



South West Regional Report 2008

As I write this and reflect on the fantastic year the South West Region has had I must extend a big thank you to everyone from the South West for their continued support during 2008. I especially want to thank my regional team, my Deputy Ian Joyner and Tim Watkins regional Secretary for their help during the last 12 months.

Our first meeting of the year was held in the Council offices of Bristol City Council

Our first presentation was by Mary Breeze from Bristol City. It was on a Home Shopping Companion. The idea was developed by Heinz Wolff at Brunel University. It was being piloted in Bristol. The project was to issue older people with a recycled lap top computer and a hand held bar code reader. This allows them using a catalogue to order their groceries from Somerfields. It also allows ordering of non-food items including prescriptions and library. It is easy to use and has other possible uses for the future such as care workers who will be able to log in and out when they visit, and Meals on wheels could be ordered.

After a short break we welcomed Sandra Gardener from a small Bristol based company called Kasey. They manufacture cake mixes for special diets. Her children have an egg allergy so all her cakes are suitable for egg free. She has been supplying St Monica Trust for 12 months and Gary from St Monica has encouraged her to try more diets so she now also has gluten free and diabetic all that are also egg free. Sandra brought us lots of yummy cakes to try and everyone left with a doggy bag of cakes and cake mixes to try. Anyone can order via mail order or the internet. Sandra has since joined the SW region.

After lunch we welcomed Margaret Tengrove from Cornwall Care who gave us a presentation on their project 'Appetite for Life'

Our summer meeting was held in Hillier Gardens in Hampshire and had nutrition and training as the theme. After a lively business meeting we welcomed Sue Ullmann our National Chair. Sue told us of projects she has been working on since taking office. There was a lively discussion about the direction we should be going within the NACC.

After lunch we welcomed Emma Parsons, Research Dietician from Southampton University and Abbi Cawood from Nutricia. I met Emma at the Bournemouth Care Show and had asked her to attend this meeting. Emma gave us a presentation on MUST (Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool) and told us about their research into use of nutritional supplements in the community.

The final presentation was by Karen Hazzard a Dietician from Winchester PCT who told everyone about the partnership with Hampshire County Council. Karen had carried out a pilot in a Hampshire care home to deliver training in MUST. The system is now used across the whole of Adult Services in Hampshire County Council as part of the care

planning .Care home managers are trained to use the tool and catering staff are given a menu file with ideas on how to fortify foods using dried milk powder and adding butter. There is a care plan for every resident and depending on their score this will decide the action taken by care and catering team.

Our October Meeting was held in Devon at Plymouth's City College. It was nice to see some guests from Devon and Cornwall who attended for the first time. The meeting was hosted by Stella West Harling, who is the director of the Ashburton Cookery School in Plymouth.

Firstly we had the business meeting and of course celebrated our success at the gala dinner. After the business meeting Stella and her team told us about their school and their links to FEAST the government training for school cooks. When the meeting was planned 12 months ago she hoped that her new FEAST kitchen would be opened for us to view but unfortunately the plans have only just been agreed and building work starts soon. Stella showed us a video produced for FEAST the showed school cooks using the facilities at Ashburton School. Ashburton offer a wide range of long and short courses suitable for catering professional, enthusiastic amateurs and beginners. Courses such as Gluten free cookery. She said they have to deep clean the whole kitchen before this course to ensure that there is no cross contamination, many who attend the course have the allergy. They do knife skills and food safety and to make the most of the time they have for training they employ staff to wash up to free the time for practical learning. (I hope they expect that when they get home I have worked with Chefs who don't know how to wash up).

Many people attend courses as part of a cookery holiday in Devon. The Marketing Manager from Ashburton showed us their new elearning package. It is a training portal that they have purchased from America. There are many basic techniques filmed although they will need to overdub the American voiceovers. This supports but not replaces practical training. It allows the students to see techniques at own pace stop and start even work alongside and get background information or fast forward as necessary. It can help those studying for NVQ as they may be able to learn different techniques that they may not usually do at work or need to refresh for assessment. It could help a chef returning to the industry brush up their skills. It also helps as sometimes during a practical demo they miss something especially if you are short and have someone in a chef hat in front of you. It can also allow the practical session to be shorter if the students have done the session before hand.

The quality of the filming was very good and of course it is consistent so you have problems with lack of tutor skills. Given peoples interest in cookery programmes especially those that get people to cook along this could have a good place in the industry. It can be accessed anywhere in the world via the web so staff don't have to travel to Devon it also has networking within it so they can be in a virtual classroom.

The e learning is in the early days yet they also plan to have management skills and will commission different skills if needed they may be able to film it for any customer. For example as a technique needed in care catering for example using our skilled care cooks of the year to show pureeing, thickening, It certainly gave me some food for thought.

We had a lovely buffet lunch produced by the students at the college. After lunch we had a presentation by Plymouth City College. They offer a range of courses the college have invested in the catering department the restaurants were modern and reflected modern restaurants. They have close links to local industry as a result in the growth of café they now run short nationally recognised course on using the scary café machines and a new course has been introduced the first in the county to produce a recognised qualification in cocktail mixing students are travelling from all over the country and Europe for this course.

Our last meeting of 2008 was held in Exeter at the Sandy Park Conference in Devon. It is the home of the Chiefs a local rugby club. The venue was excellent and we had a fantastic view over the pitch and the countryside around and even got an opportunity to see players practising during our coffee break. The day started cold and sunny it then went very dark and grey as if snow was on the way but ended with a rainbow.

The day was sponsored by Electrolux and Allsop and Pitt a big thank you to Mike Kendall from Electrolux for setting it up.

Firstly we had the business meeting and discussed the burning issues from our last national executive such as the website and funds.

The business meeting ended with the election of regional officers. I was re elected as Chair and Tim Watkins as Secretary. Ian Joyner was standing down as Deputy and John Hilton was elected as Deputy. John an active member of the region not only won the achievement award this year but has experience of cook competitions in the Services so will be tasked in running the cook off competition so I can plan the rest of the day. Sue Helliker was also elected as Minute Secretary to assist planning and at meetings. Sue has always been an active member of the region and her experience will be invaluable. I would like to extend a warm welcome to John and Sue and look forward to working with them.

After a brief break we began the main event of the day. Our First speaker was Sherin a Catering Adviser from Bristol City Council. She told us about Jigsaw a Supported Employment scheme they have run since 2000... It runs as a cooperative and allows adults with disabilities to get paid employment, and receive the support and training they need. They run cafes for council staff. It was an emotional and thought provoking presentation where Sherin put across the barriers that adults with disabilities have in getting paid employment and the success stories. One gentleman now aged 70 got his first paid job at 63. Another young man aged 25 is the first of their scheme to get sufficient employment to be able to come off benefits and claim working tax credit.

Next we had a brief presentation from Allsop and Pitt on their company. This was followed by a delicious Christmas buffet and Tim's famous quiz

Having eaten our lunch the presentation of the afternoon was from Hannah Baker from Yakult on Probiotics and health. I met her at the Bournemouth Care Show. Everyone soon saw why had put this slot after lunch when we talk about bacteria, bowels, gut and explosive diarrhoea. However the presentation was very informative and thought provoking about the use of Probiotic bacteria when someone is on antibiotics to help protect the gut. The consumption of Probiotics in care homes and hospital both overseas and in the UK has been shown to reduce the incidence of C diffi infections. These are a major health issue in care homes and hospitals more so then other hospital acquired infections. By taking Probiotics during antibiotic use and 2 weeks after helps maintain health. Over 65's should be encouraged to take them before going into hospital or care home to build up their natural immunity We have the debate of cost as it is classed as a food however it can be prescribed by GP's. And if it reduces the cost of the clean up after an outbreak of C diff it is money well spent and perhaps could be funded from elsewhere. C diff is a spore forming bacteria so very had to destroy and rooms can be unoccupied for days while it is disinfected. Perhaps we will soon have the campaign on water, probiotic and 5 a day keep the doctor away.

As I now have to turn my attention to 2009 which again looks to be a challenging time for the care sector and the region.

Achievement by SW members 2008

Regional Award -2008

Gareth Cartledge- St Monica Trust- Winner- Care Cook of year 2008

The Hayes, Dorset , Winner -Care Establishment of the Year-

Hawthorne Court, Hampshire Finalist – Care Cook of the Year

John Hilton, Bristol City Council- Winner – Achievement Award 2008

Sue Helliker, Somerset Care- Finalist- Achievement Award 2008

Bristol City Council- Finalist- MOW Marketing Award 2008

Congratulations and well done to all the winners and finalists

Alison Pugh

NACC South West Chair