



Taste Real Food UK

Newsletter

February 2010

After the launch . . .

THE LAUNCH OF TASTE REAL FOOD last September may not have reached the front pages of the national newspapers, but for those of us who had been involved in planning Taste Real Food, from developing the initial concept into firm foundations for a national membership organisation for people passionate about real food and drink, it marked a significant first step in our progress.

We launched Taste Real Food at the end of last year's summer, on Thursday 10 September, the eve of Ludlow Food Festival, at a reception held in Ludlow Castle which also marked the 15th year of Ludlow Marches Food and Drink Festival. We were (and still are!) delighted to have the practical support of this successful voluntary organisation, which is itself so committed to real food and drink. We benefit from the Festival's experience and from being able to share

their office and other facilities. This not only helps us to contain administration costs but also helps us to be able to answer the office phone in person most of the time!

Since September, our membership numbers have grown steadily, and we have established local Taste Real Food Groups in Cheshire, Bedford, Ludlow Marches, Sheffield and Faversham. Our newest groups, in North Hertfordshire and in Brecon, are likely to be formally 'signed up' within a few weeks, and we anticipate signing up quite a few more in the coming months.

We've been encouraged by the reception we've had when we have been telling people about Taste Real Food. Many individuals have been quick to grasp the idea of a 'bottom-up' organisation where the important activities really do belong to the local groups; but we have also been heartened to find some very firm and enthusiastic

support from a variety of places, whether it's the energetic events, food and hospitality students in Sheffield, the Brecon Beacons National Park, or several other schools, colleges and universities – and not forgetting food producers!

Make haste slowly! Behind the scenes a large amount of work is going on to produce not only a website, but an Internet-based system that will make it much easier and effective to run both the local groups and the UK office, and which should enable easy and productive communications between all parts of Taste Real Food.

You'll find much information in this newsletter about what is going on inside Taste Real Food. This issue of the newsletter is being posted to you, together with, in most cases, your new membership card, but we intend that most future issues will be sent to members by email as a PDF attachment. This will enable us to control costs and reduce waste paper, but any member who would prefer, for some reason, to receive future newsletters in printed form by post has only to ask. ■



Visit the website for more information:

www.tasterealfood.com

◀ Posing for the press on the first day of the 2009 Ludlow Food Festival, with a glass of Barbourne perry.

John Fleming (left), one of the directors of the newly-formed Taste Real Food UK, and Howard Lyons, our development strategist, toast the partnership with the Festival. They are pictured here with Philippa Home of the Brompton Cookery School near Atcham, Shrewsbury. Howard is a visiting fellow at Sheffield Business School and an associate of the Eden Project in Cornwall. Photo by Peter Harris of Taste Real Food Cheshire.

The Great Taste Real Food Ice Cream Challenge



Calling all ice cream enthusiasts!

With snow, sleet and rain pouring down outside you may not think that this is the time to consider buying yourself an ice cream cornet or treating yourself to an ice cream sundae! However, Taste Real Food UK is on the look-out for the best ice cream producers in the UK. Can you cast your mind back to the summer when you visited an ice cream farm or bought some great ice cream from an independent producer made with lashings of local ingredients?

If you have a great ice cream secret to share we would love to hear from you. We are obviously keen to hear about ice cream which is made using high quality ingredients and that is not stuffed full of additives. Plenty of local cream is a priority and fresh fruit rather than artificial fruit flavourings.

So far we have identified three types of producers:

- Dairy farmers who have diversified into ice cream (such as Callestick, Roskilly's below).
- Chefs who have specialised in ice cream (such as Mr B's below)
- Specialist ice cream makers (such as Kelly's below)

To get the ice cream bombe rolling (sorry for the pun) we have a few ideas to share in Cornwall:

- 1. Callestick Farm** – a super premium ice cream made from lots of wonderful cream. www.callestickfarm.co.uk
- 2. Roskilly's** are another wonderful super premium ice cream that you must try. www.roskillys.co.uk

3. Moomaid from the village of Zennor is yet another wonderful and very creamy super premium product.

www.moomaidofzennor.co.uk

4. Penwindsor farmhouse ice cream is one that we've only just discovered (on the web) and need to try!

www.penwindsorfarmhouse.co.uk

5. Mr B's Ice Cream Parlour in Hayle is an example of a new and local ice cream business that combines quality and it is entirely local. Very exciting!

<http://www.mrbiscecream.co.uk/team/>

6. Kelly's ice cream is a premium ice cream and claims to be the oldest manufacturer in Cornwall. It has wide distribution in Cornwall and is now stocked on a wider basis by Sainsbury's. If you think that this still counts as local let us know. However we will still buy it when the super premium ices are unavailable.

www.kellysofcornwall.co.uk

7. Wright's, Fore St, Polperro, Looe, Cornwall PL13 2RG (tell us about it).

8. Beddoes, Lansallos Street, Polperro, Looe, Cornwall PL13 2QU (tell us about it).

9. Treleavens Luxury Cornish Ice Cream <http://www.treleavens.co.uk/>

If you could email us to tell us about your favourite ice cream we will be able to put together a list of the creamiest, tastiest, most delicious ice cream experiences across the country.

By the summer of 2010 you could have access to a map of the best Taste Real Ice Cream across the UK – just in time for

Foodie Dates for your Diary

16th February – Shrove Tuesday - Pancake Day!

- Why don't you invite your friends and family around for this traditional food celebration. The original 'Real' fast food!
- Check out this website for photos of pancake races around London: www.ukstudentlife.com/Ideas/Album/PancakeRace.htm

20th February – Pancake Races in Ludlow. 11 am to 1 pm.

- Come along to Ludlow's Pancake Day celebrations in Castle Square. You can't book, just turn up!

26–27 February – Wakefield Festival of Food, Drink and Rhubarb

- Check out the website for plenty of culinary treats in and around the UK capital of Rhubarb: www.experiencewakefield.co.uk

18–21 March – Kelham Island Brewery Spring Beer Festival

- Fantastic beer, food and music in and around the Fat Cat pub and this award winning brewery in Sheffield: www.kelhambrewery.co.uk

3–5 April – Chester Food and Drink and Lifestyle Festival

- Local food, cookery demos, gardening advice and plenty more: www.chesterfoodanddrink.com

8–9 May – Ludlow Spring Festival

- Beer, bangers, bread, classic cars and more, all inside Ludlow Castle. Meet the Brewer preview on Friday night, 7 May. Book online: www.springevent.org.uk

10–12 September – Ludlow Food Festival: the unforgettable festival of real food and drink from the Marches. Ludlow town centre and Castle. Book online: www.foodfestival.co.uk

PLUS – more events from Taste Real Food local groups elsewhere in this Newsletter!

your summer holidays!

We look forward to hearing from you!

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Local Group News

Bedford

Taste Real Food Bedford *Project 2010* is an ambitious project incorporating not only taste education through 'Look, Touch, Taste and Feel' but also has established **Thomas Laxton**, our Bedford Heritage Hero, in the minds of so many people. The project is funded by our members' attendance at our adult food events.

TRFB celebrated success as part of the award winning Bedford in Bloom team who gained gold status by the RHS Anglia in Bloom awards and silver status at Britain in Bloom 2009. The TRFB project educates lower school children at four seasonal events – spring, summer autumn and winter. On the day the children pick seasonal vegetables from our allotment, learn the importance of look, touch, taste and feel whilst helping to cook the produce. The day includes local Bedfordshire produce and finishes up with a visit to the orchard by 'Thomas Laxton', characterised by our committee member Fytton. Fytton tells the story to the children of how his family gained notoriety as horticulturalists in the UK and later around the world.

In 2010 through our committee member Ann Hepher we have forged a link with a local housing association (BPHA) who offer refuge for young people from the age of 16-plus who are down on their luck for various reasons. The refuge guides them towards catering NVQs. TRFB are using the students at our children's orchard events to prepare the food for the children. Young people are an important part of our community and at TRFB we believe they should be given a second chance. At our recent adult event 'Celebrating Winter' we focused on our local producers, seasonal produce and gave everyone an insight into how to use the cheaper cuts of meat. TRFB is reaching out to both foodies and non-foodies, giving everyone the opportunity to understand the Taste of Real Food.

- **Sue Miller** leads *Taste Real Food Bedford* and is a *Taste Real Food UK Director*

Cheshire

During our short two years in Slow Food we grew to become one of the largest local groups. Following a 100% vote to move to Taste Real Food, over 60 people, almost all of our active members, have become members of TRF already.

A varied programme of suppers, producer visits/tastings and educational activities is planned.

We launched Taste Real Food Cheshire in November, at Nunsmere Hall near Northwich, with a Game Dinner comprising pheasant broth, roasted saddle of venison with eight-hour braised venison, and pear and almond tart. The game was sourced locally and the pear was in honour of the TRF perry pear logo!

Our Christmas dinner took place at Byley Village Hall. The centrepiece was magnificent roast fillet of Hereford beef from our farmer member Andrew of The Great Tasting Meat Company, based near Nantwich. The cattle graze in 1000 year old water pastures which have never been ploughed and the meat is wonderful!

Following a mid-winter break, we begin 2010's events with a Gourmet Pies Supper and Tasting at the Knutsford Civic Hall on 13 February. The superb pies will be baked by Simon and Sarah ('Simply Pies') from near Whitchurch. There will be a cold pie tasting, with five apple based chutneys from the brilliant artisan producer, Clippy's of Sale (Michelle McKenna), preceding a classic beef and ale pie and a Cheshire apple and black-currant compote.

A supper themed around herbs and another with duck as the centrepiece are planned before better weather moves us towards visits and other outdoor activities.

We are working on some exciting ideas with other Cheshire organisations, which should help spread the TRF message among young people in Cheshire, not to mention adding to our membership!

- **Geoffrey Carr** leads *Taste Real Food Cheshire* and is a *Taste Real Food UK Director*

Ludlow Marches

Following the launch of Taste Real Food UK at the Ludlow Food Festival in September, the Ludlow local group was formed with local baker Peter Cook chairing a small steering committee consisting of Rosemarie Fleming (Secretary), Michael Moore (Treasurer), Sheila Madgwick, Claire Radnor, Phil Maile, Sally Maile and John Fleming.

We decided to call the group 'Ludlow Marches' to reflect the fact that our members come not just from Ludlow itself, but from other parts of Shropshire as well as Herefordshire and Powys.

We held our launch event at the end of October at the Unicorn, a local Ludlow pub, where we enjoyed a simple but tasty meal of local sausages and mash.

Twenty-eight people spent a very useful and enjoyable few hours discussing our plans and programmes for the new group. Almost everyone who was not already a member of TRF joined up either on the night or shortly afterwards.

In December we held an 'untraditional Christmas meal' at Koo, a well-known Japanese restaurant in Ludlow, where Mari Kure and her team presented us with a delightful, mouth-watering array of seasonal Japanese food.

On Saturday 20th February we will be helping Ludlow Food Festival and others organise a Pancake Race in and around Ludlow's Market Square and the castle, and in March we are having a Fidget Pie competition, with a food quiz to follow.

In May, Ludlow Spring Festival is an event now in its second year. It features 'beer, bangers, bread and more' – in fact 130 real ales. (See www.springevent.org.uk). Taste Real Food will be having a stand to spread the word about our association, and we'll be offering tastings of various interesting morsels of real food.

Later in the same month we hope to visit a nearby brewery to examine their environmentally-friendly equipment and to conduct some tests of the beer, this will be followed by an evening meal in a nearby pub.

On 20th June we plan to have a great breakfast (featuring local produce, naturally) at Moor Park, a school situated near Ludlow, followed by a treasure hunt in the extensive and scenic school grounds.

housing the Shepherd Neame brewery, food and drink is taken seriously in this part of Kent, with a very respectable number of small food producers as well as some great pubs and restaurants.

You can contact Harold and other members of the Faversham team via the Taste Real Food UK office.

FAVERSHAM'S first event

Taste Real Food Faversham has just announced that its first event will take place on Monday 8th March. Full details are being sent to local members and the event is being well advertised locally.

The Faversham group came into existence in September, when Harold Goodwin, a well-known authority in the field of responsible tourism, and others from Faversham were visiting Ludlow Food Festival.

Faversham, in Kent, is a most attractive and historic town. Well known for being in the heart of the Kentish hops area, and for

Brecon forms Taste Real Food Group

We are pleased to welcome Brecon as the home of our newest Taste Real Food group – and our first group in Wales!

A meeting of people who were interested in the concept of Taste Real Food, and who were also interested in exploring the idea of Brecon becoming a 'Real Food Town', took place in the Castle Hotel, Brecon, on 4th February. Taste Real Food UK directors Liz Sharples and John Fleming described what real food is, what Taste Real Food is all about, and outlined the way in which they could assist with a Taste Real Food Town programme. Other speakers spoke about the boost to quality local food and drink producers and suppliers that could result from the town setting up a local Taste Real Food initiative. Breconshire Brewery, a local micro brewery, were present to speak about the importance of local breweries, and naturally gave us some generous tastings of very likeable real ale, as well as supplying samples of some very good cider and perry made by Gwynt y Ddraig, the Welsh cider and perry makers based near Pontypridd – which all helped to wash down some very impressive local cheese and bread.

Local individuals and businesses, including food producers, B&B owners, restaurant and cafe owners, took part in a lively debate about real food and drink in general, its importance to the local economy, and about how Taste Real Food could fit in with Brecon's aspirations.

The idea behind the event came from the Brecon 'Collabor8' group who began meeting late last year to discuss ways to



Part of Brecon town centre

Taste Real Food's first Student Group!

Taste Real Food has its first student group up and running at Sheffield Hallam University. A very enthusiastic bunch turned up to the first meeting just before Christmas (perhaps encouraged by some rather nice wine and lots of local cheese!) and by February we had a nine-strong committee in place and loads of ideas for events and activities.

Approximately twenty students have already signed up as Taste Real Food members but we are anticipating that this number will more than double in the next couple of months.

Sheffield Business School, as part of the university, is firmly behind this initiative and the group has already brought together Hospitality, Tourism, Food Marketing, Nutrition, Marketing and Events students from across the faculty who all share a genuine

passion for good food.

One of the first projects that the students plan to get involved in is the production of a Real Food cook book for students – both hard copy and web based. They plan to film themselves cooking up the dishes in our training kitchen at the university. Chilli con carne made from local beef and fresh tomatoes – delicious!

The students are also planning to get out and about on a few culinary trips. The Rhubarb festival at Wakefield (see listings of events) is a must and the students are also planning to 'do lunch' in Ludlow when the weather improves!

I wonder how many more Taste Real Food student groups will pop up around the country?

- **Liz Sharples** is a director of Taste Real Food UK



Sheffield from Meersbrook Park (Photo by Lewis Skinner)

improve tourism in Brecon for the benefit of both visitors and the local community. Supported by Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, who are working alongside Taste Real Food UK, the event aimed, successfully, to give local people the chance to enjoy, explore and promote the taste of real food.

Nick Stewart, Collabor8 Project Officer for Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, had said earlier: 'The importance of food to the tourism industry has increased significantly within the last ten years and the availability of high quality, local food has become increasingly important for visitors deciding on destinations. We hope as many people as possible turn up to this event and be enthused enough to support local people like Janet Williams from Pilgrims Tearooms near Brecon Cathedral who is hoping to lead the development of a Brecon-based Taste

Real Food Group.' The Park Authority also plan to give some financial help to get the ball rolling.

If you don't know the area, Brecon is an attractive and historic small market town situated in beautiful countryside at the foot of the Brecon Beacons. The area abounds with seriously good food and producers, and there are some good eating places, as well as independent butchers, bakers and specialist food shops – an ideal place to consider for a Taste Real Food town!

Taste Real Food at the BBC Good Food Show

Taste Real Food UK shared a stand with our partners Ludlow Food Festival at the BBC Good Food Show held at the NEC, Birmingham, on 25-29 November.

We used the opportunity to showcase our new association, and we met lots of potential new members, and a few existing ones too! Helping to staff the stand were all the Taste Real Food UK directors, as well as other volunteer members from Ludlow, Sheffield and Bedford.



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