

# BILLINGSGATEGOSSIP

THE LONDON FISH & POULTRY RETAILERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

JULY 2016



## Hello to the new President...

The LFPRA would like to congratulate Andrew Kenny on becoming the new President of the National Federation of Fishmongers.

Andrew has been in the fish business for many years and runs the famous family establishment, Cross of York, in The Shambles.

Like his father John, Andrew is a fantastic advocate for the fish trade, having an interest in the complete seafood industry. He has a great devotion towards the independent retail fishmonger and serves on many councils with a passion for apprenticeships and training opportunities.

Andrew recently hosted a social weekend which was enjoyed by many in his home town of York.

Well done Andrew and keep up the good work!



• Andrew Kenny, left, pictured with Vice President Giles Shaw

## Notes from the chair

With many rumoured observations around the market as to when and where the move of Billingsgate Market will happen, it was quite interesting to hear that it will possibly be five to ten years before such a move will happen. Apparently there are many problems to be considered; Acts of Parliament for instance, so I think we should all take the many stories circulating with a pinch of salt.

Having said that, I think we need to keep the London Fish and Poultry Retailers' Association as strong as we possibly can so please give us your support – join us on the Council, attend a meeting, give us your views and suggestions.

I believe that, come the move of the Market, as loyal everyday buyers we will be duly consulted.

Rex



## ...and goodbye to the Chief Inspector

After 31 years as the Chief inspector to the Fishmongers Company, Chris Leftwich has retired. During his time at the market he saw many changes with the variety of fish coming in from all over the world and the modernisation of the seafood industry.

Chris spent two years raising funds in the late 1990s and established the Billingsgate Seafood Training School which opened its doors in 2000. The school has gone from strength to strength and Chris is still actively involved

as a trustee. During his years in the industry Chris conducted overseas consultancy work to countries including India, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania. He was voted the Inspector of the Biennium by the International Association of Fish Inspectors for his work in raising standards.

Chris recently received the Fishmongers' Medal from The Princess Royal at Buckingham Palace for his work with City and Guilds.

Chris has set up a small consultancy company to enable him to keep his hand in and also to

pass on his knowledge and experience.

The merchants and the City hosted a reception in the committee room to mark his retirement where Chris was presented with an inscribed Royal Doulton figurine of a cricketer. He was particularly touched that the merchants had given this some thought and his wife was relieved that it was not another fishy gift.

The Fishmongers' Company has marked his retirement by making Chris a liveryman of the Fishmongers Company.

ENTRY NOW OPEN - The British Fish Craft Championships® 2016 - Visit [www.fishmongers.info](http://www.fishmongers.info) for details

# Looking to a bright future

by CJ Jackson

The Seafood School has had a very busy June and we have lots of projects scheduled for the next few months. We have been exploring new avenues for funding and, as a result, we have the following plans to take us forward.

Fishmongers' Company have donated funds to enable us to replace all of the hobs and ovens in the kitchen and Le Creuset have kindly donated new induction friendly saucepans to work with the new hobs.

The Fishmongers' Company have also given us funds to install audio visual screens in the

kitchen and skills room which will enable our guests to see preparation and cooking much more easily.

The Rank Foundation have enabled us to replace the work surfaces and we plan to do more refurbishment over the coming weeks.

We of course continue to deliver our many courses across three arms of activity. Our industry programme is particularly active and is open to chefs and catering companies that want to learn more about seafood, sustainability and cutting techniques in particular.

We have also received further funding from Seafish - who are enabling us to invite catering colleges from around the UK to visit us

at the market over the coming months.

Additionally, we have secured funding that will enable us to get out and about to visit schools and colleges around the UK.

Our City & Guilds programme is also in full flight and we delivered one of these in June and have two more planned for July and October.

Over the summer we are going on a road show trip to a number of food and seafood festivals around the South East and we are hoping to tempt some foodies to join our food lovers programme on the back of this.

We also have some Sustain events and Get into Fishmongering courses. Don't forget that any one from the market is entitled to a 50% discount on all our courses.

**For more information contact Office 30, Billingsgate Market, Trafalgar Way, London, E14 5ST  
Tel: 020 7517 3548 For a full list of our courses and to book online visit: [www.seafoodtraining.org](http://www.seafoodtraining.org)**

## MARKET ROUND-UP

### National Federation of Fishmongers

The NFF recently had a very successful social weekend in York. Newly elected president Andrew Kenny, organised a fascinating bus tour of York followed by a walking tour which finished with a delicious Italian lunch just off the world famous Shambles.

The President's banquet took place at the Marriott hotel overlooking the York racetrack and guests of honour were the new chief executive of Seafish, Marcus Coleman and his wife.

An amusing after dinner speech was given by Alan Tandy, who also comperes the annual Craft competition.

### Shellfish Association of Great Britain

The annual conference of the Shellfish Association of Great Britain (SAGB) took place in May at Fishmongers' Hall. The key note speeches were given by Mr



by Chris Leftwich

Ian Duncan MEP who serves on the EU Pech committee and Mr George Eustice MP, the Fisheries Minister. Both delivered scathing attacks on the newly reformed Common Fisheries Policy and the ill thought out Landing Obligations.

Mr Duncan in particular was not very impressed with this requirement which would lead to choke species which would prevent the Scottish fleet from catching fish such as cod and haddock, the stocks of which were quite healthy.

The annual Drummond lecture was delivered by Mike Berthet who has recently retired from M & J Seafoods.

Other speakers discussed a wide range of topics from certification through to the dangers of microplastics in the aquatic environment.

David Jarrad the Director of SAGB has been working quite hard over the past year with Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and the Chinese

to reintroduce the export of live brown crabs to China following a ban that the Chinese introduced 18 months ago due to high levels of cadmium in the brown meat. The ban was jeopardising a trade that was worth around £40million per annum for UK exporters.

Following a visit to China and a reciprocal visit to the UK by Chinese officials, SAGB have finally encouraged the Chinese to lift the ban.

However, there are caveats. SAGB are co-ordinating all the results from the testing of crabs from the various catching areas around the UK.

Anyone wishing to export crabs must be approved by SAGB as the costs, which must be shared, are relatively high

For further information or to register with the SAGB please contact David Jarrad at the following email address: [david@shellfish.org.uk](mailto:david@shellfish.org.uk) or visit [www.shellfish.org.uk](http://www.shellfish.org.uk)

## NORTH O' THE BORDER

by Ken Watmough



# Brussels with your fish?

As I look around my garden and see how well it's beginning to look after some back-breaking work, and of course my constant fight to get rid of the most of the ever persistent weeds, I can now take a little time off to enjoy a cool refreshing drink, usually a house measure G&T: just lovely. I hear you asking "what's this guy on?"

Well, let me tell you. Apart from getting the garden in order, at this time of year I also look forward to the seasonal arrival of lovely fresh herring, those glistening "silver darlings", and you know, if I've got my garden planning right I should be able to dig up some early new tatties (usually Charlottes), to go with my fresh herring.

In my household here in Aberdeen, and in so many other Scottish homes, the most favourite way to prepare the fish, is to coat the herring fillets in oatmeal and then pan fry to crisp the coating, then serve with the home grown tatties and bread and butter: it's heaven on a plate here.

Billingsgate will no doubt get the Fraserburgh herring trucks soon. Hey ho!!

I suppose we all have our own image of what a landlubber looks like, and I think that I must be the classic example. Let me explain why. I would not want to be a fisherman on a fishing boat, the main reason is that it's a very dangerous job, the very thought creates a fear in me. Mind you I do like being near the sea, and of course living in Aberdeen you're never far from the sea, in my case I'm only about ten minutes away from the coast which is fine for me to see the sea from the dry land.

I mention this to highlight the dangers that face our white fish UK fishermen, and as if they didn't have enough problems whilst at sea, there's a new problem which has come out of Brussels.

I think the problem started when Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall started his campaign on the amount of fish being discarded by UK fishermen. And of course he became the bosom pal of Maria Damanaki the then EU Fisheries Minister, and from there came the new EU law on discards, referred to as the 'landing obligation'.

This new law means that catchers are

obliged to land at least 95% of all the fish they catch, and in the Scottish mixed white fish fishery not all of the fish being caught have a market value at auction, either because of size or species. Whatever is caught must be landed and the unwanted species quickly choke the quota limits. Many of the Scottish fleet consider the system unworkable.

I don't know if they have come up with the answer as to who pays for the unsold fish but in the past there was an agreed withdrawal price which would be paid to the catcher, and in Aberdeen the unsold fish then went to the local fish meal factory to be made into fertiliser or pet food.

Also, it is still unclear as to how the ban is supposed to be policed. On board observers or CCTV cameras could become mandatory, and raises the question of who would pay for them.

No doubt someone from Brussels may have the answer, I wonder.

By the time you read this I'm sure that the EU Referendum will be well and truly over, and whatever the result, one thing is sure. All the canvassing will be over too. Thank goodness.

## The Fish Harvest Festival Service

After more than thirty years of my involvement in this annual event, which I have to say I have really enjoyed, I have decided to stand down. I have contacted many people who have supported me on so many occasions, but after all these years there are probably many more people who have helped that I should also thank. A sincere thank you to everyone.

Of course, this would not have been possible without the generous donations of fish from those members of The London Fish Merchants Association (LFMA) who give their fine produce annually to this event.

I first became involved through the late Ray Cayless, a long-standing supporter of the fish trade, The National Federation of Fishmongers and The London Fish and Poultry Retailers'

Association. At that time, the Hill brothers, Eddy & Les, of W.Hill, East Ham, were great with their almost continued help. The late Ray Sandys (Sandys of Twickenham) was yet another great supporter and John Masters (Peters of Richmond) was another. We could always rely on John to remember the important things like parsley, buckets and brooms!

I must mention here that an important part of the team was always the traditional Billingsgate Porter, dressed in their whites and 'bobbin' hats. They were always a great favourite of the viewing congregation. Thank you then to the porters; Don Ruth, Billy Hallett, Frankie David amongst others.

All of the past Chairmen of LFPRA including 'Sid' Mash, Steve Davies, Ted Saunders, Dave

Shepperdson and Gordon Sage would attend the service along with many members of the trade and market.

I do hope that this unique annual event will carry on and that a small team could give just one half day with the help of LFMA. I understand that the origin of this service was from the Old Billingsgate Market and there was great competition with the market wholesalers as to who could provide the centrepiece. Perhaps we could see a revival of this? Long may this historic spectacle continue.

I will still be willing to give advice.

*Charlie Casiey*

**The Harvest Festival Service will be held on October 9, 2016 at St Mary at Hill.**



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## OBITUARIES

### Peter Stagg

May 1953 - May 2016

Peter Stagg, Chairman and founder of Le Lien and owner of Fawsitt Fish was very proud to have involvement with Billingsgate. He recognised that he wasn't a 'market man', but thoroughly enjoyed spending time with the Fawsitt team and getting to the market whenever he could. He was hugely respectful of those who were at the market day in and day out.

He left school at 16 with little interest in academic subjects, but his ability to charm and talk opened up many doors for him and his first job was in the City.

He ended up stepping into the seafood world as editor of Intra Fish. He founded Le Lien around 15 years ago. His business partner, Chris Driver, joined him when this was established and it is he that will take Le Lien on to the next level.

He had many strings to his bow. He was a hugely valued trustee of the Seafood School and became CJ Jackson's business mentor and HR support. He gave a lot of his time for free for what he would term 'the greater good' and he was never short of advice, but always finished by saying 'I don't have to be right!' (he was 75% of the time).

He was also valued at Seafish, where he would sit on many panels and as a levy payer, was always challenging decisions and was never at a loss to put his thoughts and beliefs forward. His sincerity and straight talk made him a challenge, but he was also hugely liked by many.

He had his share in a tuna business in Sri Lanka and worked tirelessly at Government level to support the people who relied on the fishing industry for a livelihood. He was very relieved to see the 'red card', imposed by the EU on Sri Lanka, lifted in April - just

a couple of weeks before he passed away.

Never a boastful man, he kept his involvement with Fishmongers' Company very quiet, but he was delighted to become a member of the livery in May 2015. It was a highlight of his involvement in the industry. He was very disappointed not to have been able to make more of this.

He kept his private life very separate from work, but he had a great number of very close friends from his school years with whom he enjoyed all sport - although he was not known for his particular skill in this area. He had nicknames for each and every one - the one thing that spilled over into his work life.

Peter fought his cancer with an incredible positivity and his sense of humour and smile enamoured him to those he came into contact with, especially all the medical staff he met after his diagnosis.

All those around him were deeply moved to see him smile through the whole ordeal saying 'onward and upward' or 'it is what it is'.

He knew he wouldn't win the fight but he lost it sooner than he had hoped on 7th May 2016 and sadly didn't quite get to the bottom of his 'to do' list.

Peter leaves a widow, Sharon, and two adult children by his first marriage, Danielle and Josh. He was a very loved man and will be greatly missed. Peter said he wanted everyone to remember particularly the happy, laughing times we all had with him. **CJ Jackson**

### David Briggs

It is with great sadness that we have to report that David Briggs has recently passed away after a short illness. David had worked at the market all his working life starting at Minch's and finally ending up at Leleu and Morris. Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this sad time.



I wonder just how many people are aware of The Fishmonger's & Poulterers' Institution? I ask this question having just attended our 180th Annual General Meeting.

We are a charity that provides pensions, grants and other relief. The Institute is there to help members engaged in the fish and poultry trades or their dependents, widows or children.

All applications for assistance are considered by Honorary Officers of Trustees at our meetings which take place three times a year, or by direct communication between the Officers.

As a charity we are always grateful for donations and this will enable us to assist those people who are not as fortunate as others.

**Visit our web site for further details at: [www.fpicharity.org.uk](http://www.fpicharity.org.uk)**

*Tim Silverthorne - Chairman*

### Your LFPRA Council 2015

Chairman	Mr. Rex. Goldsmith
Vice Chairman	Mr. John Purkis
Treasurer	Mr. Steve Davies
Secretary	Mr. C. Caisey MBE
Mr. G. Sage	
Mr. E. Saunders	
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Pauline Invaldi	

### Contact the Gossip

We hope you've enjoyed this edition of The Gossip and welcome your views and input. Send your gossip, stories and photos to: *The Gossip, 67 Albany Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 4AE.*

Or e-mail your news and views to: [newsletter@seafoodtraining.org](mailto:newsletter@seafoodtraining.org)