



What's Cooking

NEWSLETTER of the Worshipful Company of Cooks of London
Edited by Renter Warden, Graham Craddock

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The Master at Mid-Term

The Master strengthens The Food Company's links whilst cooking skills at all levels are a revelation.

It has been an honour and privilege for me to represent the Cooks' Company during the last 6 months. My diary has been extremely full for much of this time, and I admire my three predecessors for having done their full time jobs in addition to being the Master Cook. I have accepted as many invitations as I have been able to attend, and am pleased that my waistline has not yet suffered too much!

I will just mention here two aspects of my experience so far that I have found especially rewarding. Firstly I have been privileged to meet a great number people from diverse backgrounds in a short space of time. Being Master opens various avenues and this gives a great opportunity to project what the Company does, and also to see where the Company can use its resources to help promote cookery, charitable giving and working with fellow Livery Companies for common causes. For example, earlier this year the Cooks' hosted a meeting with the Masters and Clerks of the other six "Food Companies". We already work together on the very successful City Food Lecture, and indeed in 2008, the seven "Food Companies" will be the main sponsor for the first time. We explored other opportunities for the potential to harness our common set of interests, such as in training and education. In June we met again as a group at the Billingsgate Seafood Training School, hosted by the Fishmongers' Company, and discussed several aspects of food training for the future needs of a growing and changing London.

Through such contacts and discussions we may be able to develop strength through size that we could not achieve on our own. Meeting people can also be great fun in its consequences, and in a separate article I describe our visit to Zurich which arose from one such chance encounter.

A second aspect of the work of the Cooks' I have closely experienced is its support of charity and the skill of cooking. I visited the Broadway Centre in Shepherd's Bush where homeless people are given the chance to learn to look after



The Master flanked by Past Masters of Zunft Fluntern in Zurich.

themselves, including learning how to cook. With Mistress Cook, I visited Treloars, where our support to the Mayoral Charity achieves such remarkable educational goals with some of the most disadvantaged school children in the country.

The support of cooking skills has also been a revelation to me. Catering training is part of the curriculum at my local Suffolk College, and I have presented prizes twice as part of their Junior Chefs Academy programme. With chef judges from the Ritz Hotel and Milsoms at the last event, such was the skill of the sixteen year old winner; they were both vying to attract him as an apprentice at their respective restaurants!

I also went to Stratford upon Avon to view the final selection day of five for the young cook entrant to represent Great Britain at World Skills in Japan in November. This event is held every 2 years as a competition for excellence in a range of 50 crafts, and it will come to London in 2011. The Cooks' Company has already supported UK Skills for several years, and working with those Companies supporting various other skills— such as the Innholders and Masons — we will hear more of this event as 2011 draws closer.

I am proud of what the Company does in support of cooking and we should all feel confident for the future as we enhance and develop our important role in supporting cooking as both skill and charity. I ask members of the Company to give their personal support, and the Cooks Charity brochure first sent last year will be sent to you again this year for continued building of resources to help fund various causes.

The Master, Peter Messent



Bryn Williams with the Master and Late Master

Charity Cook cooks for Cooks and cooks up even more Charity...

Training For Life Charity Dinner

Last November, a number of the Cooks attended a charity dinner on behalf of Training for Life. At the event a successful bid was made on behalf of the Company for a dinner cooked by Bryn Williams the Head Chef at Odettes in Primrose Hill. Little did Bryn know at that time what he was letting himself in for, not a select dinner for 4, but 64 from the Company of Cooks. He very kindly agreed and the meal was organised in conjunction with the staff and students of Westminster Kingsway College. This was finally held on 23rd April 2007.

The menu –

*Pressed Chicken and Hazelnut Terrine, Chicken Liver
Parfait and Celeriac*

Pan fried Red Mullet with Baby Squid and Garlic

*Roast Rack of Lamb and Crispy Shoulder, Olive Oil
Potato Puree*

*Iced Strawberry Mousse and Strawberry Jam
Doughnuts*

The menu was a great success – particularly delicious was the crispy shoulder of lamb and the iced mousse and miniature doughnuts. All was prepared and served by the enthusiastic students under Bryn Williams's supervision. This was a great opportunity for the students to work with one of Britain's finest Chefs and they obviously enjoyed it.

Bryn Williams has recently come to fame as one of the Chefs cooking for the Queen's 80th Birthday. He also got to the finals of the Great British Menu where sadly his dessert, iced strawberry mousse with poached strawberries and strawberry jam doughnuts (yes, the same we were served at the dinner!) was narrowly beaten by Mark Hix. Knowing how delicious Bryn's dessert was, one can only envy the arduous task the judges had to endure to find the winner!

Bryn, who spoke after the meal, thanked the students of Westminster Kingsway for their help in producing our superb dinner and went on to say how important it is to develop a passion for food amongst young people entering the business. We really appreciated the time and effort that Bryn had given to the event providing us with an excellent evening enjoyed by all.

Mary Craddock

Training for Life is one of the charities that the Worshipful Company of Cooks support. Some of the work they do is featured in the article on page 12.



The team at Westminster Kingsway take a deserved bow

The Future's Bright the Future's Organic!

A View of The City Food Lecture January 2007

This event is now an established feature of both the City of London calendar and the food industry. The lecture is promoted by the seven food related City Livery Companies.

The guest speaker this year was Lord Peter Melchett, the policy director of the soil association and well-known environmental campaigner. The lecture was entitled – “Food and values – the organic future” As you would expect Lord Melchett extolled the virtues of organic farming despite audible grumblings from the hardcore farmers sitting in a gang to his right...dissension was already in the air.

Not at all deterred, Lord Melchett went on to state even more fervently that the advantages of the ‘White Heat’ of technology could no longer be relied upon. We now need to make the most of our natural assets. To treasure and preserve is the only answer. ‘organic’ stands for a whole new green way of life: not so much a process more a movement!

Lord Melchett agreed that organic may not have all the answers for the future of food but we are heading for solar-powered, animal and wildlife friendly, pesticide and additive free farming, and this direction has the support of the public. There are huge entrenched interests that are threatened by the changes but the public support recognises that these changes are needed and will happen despite government or industry. Every one of us has the opportunity to decide what to eat, so all of us will drive the change.

Following the lecture there was a question time session chaired by Dame Deidre Hutton of the FSA. The panel comprised Sir Stuart Hampson, the Chairman of the John Lewis Partnership which of course includes the Waitrose supermarket chain, Prue Leith, the restaurateur and Freemaident of the Cooks, Professor Tim Lang of the City University Centre for Food Policy and Tim Smith Chief Executive of Arla Foods supplier of many household names in dairy products including Lurpack and Anchor.

In effect therefore, there was representation from all parts of the food chain. Unfortunately this did have the effect of fragmenting the arguments but the fragments themselves were quite interesting.

The Farmers started with their initial salvoes questioning the definitions and claims of organic process/movement especially about claims that organic was better for you.

Prue Leith made the comment that she was not sure that organic was either better for you or indeed tasted better. The biggest quantifiable difference was freshness which included how far the produce had travelled from farm to table. In any event, she went on to say it was not an individual food stuff that was the issue but the total diet. She also expressed a concern over the lack of availability of organic for the less well-off.

Tim Lang agreed that diet was the priority. The issue however he stated was not how we grow our food but what we eat: obesity is the problem and the move from fat based foods to fresh fruit and vegetables. Talking of fatty foods, Tim Smith recognised that there needed to be a commitment of time and resources by the food industry and that will be driven by a clearly identified mass market. He was sure that this would become apparent and the necessary investments made by the food industry.

Stuart Hampson stated that Waitrose was one of the first to sell organic produce in 1982. His fundamental issue is that 86% of the market likes to see organic produce merchandised but only 18% actually purchase.

Overall the evening was summed up by Dame Deidre – Consumers are faced with an increasingly complex and inter-related set of judgements to make about their food. The complexity made one think – here is an answer now what is the question? Organic in Lord Melchett’s view is a great label which has caught the public’s imagination but the risk is that it may not do what the consumer imagines.

Renter Warden Graham Craddock



The Cooks Golf Team at Epsom

The Lightmongers' Charity Golf Day

The Master led a stalwart team of Tony Simmonds, James Fogarty and Bob Lawrenson in the Lightmongers' Charity Golf Day at the sumptuous RAC Club at Epsom on a glorious day in April. Our early scores looked promising, but at about halfway we relaxed and enjoyed the day more, with adverse effects on the scoring. However, the Master spoke seriously to us and I handed round the extra strong peppermints causing us to regain our good scoring rate. We still finished below the prize winners of the 20 teams competing. Last year the master had had an expensive hole-in-one, but his skill did not desert him for he won the putting competition this year.

An auction followed a very good dinner, with the top prize of a day for two on the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious going for £1000. Altogether the day raised just over £5000.

Honorary Freeman Bob Lawrenson

Company Golf - The Prince Arthur Cup

The annual competition for the magnificent Prince Arthur Cup took place at the twin courses at Walton Heath on Thursday 17th May. Teams from 54 Livery Companies were listed to play, 4 players to a team, in a most testing foursome system, scoring to bogey. Of the original Cook's team only the Master made it on the day, supported by reserves of Liveryman Richard Herbage and myself – the latter a measure of our desperation. Peter and Richard played morning and afternoon in the pairs competition and scored reasonably well, but as I was on my own, my score did not count.

In true Prince Arthur Cup style, it rained steadily for most of the day, but the sandy-based courses stood up well. Hopefully, the scores of our only pair will be sufficient for the Cooks to be invited back next year.

Honorary Freeman Bob Lawrenson

And While We Are Talking Good Sports...

The Worshipful Company of Poulterers 3rd Pancake Race Shrove Tuesday 20th February 2007 Guildhall Yard

Twenty-four teams took part in this year's spectacle in Guildhall Yard. Each team consists of Master, Liveryman, Lady and 'Novelty' – a fancy dress entrant that reflects the Lord Mayors chosen charities. There are stringent rules concerning the wearing of gowns, hats and gloves, the tossing of pancakes etc which seem to be completely disregarded in the competitive heat of the moment.

I am pleased to report that the Master and our liveryman Crispin Payne both came first in their respective heats, but unfortunately they then progressed no further. Our brave novelty entrant Paul Herbage splendidly attired with an authentic Eritrean head dress (representing VSO) and bearing the Complete Works of Shakespeare (representing Education) found he was hampered by the afore-mentioned tome but did complete the course. Similarly I maintained my dignity by not losing my pancake - but finished last in my heat too.

There is talk of training for next year participants. If you are not in that select group I can highly recommend that you make a note to be in the city on Shrove Tuesday to watch.

Liz Messent

Mistress Cook



The Master with two other tossers. Sorry, we do not appear to have any pictures of Paul Herbage!



Reunion Des Gastronomes

Through many decades the Worshipful Company of Cooks and the Reunion des Gastronomes have enjoyed a special association.

The Reunion des Gastronomes was formed officially in London in August 1899 and the membership is made up of many senior figures from the hotel and catering industry. The principal objectives are endeavouring to raise the standards of hotel keeping and catering; of promoting stability of employment; and of exchanging ideas and opinions of value on all questions concerning the profession. These objects are as important today as they always have been and complement those of the Worshipful Company of Cooks who support the next generation of cooks through prizes, awards and financial support together with a range of charities connected to the catering industry.

August 1899 saw the first meeting held at the Queen's Hotel Leicester Square although other gatherings had been arranged before that date but no records were kept. Monthly meetings were subsequently organised in members' establishments to wine and dine and to discuss matters of common interest connected with the hotel and catering profession. (The cost to members at that time for supper including wines was 15/- per head). These included the Hotel Cecil, Princes Restaurant, Palmerston Restaurant, Cafe du Europe, Hotel de Park, Hotel Bristol, St James's Restaurant and the National Liberal Club. Meetings are still held monthly generally at prestigious venues both long established as well as many of the more recently

introduced first class hotels and restaurants. Membership is by invitation only and restricted to Proprietors, Senior Executives and Senior Managers of the hotel and catering industry, preferably who have at least two years' practical kitchen experience. Numbers are restricted to 200 but generally kept at a level of 160. Over the years many illustrious names within the industry have been members - Oddenino, August Escoffier, Cesar Ritz, Quaglino, Joseph Lyons, Lord Forte, Sir Maxwell Joseph, Silvano Trompetto, four generations of the Goring family, together with so many others. Those active within the Reunion today include the well known chef/proprietors Anton Mossimann and Anton Edlemann, as well as many of the distinguished senior management figures in the Country, the majority of whom are based in London.

Presently within the Company we have four Past Presidents -A G Fairbrass, BEG Puxley, B M W Clivaz and S J Roberts, each of whom has served a two year term of office, and there are also six other members within the livery. It has long been a tradition for the Master to be invited to the Annual Banquet and last year the Late Master Bob Grainger had the honour of proposing the toast to the Reunion. He spoke movingly of his life long association with the Gastronomes through his late father Cherry Grainger (President from 1976 to 1978) and he looked forward to us all strengthening the relationship and bond between the Worshipful Company of Cooks and the Reunion des Gastronomes.

*Alan G Fairbrass
Second Master*

British Red Cross Christmas Market at the Guildhall

26th-28th November 2007

Avoid the frenzied rush of Christmas shopping on the High Street whilst supporting the vital work of the British Red Cross by coming along to the 2007 Christmas Market in the Guildhall. Over 100 stalls of merchandise, massage, wine and cheese, music.

PREVIEW NIGHT - Monday 26th November 5:30pm – 9:00pm. Entry by pre-booked ticket only: £20 per person (Includes Champagne & Canapés)

PUBLIC DAYS - Tuesday 27th November 11am – 8:00pm. Wednesday 28th November 11am – 3pm.

£5 multi-entry ticket including a complimentary glass of wine

For further information please contact Rebecca Payne on 020 7382 4650 or Email: rpayne@redcross.org.uk



A Spellbinding Man Who Simply Loved His Country is Brutally Murdered

Sadly, in January, we learnt of the death of David Rattray whose lecture on Rorke's Drift mesmerised us all in October 2004

Past Master Oliver Goodinge reflects

Very occasionally we are privileged to meet and listen to someone truly extraordinary. David Rattray was certainly such a person. In September 2003, I attended David Rattray's Royal Geographical Society lecture on the Battle of Ulundi, the third in his legendary Anglo-Zulu War series, and instantaneously had no doubt that I wanted to share the talent of this extraordinary man with the Company during my year as Master. The plan was hatched and the lecture was fixed for 13th October 2004 and David particularly liked the angle of "Hook the Cook" weaving in the role played by Private Henry Hook VC that day. That magical evening (see report [opposite] reprinted from the December 2004 edition) transcended historical lecture and transported the audience to that Natal corral on 22nd January 1879.

In January earlier this year the terrible news of David Rattray's murder was reported, bringing with it shock, sadness, anger and dismay. Shock that this

wonderful African, whose vivid story-telling enthralled all listeners, was suddenly and brutally dead; sadness that this vibrant and talented man was no more; sadness for his lovely wife, Nicky and their three children and sadness for Africa who have been deprived of a true son; and anger and dismay that such an ambassador of Africa sometimes known as "the second most famous South African after Nelson Mandela" was killed at the hands of fellow Africans.

David Grey Rattray was born on 6th September 1958 in Johannesburg. He was prophetically named David after a children's book "David goes to Zululand".

He was educated at St Alban's College, Pretoria and then studied Entomology at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, graduating in 1982. His study of insects began as a boy and he put together an extensive collection of beetles. It was when studying beetles that he first encountered Zulus and heard their own perspective of the Anglo-Zulu wars and with it experienced the oral tradition of story-telling which was to have such a huge influence on his own style. He learned to speak Zulu immaculately and became known as "the White Zulu". Through his upbringing and study he became a dedicated conservationist, which underlined his later business enterprises.

Later he became Chief Executive of the Mala Mala Game Lodge close to the Kruger National Park and then a lodge in Namibia. In 1989 he returned with his wife Nicky to the family farm at Fugitives' Lodge, Dundee on the Buffalo River close to where Lieutenants Melvill and Coghill died on the 22nd January 1879 defending the Queen's Colours of the 24th Regiment of Foot. Both soldiers were posthumously awarded Victoria Crosses. Ironically, Rattray himself was to die within 500 yards of this spot almost to the day 128 years later.

David Rattray made his career from welcoming guests to Fugitives' Lodge and from his iconic and inspiring talks both on site and around the world. His vocation as a raconteur led him to be called "The Laurence Olivier of the Battlefield". His rousing oratory brought history to life "by telling the compelling stories of the many human faces of the old history of the region" as well as the struggles of nation-building and reconciliation. "When David spoke people were spellbound – indeed, brought to tears." "It was goose-bump stuff".

He spoke 20 times (always sold out) at his legendary Anglo-Zulu War series at the Royal Geographical Society where he was honoured as a Fellow in January 1998 for services to the popular understanding of Africa. Rattray had met the Prince of Wales when the Prince brought his son, Prince Harry, to Fugitives' Lodge following the death of

Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997, and they become firm friends. In 2001 at the Prince of Wales's invitation David Rattray delivered the inaugural Laurens Van Der Post lecture at St James's Palace

On 26th January 2007, Rattray's killer, having enquired of his whereabouts at the Lodge reception, entered his house, fired a single shot, left the building but was ordered to re-enter the building and fired two further shots. The gang then fled but the motive remains unknown as nothing was taken and no-one else was harmed. His murder has been described both as a "botched robbery" or an "assassination". The killer and the ringleader have each been convicted to twenty-five years in prison.

A memorial service attended by 1,300 people,

including the Prince of Wales and Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi at Michaelhouse School, Kwa-Zulu Natal was held on 1st February 2007. The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall later attended a further memorial service at Southwark Cathedral on 30 April 2007. Standing room only like his lectures !

Past Master Graham Price described the Rorke's Drift evening as "not a lecture but a performance". It is tragic that David Rattray's own lifelong performance was cut short in his prime but grateful that the Cooks' Company have a magical evening in October 2004 by which to savour and to remember him.

David Rattray B.Sc FRGS is survived by his wife Nicky and their three sons.

Rorke's Drift Lecture

A reprint of the article of the lecture featured in the newsletter in December 2004



The Late Master, Oliver Goodinge with David Rattray

David Rattray FRGS gave a truly inspirational lecture on 13th October. Organised by the Late Master, Oliver Goodinge, this took place in the magnificent wood-panelled Tower Room of Ten Trinity Square, overlooking the Tower of London. However, as soon as David Rattray started his talk, he transported everyone in their own mind to the battlefield at Rorke's Drift. I have never heard a speaker like David who with no visual aids at all was able to make the whole audience feel they were at the scene and back in time. It was a similar sensation to reading a genuine page-turning novel where your sense of reality is with the author and their tale and you are somehow distanced from the present.



New Member of Honorary Freedom

Professor Haroon Ahmed was sworn in at the February Court meeting

Professor Ahmed is Master of Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge and Professor of Microelectronics at the Cavendish Laboratory. Also as non-executive director he is the university representative for Addenbrooke's NHS Trust Board.

The Chicago Challenge

The Combined Services Culinary Arts Team Fly the Flag for Great Britain at the American Culinary Classic in Chicago

The Combined Services Culinary Arts Team (CSCAT) represented Team Great Britain at the National Restaurant Association Culinary Challenge held in Chicago, 19 – 22 May 2007. The Team led by Sergeant Lee Corke, a chef currently serving at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire, comprised 12 Service personnel from the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force. The Team were required to prepare a complex International Cold Buffet, and produce an imaginative hot three course restaurant meal for 80 covers.

The Team competed at the very highest level against eleven other invited countries. CSCAT has been invited by the British Culinary Federation to represent Team Great Britain in several prestigious International events, and this is the second occasion they have competed in Chicago. This 2007 performance far surpassed their performance four years ago with the Team winning four Silver medals – a superb achievement particularly as the Team were

only able to get together to practice for 2 weekly workshops.



The mouth watering menu for the hot meal was as follows:-

Lightly Smoked Maple Glazed Salmon, Creamed Avocado, Hot Potted Crayfish, Saffron Scallop, Apple Salsa

Lamb Variations – Garlic Infused Cannon, Breast with Black Pudding & Artichoke, Crumbed Sweetbread, Dauphinoise Potato, Girolles with Broad Beans, Carrot Purée, Lamb Jus

Chocolate Mousse, Shortbread with Raspberries, Pistachio & Plum Cake, Vanilla Ice Cream, Raspberry Espuma

Mr Jack Jarvis from Robot Coupe, one of the sponsors and advisor to the Team, made a special visit to the event in order to provide support and encouragement. CSCAT is sponsored and supported by a wide range of catering industry companies including G3 Systems, The Worshipful Company of Cooks, ESS Support Services Worldwide, Karcher, Robot Coupe and Churchill. It was a pleasure to be able to welcome Eileen Mould from Churchill and Jack Jarvis from Robot Coupe to dine at the Restaurant of Nations Lunch and sample the Team's effort.





The overall winner of the event was Switzerland, with Canada second, Norway third, and US fourth, Germany fifth and Great Britain (CSCAT) coming sixth which, given that this was an International event involving the top culinary nations in the world was a tremendous achievement. CSCAT has gone from strength to strength in recent years, in November 2006 CSCAT were runners up in the Military Competition at the Culinary World Cup held in Luxembourg, and on the strength of that performance the British Culinary Federation selected CSCAT to represent Team Great Britain in the American Culinary Classic. By their efforts CSCAT have attracted considerable credit to the Armed Services. Capt Paul Cunningham RN, Leader of the Defence Food Services Integrated Project Team added: - "This is a phenomenal achievement

considering the Team only had a limited amount of time to prepare. I congratulate the Team on their fantastic result, and acknowledge their skills, enthusiasm and outstanding commitment."



CSCAT Team Photo:

Left to Right Back Row – Sgt Emma Rousell RAF, SAC Alun Davies RAF, Cpl Jonathan Smith RAF, SSgt Jay Avril Army, PO John Potts RN, Sgt Sarah Cox Army, Cpl Chris Dupee RAF, WO1 Eric Montgomery RM (Team Manager)

Left to Right Front Row – Sgt Stu Harmer RAF, Sgt Richie Holmes RAF, WO Tony Wood RAF, Sgt Lee Corke RAF (Team Captain), Sgt Nathan Kelsey Army, CSgt Si Atkinson RM. WO Richie Taylor RAF missing from photo as he had to return home early.

City Briefings

The City Briefings are open to all Freemen and Liverymen and their partners who wish to gain a further insight into the Corporation and the relationship with the Livery Companies. There is the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers and the Briefing is followed by a light finger buffet providing the chance to mix with other Freemen and Liverymen. The proceedings start at 5pm and finish at 8 pm

Please apply initially to the Clerk - places are strictly on a first come first serve basis.

The next dates:

Wed 10 October at the Innholders' Hall

Tues 13 November at the Innholders' Hall

Tues 19 Feb 2008 at the Innholders' Hall

The Lynn Painter-Stainers' Art Prize

If you are a budding artist, or know one who may be interested in entering this competition, please read on!

The Prize is organised by the Worshipful Company of Painter-Stainers and encourages creative representational painting and promotes the skill of draughtsmanship. Only original, two dimensional works in any painting media, that have been completed in the last three years, and that have not been previously exhibited, are eligible.

For more information and to download an entry form, click here:

<http://www.painterstainers.org/NetBuildPro/process/11/callforentries.html>

Prize Winners



Top: The Master awarded the prizes at the Company of Cooks prizewinners lunch in February. Among the winners - not one but two trophies for Tanya Peters, winner of Army Junior Chef of the Year and Inter Services Young Chef of the Year and City and Guilds Prizewinner Polly Eardley.

The twelve finalists of FutureChef 2007 brandish their £100 cheques courtesy of the Company of Cooks presented by the Second Master. The Master presents the Suffolk Junior Chef Award.



Above: and just to show that it is not all giving. The Master receives a silver teapot to commemorate 25 years association with the Royal Navy Supply and the RAF Catering Branches; The Master is rewarded for fabulous putting - the umbrella has proved particularly useful!

We are thankful for the services of Michael O'Sullivan Photography for some of the photographs shown here: Tel: 020-8363-8350 or 07973-671915.

And then the Snowman's head exploded...



The Master explains some of the weird and wonderful goings on when he visited the Sechseläuten and the Zürich Guilds

It was a chance meeting talking to Walter Isler, a Swiss but also a freeman of the Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers, that led to Mistress Cook and myself participating in the Sechseläuten in Zürich on the 16th April.

Zürich, like London, is a city which has maintained the continued presence of a significant number of ancient Guilds. There are currently 26 Guilds or "Zunft" in Zurich. There is a mix of ancient Guilds from the 14th century (of which 12 remain) and more modern Guilds which were founded from 1860 onwards. Most of the ancient Guilds have a particular craft association such as the "Bakers", "Smiths", "Carpenters" and "Shoemakers". However other ancient guilds were not for one individual craft, but represented a range of crafts within a given locality such as a ward. Cooking does not seem to have been one of the represented crafts.

We were invited by one of the "modern" guilds called "Zunft Fluntern", founded in 1895 when Fluntern was still a small village outside Zürich. All the Guilds have a room they use as their Hall, either as a permanent base or just for meetings and feasts, and some of these Halls are very ancient. There are many similarities with the London Guilds, but also differences. For example, the Zürich guilds do not do much charity work, but they have patrimony, dinners and Masters. The Zürich Guilds effectively ran the City of Zürich for several centuries in a comparable way to the role of the London Guilds. The Master may hold the position for many years, and is selected on his speaking skills along with humour and repartee ability, and I had the doubtful pleasure of exchanging words with the Master of Zunft Fluntern at lunch!

The biggest event of the Zürich Guilds is the annual Sechseläuten. The main feature is a huge parade of the 26 Guilds around the streets of Zürich, which culminates in the burning of a figure of a snowman called the Böogg (comparable to "bogeyman"). This parade is held on a Monday, which is a holiday in Zurich. However the weekend starts with a joint reception and several Zunft balls on Saturday.

On Sunday there is a large childrens' parade in which over 2000 youngsters take part.

The day of Sechseläuten started at 10.00 with light food and drinks in the Zunft Fluntern Hall. There were many speeches in Swiss German to and from the guests, and I gave a brief response for the Cooks' Company in German! After a hearty lunch we all set off for the parade, accompanied by a dozen Guild riders on horseback and a 50 piece marching band, all processing behind the Guild flag. I did not look out of place in the Company gown and crown! We processed for 3 miles, while spectators would come out from the crowd to greet and give flowers to the participants they knew.

The finale was the burning of the Böogg. Each group of Guild riders would circle it in turn 3 times in a breathtaking display of horsemanship given all the noise and fireworks. At the climax, the head of the Böogg exploded which signified the end of winter. We then set off for a drinks reception with our wives. This was followed by dinner, and then visits to 3 other Guilds, our band playing the whole time as we traversed the Zürich streets. The Guild Masters or deputies would exchange ribald pleasantries, while we were offered drinks. After the official midnight finish, the Guilds and hostelrys remained open late.

There are various links between the Zürich and London Guilds, and a few years ago the combined Zurich Guilds paraded at the Lord Mayor's show, perhaps this may be repeated. We made many friends in Zürich, and their hospitality was immense and I hope that as a Company we can maintain a mutual contact with Zunft Fluntern.

The Master, Peter Messent



The Master thanks Cooks at the Widder Ball, Zurich

Charity FOCUS

The first of a series of articles highlighting organisations that benefit from grants from the Cooks charitable fund

1) TRAINING FOR LIFE:

We probably recognise the Training for Life organisation better as the people behind the Hoxton Apprentice but that restaurant is only a small part of what happens at 16, Hoxton Square.

At the beginning of May, along with the Master, I was delighted to be shown around the facilities at Hoxton Square and to talk with Gordon D'Silva the Chief Executive of Training for Life. His enthusiasm for the considerable achievements that have brought this project to life is infectious but he is equally concerned for the well being of the business as he chats with the management and staff of the restaurant. This concern is more than ensuring continued cash flow into the charity it is also about ownership, commitment and concern for his people.

Training for Life helps individuals and communities fulfil their potential, in tackling and preventing difficulties including unemployment, worklessness, deprivation, disadvantage and community conflict. The first stage in the process is to identify deprived communities and then create 'enterprising learning communities' – known as Prospect Centres. The Prospect Centre is a partnership between industry, local regeneration agencies, and the charity.

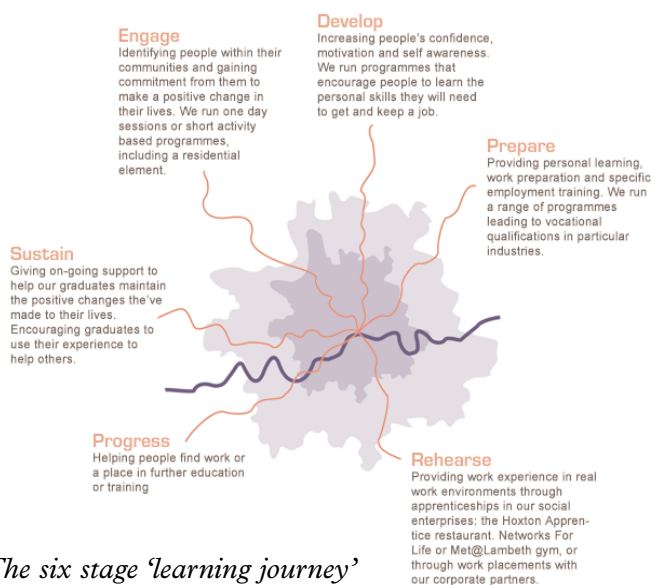
The Prospect Centre sets out a learning journey. The route isn't the same for everyone, nor the start point. So programmes are tailored to the individual using a six-stage 'learning journey'. (See diagram)

Without support, up to 60% of graduates can lose confidence, fall back into unemployment and regress into previous lifestyles. To solve this problem an innovative network of past trainees known as 'InTouch' has been created.

The InTouch programme tracks and support trainees when they reach the end of their learning journey. As well as offering timely support, InTouch gathers intelligence on successes and gives graduates the opportunity to 'give something back', act as role models and provide invaluable experience and encouragement to current trainees.

The Prospect Centre at 16 Hoxton Square:

The former school housing the Hackney Prospect Centre is jointly owned by Training For Life, Shoreditch Trust and the Corporation of London. The main centre houses training rooms for both IT



The six stage learning journey'

training and personal development programmes, a community kitchen in which healthy eating clubs, and a unit to support start-up businesses in the area. A crèche also runs in the centre, and a gymnasium. Located on the ground floor of the building is the Hoxton Apprentice, a top-class restaurant that taps into the vibrant scene that has developed in the area. It provides an excellent facility in which to gain valuable work experience. While the restaurant is self managed it remains part of the charity and all the profits are ploughed back into Training For Life to support its charitable activity.

I had never imagined the scope of facility that the Prospect Centre offered, but it is the hidden benefit of hope given to the individuals and the communities in which they live that is the real monument here.

Graham Craddock

Note from the Editor...

I hope that you enjoy this issue of What's Cooking. It has certainly been a pleasure for me to put it together. This is my first foray into the editorial jungle the newsletter having been in the stewardship of the Messents since the time of the quill pen – I now realise the commitment Michael and then Peter put into these twelve or so pages. I apologise in advance for the errors which I am sure are here – please put them down to inexperience and I will promise to do better next time. Please also give me as much feedback as possible. The very best feedback is the submission of articles. In the Cooks there is a very broad range of interests but judging by the last few years a fairly narrow range of contributors. I am seeking a greater number of participants who can not only bring their own interests to the fore but also write up articles on events that happen in the 'Cook's Year'.

Please give me a call 07952 259388 or email: graham@crystalhotels.co.uk.

Graham Craddock, Renter Warden.