.

### *new blood*

Ray Sandys welcomed many friends and associates during his speech including Ronny Mumford, Roy and Maureen Jefferies and Ken and Pat Condon. It was lovely to see Sue Lyons looking so well!

On a more serious note, Ray Sandys pointed out the major officers of the London Association (i.e Himself, Chairlie Caisey and Ken Condon) were well passed there sell-by-date and there was an urgent need to recruit some new young blood.

Ray asked if Tony Lyons, Peter Morris and Lee Fawcitt would examine their customer base and see if they could suggest any nominees to the Council.

Ray then thanked Lee and Nicky Fawcitt for organising the evening and the Chef and hotel staff for providing a great meal.

## Prince William visits Billingsgate



• Pictured Left to Right: Chris Leftwich (Chief Inspector of Fishmongers Company), His Royal Highness Prince William and Lyn Gower (Director Billingsgate Seafood School)

On a recent visit to Billingsgate Market, His Royal Highness Prince William was warmly welcomed by everyone. Enjoying immediately the the famous Billingsgate 'banter', His Royal Highness showed great interest in the many species of fish on offer, asking many searching questions of the trade - the availability, shelf-life and turnover of

stock. Talking with many of the Merchants, it was great to see so many happy faces so early in the day! Perhaps trade is not too bad after all.

Moving on, His Royal Highness was shown around The Billingsgate Seafood School where he was shown the excellent training facilities available.

## Market float at the show

Yet again we use the phrase 'passion' for our trade. We at Billingsgate should show our appreciation for the people who took part in this year's Lord Mayor's Show. Joining the float representing the three markets of The City of London, Billingsgate, Smithfield and Spitafields, our team were proud to be there .

The team had all carried out their usual duties, starting in the market as early as 4.15 am and still looking a picture of health at the finish. 'The Gossip' thanks you and we are sure *everyone* will agree with that. God Bless The Lord Mayor.

Pictured right: Michael Desmond, Gary Shaw, Billy Hallett, Steve Martin and Roshan Persad.



THE LONDON FISH & POULTRY RETAIL ASSOCIATION  
WISH ALL OUR READERS  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

# BILLINGSGATE SEAFOOD TRAINING SCHOOL

*Dear Colleagues*

I am off to chop Christmas trees this weekend so feeling decidedly festive. Happy Christmas and the warmest season's greetings to all Gossip readers! For those at the market I hope the seasonal boost in sales is strong and sustained.

We have delivered some great courses over the autumn and the new January to May 2006 dates below look exciting too! To view our full 2006 programme of training check out [www.seafoodtraining.org](http://www.seafoodtraining.org).

## New course dates for 2006

### Free Seafood industry training

Get into Fishmongering! ..... 10 February, 4 April  
Get into Fish Frying! ..... 8 February  
City & Guilds Seafood Retail Certificate ..... 6th & 7th April  
Seafish Scholarships ..... 25th & 26th April

### Quality Assessment of Seafood spring dates

Quality Assessment of Fish ..... 15 February  
Quality Assessment of Shellfish ..... 15 March

### Practical Seafood Preparation & Cookery Dates for 2006

Fish 'n' a dish evening cookery courses

Tuesday 17 Jan ..... Mussels & clams  
Thursday 2nd Feb ..... Trout  
Tuesday 28 Feb ..... Lemon sole  
Tues 14 Mar ..... Smoked Fish  
Tues 4 Apr ..... Sea bass  
Tue 9 May ..... Crab

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### Exclusive Steve Pini's Master class 2006 dates

1st February, 16th March, 25th May  
5th July, 23rd August, 13th September

### Children's fish cookery date with Duncan Lucas

Children's Cookery ..... 18 Feb 2006

## New Billingsgate Seafood Training Schoolknife roll now available

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By popular demand we have put this set together to offer students exactly what they need to develop their knife skills after learning techniques on our training courses.

All the contents are top quality and designed for every day use.



Contents: Heavy duty canvas knife roll with logo, Superior steel, Victorinox steaking and filleting knives, Matfer fish descaler, Venture pin boner

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o reserve your set for collection or arrange payment and delivery please contact us on 020 7517 3548.

Free Knife Skills Video with every course booked online! This video follows our knife skills course and is the perfect reminder to help practice your skills at home

To find out more about any of the above items please either come and see us in our new office 30, or visit our website [www.seafoodtraining.org](http://www.seafoodtraining.org).

Best wishes,

*Adam Whittle*

Development Manager

Billingsgate Seafood Training School

Tel: 020 7517 3545 [www.seafoodtraining.org](http://www.seafoodtraining.org)

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Contact: Dale Morgan, Skills Broker (Associate)

Learning and Skills Council

T: 020 8929 3974

E: [Dale.Morgan@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:Dale.Morgan@lsc.gov.uk)

For enquiries about  
The Billingsgate Seafood Training School  
please contact Adam Whittle,  
Office 30, Billingsgate Market,  
London E14 5ST.

Tel: 020 7517 3545

Fax: 020 7517 3535

E-mail: [newsletter@seafoodtraining.org](mailto:newsletter@seafoodtraining.org)  
Web: [www.seafoodtraining.org](http://www.seafoodtraining.org)

## Seafood Jobfinder

J Bennett (Billingsgate Ltd)

### Sales Personnel

We have two vacancies as follows:

1. Trainee salesperson to work on the market floor.
2. Telephone sales person, some experience of the fish trade required.

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# GOSSIP FROM THE SEAFOODSCHOOL

by Lyn Gower

Another busy term at the school. In November, we passed the 2000 marker for the number of students passing through the school in the year. It's just as well that we have started our re fit as we are bursting at the seams trying to fit in everyone who wants to come on a course

We are now in our new office (30) which is a great improvement as a working environment for us - as well as being much smarter, cleaner and (a bit!) tidier. Office 28 is now a lecture room, again a great improvement - it's even got air conditioning, after all these years of sweltering through the summers. Feel free to come and visit us and have a look at the office and the lecture room. With a bit of luck in the early part of next year, we should start on the kitchens.

So after throwing everything into chaos, I'm also throwing in the towel and going off to South America in February. I can't tell you how much I have enjoyed my time at the school, it has been a great experience. A VERY steep learning curve at the beginning, but everybody in the market has made me so welcome and helped me find my feet. The main thing I will miss is the warmth and kindness I experience every day. Everyone - porters, merchants, maintenance guys, traders, people in the 'caff', police, everyone, I will really miss



• The newly air-conditioned lecture room in Office 28.

you all. Just note though - those of you who haven't returned your work books for the City & Guilds courses - I'll be watching you from afar. You know who you are!

I'm sure that you will be just as welcoming to the new director CJ Jackson. A lot of you will already know her as she has been instructing at the school over the last few years and has been on the market floor with me from time to time. She's going to take the school onwards and upwards, so watch this space.

If anyone is ever in Chile - look me up and give me the latest gossip. My address will be available from the school.

## Seafish Scholarship Success at Billingsgate

During October another Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish) Scholarship event was successfully completed at Billingsgate Seafood Training School. The idea behind the event is to encourage new entrants into the seafood industry and stimulate those already working in the industry to develop



• Left to right: Sarah Phillipson, Sean Jackson, Jamie Stuart McCall, Barry O'Toole, Alessandro Canale, Ishmael Robinson, Steve Whiting

their skills. The six candidates included three people working on new business plans, two young men already working in the business and one recently made redundant looking for an opening into the trade. "We were really impressed with the quality of applicants for the event," said the School's Director Lyn

Gower. "With over twenty applicants it was tough to select the lucky six! The course is focused on a two day residential course held at the Seafood School, but we offer ongoing support and guidance to help individuals fulfill their ambitions and either develop new businesses or reach their career goals."

Now one month after the completion of the Billingsgate residential part of the course, Steve Whiting has now landed a job as a Fish Specialist with Macro (cash & carry supermarkets), Ishmael Robinson has just opened his new fishmongers shop 'Robbie's Fishmongers' in Smethwick, West Midlands.

Meanwhile, Jamie Stuart McCall (fishmonger with Walter Purkis & Son, London) and Sean Jackson (Oysterman with Maldon Oyster) have returned to work with renewed enthusiasm to develop their roles within the respective businesses. The value of the training was clear to Walter Purkis who wrote

to thank all the team immediately Jamie got back to the shop. "Just a quick letter to say thanks to Seafish and all the team at the Billingsgate Seafood Training School for the marvelous Scholarship experience offered to Jamie. We have noticed a difference in him already and I know that he is going to benefit from this experience as he progresses within the company!" Similar feedback came from Richard Emans, owner of Maldon Oysters. "Sean has come back with much more confidence," said Richard. Sarah Phillipson from Herts and Alessandro Canale from Cardiff are both keen to set up their own businesses and the Seafish Scholarship was an ideal opportunity to help 'kick start' their plans. "I would recommend the course to anyone considering getting into the fish trade!" said Sarah.

The next course scheduled for the 25th and 26th of April 2006. "Helping people into the trade really gives me a buzz," said Adam Whittle, development Manager with the Seafood School. "In the future it would be great to offer both an entrance level and management level scholarship programme to cater for the interest this event has attracted."

For further information on this event please call Adam Whittle on 020 7517 3545 or visit [www.seafoodtraining.org](http://www.seafoodtraining.org).



## All passionate out?

Dear Sir,

After reading the latest edition of the Billingsgate Gossip, which is a most excellent publication, I feel that I must help the unfortunate person who penned the article that appeared on the lower half of the front page titled Just where is London on the map?"

Sir, maybe I can be of some assistance, as far as I know London is that very large conurbation encircled within the M25 in the S.E. corner of the British Isles.

It used to have some 200 independent fishmongers approx 25 years ago supplying fresh fish to the native Londoner, alas we are probably down to about 50 or less.

Of this number many have been forced to adapt their businesses to accommodate the changing diverse population of a large city or suffer the consequences if they did not.

So in retrospect the craftsmanship competition is of no interest to these people who work in this section of the retail trade. You wont find many skinned and curled Whiting or Woodcock on their slabs. As for

## and in response...

Dear Sir,

A letter was recently forwarded to me addressed to the excellent 'Billingsgate Gossip'. It was written by Steve Davies who was offering some excuses why so few competitors from London enter the British Fish Craft Championships.

Now, I am not sure what a 'conurbation' is but I understand that Steve is referring to that very large blob on the map that stops Essex from disappearing into the Thames!!

### shifts

It is also the place where dozens of fishmongers converge every September, give up their weekends, and travel hundreds of miles across the length and breadth of the rest of the U.K to pit their not inconsiderable skills against each other at what is becoming a national showcase of fish mongering skills.

These competitors are also well used to 60 hour plus weeks, have the pressures like the rest of us of running our own businesses and some even travel straight

those retailers that enjoy a more traditional trade, then perhaps maybe by Saturday night or Sunday morning they are so 'passioned out' that all they want to do is relax at home with their families or pursue there favourite hobbies, so that by the start of the following week they have enough 'passion' to get them through another 60 hour week.

### preparation

Top marks to the London three for their 'passion' and participation in the competition and maybe one day we might see a section dedicated to the cleaning and preparation of imported exotic species, where the flashing of the chopping knife and the delicate application of the scaler will enthral us all.

So back to the opening line of your article, "where were our competitors from London?" Sir they were there 'The London Three'".

Yours Sincerely

Steve Davies 'Young Cole'

Address supplied

from working night shifts. I am not sure when Steve last came to the Championships but he wouldn't have seen skinned & curled whiting or woodcock there either, he would have seen sea bass, farmed cod, snappers, gurnards, golden trout, swordfish, marlin, tuna, dorades, guinea fowl etc. – and a whole host of preparations from portion cutting to butterfly filleting.

I would like to concur, however, with Steve and congratulate Ted Saunders, Robert Hodson and Mark Bean for their success in this years championships and look forward to seeing them compete in next years event, but wouldn't it be great if the 'passion' of London fishmongers didn't just rest on these three stout pairs of shoulders!!

Yours Faithfully

John Sullivan

The National Federation of Fishmongers (Organiser of the British Fish Craft Championship)

Address supplied

## We're safe and sound

by Barry O'Toole

In the last two weeks of November, 36 merchants and staff at Billingsgate market have all studied for six hours and learnt about bacteria, cross contamination, temperature controls, food safety hazards, and personal hygiene.

The course was laced with videos and general discussions centered around food safety and HACCP controls. The merchants are preparing for the introduction of the new food safety legislation being introduced early in the new year.

The training and recently introduced HACCP awareness documentation will enable the merchants to understandn more fully food hazards and the need for controls.

### hygiene

The course was well recieved and I am happy to report that a 100% pass rate was achieved by the first group, early indications are that the second group have also managed to return a 100% success.

The Foundation food hygiene certificate is an essential qualification for all persons engaged in the fish and food industry in general.

For more information regarding further courses please contact Adam Whittle.

As an added bonus these courses were able to raise £500 in donations to The Great Ormond Street childrens Hospital Christmas appeal and The Saint Joseph's Hospice in Hackney.

Well done to all.

### The successful candidates were:

Micky Jenrick

Joe Jenrick

Antony Laverick

Mark Hamilton

Michael Horley

Marilyn Horley

John Chilvers

Raymond Oliver

Paul Fawsitt

Lee Fawsitt

Lee Barr

Michael Bridger

James Russell

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Andris Slips

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# backpage

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## Stories of yester-year

In the last edition of 'The Gossip' we printed a letter from Tom Maiden, please could we have more like this?

Perhaps some of our readers didn't quite get the point, but for a lot of people it brought distant memories flooding back, like opening, washing out and nailing boxes up to be returned. (This from a highly respected and wealthy monger).

Like washing up Haddock roes in icy, salt water, laying each to drain. (This one talking of 'My old Man').

Or like rain dripping from roof, straightening the bent nails with a opening iron. This was from a old Mac Fisheries man. The manager was too mean to even buy a hammer!

Is there a moral to this story? Fifty years ago it was a hard trade, it still is. So open your door, sell your skills & quality goods, dispose of your polystyrene boxes correctly and keep taking money!

## Can you help?

Leicester Fishmonger, John Heath, is looking for a first class fishmonger to take over the running of his business for at least 3 months while he has hospital treatment for his knee.

Accommodation can be provided and dates & remuneration will be discussed to suit the right applicant.

Visit [www.johnheathseafood.co.uk](http://www.johnheathseafood.co.uk) or telephone 0116 288 2883 for further details

## What does 2006 hold?

Look out for an extra edition of The Gossip that we will be publishing in early 2006. It will contain information that may well affect you so don't miss it!

### Your 2005 LFPRA Council

Mr.. R. Sandys.....	Chairman
Mr.. K. Condon .....	Treasurer
Mr.. C. Caisey.....	Secretary
Mrs. S. Lyons.....	Joint Secretary
Mr.. E. Saunders	
Mr.. D. Shepperdson	
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## Got any goss'

Send your gossip to: The Gossip,  
67 Albany Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 4AE.  
Or e-mail your news to:  
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