



Celebrating the ocean's harvest

by Charlie Caisey

On Sunday 14th October 2012 it was my privilege to build a display of fish for The Harvest Festival Service at the beautiful St-Mary-At-Hill Church at Billingsgate.

I would like to thank all those London Wholesale Merchants who donated to this service. My thanks to Roshan Persad from the Superintendent's office whose help was paramount in making this event possible. Thanks to Bill Lyons for the collection of fish, J. Bennett (Billingsgate) Ltd for the use of their van, Mick's Eels for the storage space, the market Constable who kindly helped to load equipment / fish at 6 am Sunday Morning! and to the Superintendent Mr Malcolm Macleod.

I hope I have included everyone, my sincere thanks. An excellent service was delivered by The Rector Rev'd Flora Windfield to a large congregation, which included the Alderman of the Billingsgate Ward and Billingsgate Ward Club.

Teresita Cutting, Master of the ward Club, read the first lesson and Gary Hooper, The President of The National Federation of



• *The harvest display. Photo courtesy of St Mary at Hill Church*©

Fishmongers, read the second lesson. Director of Music, Robert Smith and the St Mary-at-Hill singers were of their usual high standard. I must not forget the attendance of the historic ex-Porters, dressed as usual in smock and bobbin hats Frankie David and Bill Hallet

always a welcome sight on these occasions.

Unfortunately for the first time in many years the Hill Brothers (East Ham) were unable to assist in the show, as both were unwell. We hope you are both feeling much better now.

Fishmongers & Poulterers Institution

In these difficult and uncertain times it is easy to shut ones eyes to other peoples worries and troubles. Prices are high, fish is in short supply and trade's poor. We all suffer days when nothing is going our way but our glass is half full and we always seem manage to top that glass back up. But give a thought to those people whose glass is half empty with little chance of replenishing it.

As a charity we are unable to make everything right but we are there to at least assist in small ways to make life a little more comfortable. Every case will be taken on its merits and a decision made by the Trustees.

If you know of any case where you think the Institution could help please contact us. The Institution celebrated its 180th Anniversary this year; will you help us to keep going for another 100 years? See you with the collection box soon!

NFF web site

Have you visited the site? The NFF are always looking for suggestions on how to improve the site so let them know your ideas. Would you like your business listed? Would you like to use the site to advertise? Would you pay a small fee? A few of your colleagues already use the Twitter link to show their special offers etc. "Nobody does anything for me" Can we help? www.fishmongers.info



BILLINGSGATE SEAFOOD SCHOOL

Adam's Gossip

Billingsgate Seafood School will be holding its annual Celebration of Sustainable Fish & Shellfish event on Wednesday 21st November, and you can help decide who wins the Billingsgate School Sustainable Fish & Shellfish Award 2012.

Participants vying for the Billingsgate Sustainable Seafood Award 2012 include Norwegian MSC Cod, King Scallops, MSC Herring, British Tilapia, Alaska Salmon and Sea Bass. After reviewing the market place Billingsgate Seafood School has identified all of these as fantastic products worthy of the Award.

Who wins? You decide..... Following short presentations from species champions, including the Seafish Industry Authority, Norwegian MSC certified cod, the Scallop Association, MSC Herring, British Tilapia and Alaska Salmon, amongst others, you have the opportunity to taste all of these over a brunch and lunch and cast your vote for the product you want to win.

The day is very much a celebration of the fantastic work being done by many seafood businesses to deliver sustainable fish and shellfish. Whilst there can only be one overall winner of 'Billingsgate School Sustainable Fish & Shellfish Award', in reality all those taking part are excellent examples of sustainable fish and shellfish.

More than 100 trade professionals will help to decide on the most sustainable seafood, from chefs and buyers, to technical managers and fishmongers, this is a great opportunity to network with industry experts,

take part in Q&A sessions and discover more about sustainability in the fish and seafood market. Following the species presentations, Direct Seafoods will share their experience supplying sustainable products into the London 2012 Olympics.

Cost is £25 per person and doors open at 8am, with the presentation of the Award taking place at 3.15pm to close the day.

Autumn Offers

We have some new evening classes coming up including an exciting chocolate event (YES!! chocolate at Billingsgate) with Mark Demarquette in December. If you book a place on any of the Autumn evenings you will receive a 20% discount. Please quote "Autumn12" when making your booking.

Christmas Pop-up Restaurant

We are now taking bookings for our Pop-up restaurant, a great opportunity to enjoy a delicious fish and shellfish menu at the world-famous Billingsgate Market.

Tuesday 4th - Friday 7th December and Tuesday 11th - Friday 14th December.

Schools Programme

Our nominate a primary school scheme has been very successful. If there is a primary school that you feel would benefit from our Outreach team visiting, please let us know.

For bookings and further information contact Jo on 020 7517 3548 or e-mail: admin@seafoodtraining.org

Crowds flock to Bexhill's first sea angling festival

Over 10,000 people flocked to the West Parade seafront for Bexhill's first ever sea angling festival.

Visitors enjoyed the vast array of seafood on offer, cooking demonstrations, activities and the chance to have professional angling coaching. Experienced anglers were kept busy with the string of fishing matches that took place alongside the festival lawn event.

Over 40 stall-holders offered fish dishes from a range of countries and cultures. Many of them reported having sold out as the event came to a close. Crowds flocked to the Billingsgate seafood cooking demonstrations on the Ashdown Hurrey and Spectrum stand, where eager to learn cooks discovered the secrets of fish filleting and preparation from skilled chefs.

Plenty of people had an arm-wrenching battle with a bonito or sailfish, all from the safety of dry-land, thanks to the innovative SIMFISH simulator which had arrived all the way from France.





Billingsgate Seafood School

Celebrating Sustainable Fish & Shellfish

Billingsgate School Sustainable Fish & Shellfish Award 2012

Wednesday 21st November 2012

Chairman for the event Chris Leftwich, Chief Inspector, Fishmongers' Company.

0800 Doors open and welcome

0830 Introduction

presented by Phil MacMullen, Head of Environment, Sea Fish Industry Authority;

0900 Norwegian MSC certified cod

presented by John Hancock, MD Carisma UK;

0930 King Scallops

presented by Mark Greet MD Falfish, representing the Scallop Association;

1000 MSC Herring

presented by Yasmin Ornsby Hastings Fisherman's Protection Society;

1030 Brunch (first three species served)

1130 British Tilapia,

presented by Lucy Haxton The Fish Company;

12.00 Alaska Salmon

presented by Andrew Brown, Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute;

1230 Sea Bass

presented by Joana Amaral, Operations manager and Kenny Woods, Sales Manager Anglesey Aquaculture;

1300 Supplying the Olympics

presented by Laky Zervudachi, Group Sustainability Director, Direct Seafoods;

1330 Lunch and voting (last 3 species served)

1430 Panel open forum - All presenters

1515 Billingsgate School Sustainable Seafood Award 2012 & Close.

Event address; Billingsgate Market, Trafalgar Way, London, E14 5ST.

***To reserve your place please call 020 7517 3548
or via seafoodtraining.org***



Sea Change in the Scottish Pelagic Industry

The pelagic industry in Scotland was for many years beset by problems of over quota landings. The industry was poorly regulated, badly managed and was in short unsustainable. The recent high profile Court cases arising out of this have had a lot of publicity.

The much more remarkable story however is how far the Scottish pelagic industry has travelled down the sustainability route in such a short space of time.

This sea change has largely been the result of a huge effort made by the Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group (SPSG). This is a unique organisation which represents every pelagic fishing vessel and processing company in Scotland. Its objective, when it was constituted in 2007, was to ensure that the pelagic fishery in Scotland became truly sustainable - thereby restoring its reputation and credibility as well as securing its long term commercial prosperity based on the principles of sustainable development and environmental responsibility.

The principle initiative undertaken was to enter the organisations three herring fisheries and its mackerel fishery into the MSC



programme. All four fisheries have now been certified accounting for a combined tonnage of almost 220,000 tonnes.

While the attainment of MSC certification for four fisheries that were unsustainable as recently as 2005 is a remarkable achievement in itself, the vision of SPSG is to innovate in order to advance beyond best practice. One example has been the fitting of automatic jigging machines on board every pelagic vessel.

inspired

These jigging machines allow skippers to catch a small sample from a pelagic shoal in order to determine the size of fish thereby ensuring that a shoal of small fish is not targeted. Another initiative has been the trialling of escapement panels in pelagic trawls in order to ensure that any small pelagics escape during the fishing operation.

The pelagic industry in Scotland was rather demoralised and cynical during the early part of

this century. There appeared to be no solution to the endemic problem of poor regulation and unsustainable practices. The formation of SPSG was therefore an act of hope and faith that a much better future was possible.

There was much scepticism within the pelagic industry as to whether real change would ever be possible. The achievement of getting all four fisheries certified by the MSC has brought a sense of optimism to our membership of fishing vessels and processing plants. It has also inspired real confidence in the future prospects of the industry.

Having achieved best practice, SPSG wants to go further. We believe that the SPSG experience can be an example to other fisheries. Our example of fish catching and fish processing interests working together on a sustainability agenda, shows that much can be achieved.

So, like so much of the seafood Scotland has to offer, mackerel and herring are sustainable and good for you too— something all your customers should know!

**For further information please visit:
www.scottishpelagicsg.org**

Are you one of yesterday's people?

I see myself as one of these. Often told I talk too much for which I make no apology. It is great to be able to talk to people about Billingsgate Market, the supply of so many species from around our own coast and those from far off countries. About the generosity of the Market, which is second to none and the characters both wholesale and retail and all things fish.

But being associated with retailing of fish now for over sixty years something has always puzzled me. I have always been pro Billingsgate and purchased possibly 95% of my merchandise

for the business I ran until I retired. Why when everyone associated with Billingsgate do we seem to fail to communicate? We are all taking something from the same source, a close-knit family, yet never does it become apparent that we all need one another. Or do we? Perhaps if we did communicate more we could improve. There will never be agreement over the wholesale / retailing to the publi but this is a fact of life and is now a major part of our market.

It is often argued why the retailer buys from the coast and uses the Billingsgate to 'top up'; I

think it is called 'economics' — whatever's best for my business, just like you

Why is it always "have you heard?" rumours instead of proper lines of communication?

Could it not be "we have a new product" or even "We are the best"?

I could go on, as always, but just as a closing paragraph please think a little on this, a customer "I hear you have some excellent —" the reply? "***** off you don't buy off of me. No politics please just communication. Christmas open dates for Market ?????

Charlie Caisey.

Annual Council Report 2012



As this means I am about to complete my first year as Chairman I must begin by paying my respects to my predecessor Ray Sandys. Sadly having taken the role of Chairman from Ray it was to be hoped that Ray, after holding that office for five years, would continue to help and advise me on various matters. Sadly this was not the case as Ray, after a very short illness, passed away. He will be greatly missed by us all.

The year has been quite a challenge, with the many changes taking place. We as a Council were consulted firstly about the "cart minder "

Merchants Association. Sadly yet again many of our members were sorry to see a change to an old and historic practice and goodbye to faces that we had grown accustomed to. We would have liked a quicker update on where we still being charged "Bobbin"!

Change! The wonderful Olympics — a 2am start! — clear the market by 6am but we survived as we always do, but here lie many stories was it good for trade?? Paralympics, back to a 4am start and the old style perhaps we can settle a little now?

But here we go again! "Empty Boxes" I will not

President so London as a strong connection with the National Council.

Yet again The Association will be responsible for the Annual Harvest Festival display for The Billingsgate Market & Ward at The Church of St Mary at Hill on Sunday 14th October 2012.

On this subject should anybody care to get involved with this event they would be very welcome.

We are indebted to Eddie & Les Hill, Roshan Persad (City Office) Bill Hallett & Frankie David (ex Porters), Charlie Caisey who with our the serving Chairman who have been in attendance for many years.

Gary Hooper, President of NFF has been asked to read the Lesson. In anticipation we would like to thank those Merchants of the LFMA who generously donate fish to the Festival, the Superintendents

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scenario. We made strong recommendations as to our point of view, we won some concessions, and now we need to monitor the new system. With this change we were then faced with a new lay-out of the trade van parking! Not a great start, but I listened to our members and made contact to the Superintendent on several occasions to try and sort out the problems. Pleased to say there, as been common sense used and the system as settled a little. At this point I would like to remind our members why we need to maintain the London Retail Fish & Poultry Association —at least we have a voice. Next came the change in the "Porter " system, not really our problem, as this was a problem for the City and the London Fish

dwelt on this yet again a little common sense and all is well. But I will remind our members please be sensible and do not fetch rubbish back.

The National Federation of Fishmongers celebrated their 80th Anniversary with luncheon at Fishmongers Hall on Monday 25th of June. The London Association was pleased to sponsor the champagne reception. This event was very successful, due to much effort from National Federation President and Helen Leftwich. In attendance from the LFPRA were Ken Condon, Pat Condon, Gordon Sage, Mo Sage, Charlie Caisey, Barbara Caisey & Daughter Jacqueline.

The Association has John Purkis and myself on the National Federation Council. Gordon Sage represents Essex and Charlie Caisey is Life Vice

Office and many others who help to make this event possible.

We are still supporters of the Billingsgate Seafood School with C.J. Jackson and Staff doing an excellent job in spreading the word of our skills and product.

Our congratulations to the NFF on yet another excellent Craftsmanship Competition held in Cardiff, great to see that the independent fishmongers were still amongst the prizes. It hoped that 2013 would bring a more settled environment with in the Market .

**REX GOLDSMITH,
PRESIDENT
1ST OCTOBER 2012.**

Improvements to the Market

The market authority is actively looking at ways in which the facilities at the market can be improved. For many years the roof to the market has been leaking quite badly.

One or two merchants have regularly complained to the superintendent about dirty water dripping down on to their stands and occasionally on to their fish. In addition due to lack of storage space there has been a proliferation of refrigerated containers around the market site making the market resemble a sort of shanty town. Both of these issues do nothing to enhance the reputation of the market.

In order to do something about these issues the market superintendent, Malcolm Macleod, and the chief inspector to the Fishmongers' Company, Chris Leftwich, had a meeting with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) to ascertain whether or not a replacement roof and improvements to the storage facilities would be eligible for grant aid.

Following a positive response, which suggested that both projects would be eligible for 50% grant the market authority has conducted a series of meetings with market representatives to progress both initiatives. The proposals on the table are to completely replace the market roof and develop refrigerated storage at the east end of the market hall replacing all the refrigerated containers with a large dedicated facility.

When the roof is replaced, at the same time, a false ceiling will be installed which will hide all the iron roof trusses. This will not only improve the market hygiene but should also improve the lighting to the market hall. The match funding for these projects is predicted to come from the money left in the sinking fund.

Improvements and modernisation of the market is essential if it is to remain a player in the industry. Over the past ten to twenty years the food industry has made giant steps forward and any business operating within the food industry that does not modernise and improve its facilities will slowly lose its market share. It is therefore essential that merchants also take this opportunity to improve their own image and their own hygiene standards.

The market authority with the consent of the LFMA has engaged the Fishmongers' Company inspectors to undertake a hygiene audit of the market. An extensive report on the deficiencies observed has been given

to the superintendent and matters are now in hand to improve the overall hygiene at the market. It is essential that everyone starts to take responsibility for improving the image of the market.

Eel appeal

Visitors to the market have long been fascinated by the eel cabinets operated by Micks Eels. These slithering, slimey creatures are often considered a star attraction and have raised the eyebrows of many distinguished guests, not least of all, Prince William on his visit to the market a few years ago.

However, the number of European eels has sadly been in serious decline now for a considerable number of years and all member countries of the European Union have been required to produce an eel management plan to ensure the survival of these amazing aquatic animals.

Interestingly, no-one has ever witnessed the spawning of the eels in the Sargasso sea, but after spawning, the adults die and the glass(transparent) eels float back to Europe on the currents often taking up to two years to complete the task. All the time, these defenceless creatures are vulnerable to predation by a whole host of different aquatic animals and bird life eagerly waiting to gobble up this delicious treat, and of course fishermen when they finally arrive at the coast. Glass eels have an incredible value if sold to the Far East markets. Having survived those traumas they then metamorphise into elver and start their migration into the rivers and water courses only to discover obstacles such as turbines that prove to be impenetrable barriers and chop them up into tiny pieces.

However, help is now on hand in the guise of the Sustainable Eel Group (SEG). This fairly new organisation made up of scientists, industry, NGO's and others is now working hard to ensure the long term sustainability of the eel. The group has developed standards for the sustainability of eels and has also secured a large grant from the EFF fund in conjunction with the Rivers trust to free up some of the blocked migratory pathways to enable the eels to proceed up and down the rivers. Hopefully the work being undertaken by SEG will ensure that visitors to the market will continue to see eels in the cabinets for many years to come.

Ever think you'd go back to school?

Have you ever given a thought to the Billingsgate Seafood School? There are several people now running their own businesses, using the market, many more countrywide and who still see a future as independent mongers who have benefited by making use of the many opportunities in various courses available. Could your staff benefit by a visit or a course? Can you think of anyway the

School could help you? A cookery course, a course for your customers (yes, you pay!) or perhaps a get together of fellow fishmongers. You could sponsor a local school at very little or no cost. The Seafood School is a charity and is always looking for ways to find income. After all the School is there for all of us to benefit from. Read Adam's school news on the City & Guilds Certificate, a great opportunity for

you or a staff member that costs nothing. Likewise 'Get into Fishmongering' Is this a trade for you? Hear it from an 'old' fishmonger not from a book! Use a knife for a few hours on simple skills, get ideas for what you need then read the books and make up your mind as to what course you wish to take. You have nothing to lose. For more information visit: www.seafoodtraining.org

NORTH O' THE BORDER

By Ken Watmough



What is it they say about new brooms?

Is it that they sweep clean, or something like that? Well maybe that's what Mr Owen Paterson has promised. Who's Owen Paterson I hear you ask!

Owen Paterson is a product of David Cameron's cabinet re-shuffle last month, and is the new UK Environment Secretary and he has pledged in a speech he made on 8th October to fight to bring crucial decisions over the agricultural and fishing sectors back from Brussels and to be "closer to home". He has given his backing to "radical reform" of EU farming and fisheries rules and raised concerns about the impact of wind farms on rural communities.

He is well known to be sceptical of wind farm schemes, and he hinted that he would lobby for cuts to subsidies, saying the link between renewables and communities must be "appropriate, sustainable and acceptable". In his speech he also warned that some renewable energy developments were "upsetting the delicate balance of interests" which underpinned life in rural areas. Which I think is the case - certainly in some rural areas of Scotland.

It's not all support for his "gong ho" approach, as fishing and farming leaders throughout the UK and certainly in Scotland have expressed concerns that the UK's chief negotiator on reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy had been changed at a key moment in the talks, after Mr Paterson had replaced Carol Spelman in the post.

Mr Paterson went on to say in his speech: "We must radically reform Europe's outdated and monolithic agricultural policy, one size does not fit all".

Also he said: "We must radically reform Europe's fisheries policy, which is a biological,

environmental, economic and social disaster"

After such an introduction to his new post, and making the statement he has, I think we should watch this space, and see if Mr Paterson has enough bristles on his new broom to do what he says he is going to do!!! Hey ho!!

Many of you will remember Jimmy Buchan one of Scotland's best known skippers when he featured in BBC's Trawlermen series, and also his hard working crew on his trawler AMITY II.

Much of the dialogue had to be sub-titled as the crew were constantly speaking very fast and in the local dialect, known as "The Doric". I must confess this is often how my friend Sandy Law and I speak when we're on our home turf, or if we don't want outsiders to know what we're saying!!

assessment

Anyway, Jimmy Buchan's vessel recently underwent a major refit, and as crew safety has always been a top priority for the Peterhead skipper, he decided to participate in a project being run through the Scottish Fishermen's Federation new onboard support scheme.

This scheme is aimed at playing an important role in helping to prevent accidents at sea. To accomplish, this safety officer Derek Cardno from the SFF was contacted about participating in the scheme following the vessel's refit.

A fishing trip by the AMITY II allowed the crew to make an assessment of the vessel's operational performance which was then followed by a briefing session where Mr Cardno guided the crew through the online system.

Jimmy Buchan said: "This scheme is exactly what I needed and having someone from SFF guiding the crew through the discussions



and recording their thoughts was priceless. I particularly like the idea that I will receive a prompt when any of my life saving appliances are due for renewal - for me that is something less to worry about"

It's always nice to know that there are schemes in place to reduce the risk to our fishermen, for it's only when there's a loss of a fishing vessel at sea that we realise the true cost of the fish on our dinner plate!!

Now for something different:

A famous Morayshire dram has been handed the Guinness World Record for "the most expensive whisky sold at auction".

The Macallan 64 year old in a Lalique crystal decanter sold for £291,125 in aid of 'Charity: Water' (www.charitywater.org/) an organisation that provides access to clean, safe drinking water to people in developing nations. The contents are the oldest and rarest Macallan bottled by the Speyside distillery.

I would imagine this whisky would be out of the range of even our richest Billingsgate merchants. Hey Ho!!



backpage

iGossip

Many thanks for those people that responded to our request for your e-mail addresses to subscribe to the iGossip, there are still a good number of mail subscribers still to supply us with a current e-mail address. The offer still stands and it only takes a few seconds. Subscribe to: charliecaisey@gmx.com ...easy!

Likewise, which made us feel quite humble, an old member, who over the years has given tremendous help in putting together the Craft competition when it was held around various locations, told us he did not have a computer. He sent the postage for the next four issues! A true gentleman of the trade.

Of course, we are aware that there will always be readers who have no internet access or a computer and we will of course continue to send them a printed Gossip in the future. If you are feeling benevolent, a little support in the shape of an advertisement would be most welcome. Our rates are very reasonable.

Diet from the Med.

Places are still available for "The Mediterranean Diet Revisited - Getting to the heart of the fats and Omega 3 debate: what should go on your plate?"

Friday 2nd November 2012 at Fishmongers' Hall. A one-day conference, hosted by The Fishmongers' Company in association with Heart Research UK, with support from Seafish. To find out more please visit <http://tinyurl.com/MedDietConference>

To book your place please visit <http://meddietrevisited.eventbrite.co.uk>

Stories from the new era...

The Gossip would like to feature your stories on the 'New Era' of Billingsgate Market. Don't sit and moan let us know your views. Preferably positives. Don't be shy let's have a few success stories.

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Obituary

Ewan Hilleary

It is with much regret that we have to report the passing of Ewan Hilleary. For many of you reading this obituary the name will not mean very much as he retired from most of his seafood businesses back in 1983. However, prior to that he was a leading light of the industry and head of a fishing empire with 23 company directorships or secretary appointments.

The senior company in his empire, was the Minch Shipping and Trading Company Ltd. Those older people who traded at the old Billingsgate market and for that matter for a few years at the new Billingsgate market will fondly remember Minch's. In fact one of the leading merchants at Billingsgate, Les Steadman of Chamberlain and Thelwell managed the operation for him at the old market. The group at one stage owned a whole host of companies including Cecil and Co and Knights of Mayfair, he also had interests in lobsters from Benbecula and other fishery products from Portree Fisheries Ltd on the Isle of Skye.

Latterly for a few years he was also a Director of New England Seafoods International Ltd. Those people who worked for him at various times still fondly remember this grand rather well-spoken gentleman travelling between his various businesses not in some large limousine but on his little Vespa scooter. He was made a liveryman of the Fishmongers' Company in 1983 in recognition for his services to the industry.

Sadly he suffered a stroke about a year ago which left him badly incapacitated. He passed away in October.

Your LFPRA Council 2012

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