

## Tribute to the food of Britain

BRITISH Food Fortnight – the biggest national celebration of the diverse and delicious range of food that Britain produces – starts next week.

To mark the launch of the seventh British Food Fortnight, which runs from September 20 to October 5, the organisers have produced a short film explaining why it is best to buy British food.

For the first time the event is focusing in particular on public procurement: the NHS, Ministry of Defence, prison service and all Government departments are being challenged to join the national celebration and put British on their menus during the fortnight.

## Themed evenings

DAHLIA'S Kitchen, the stylish restaurant at The Garden Place on Cropper Road in Marton, is holding the latest in its series of themed evenings on Friday, September 26, with a Bavarian Night.

Other special nights include Old Time Music Hall (October 24), Vicky la Plume (November 4), Abba Tribute Night (November 27), Christmas Singalong (December 12) and Songs From The Shows (December 19).

Admission to each of the above is £14.95 which includes a welcome drink, entertainment and a two course meal.

Also lined up is a Burns Night Supper on Friday, January 23. Tickets are £20 and include a full Burns supper and show.

Seats can be booked on (01253) 761499.

## Let us in on news

HAVE you any dining out news, views or tips?

The Weekend's Food File page is always on the look-out for the latest developments on the Fylde Coast restaurant scene – from details of good value meal deals to new faces, new places, new ideas and even gossip across the tables.

Just send your eating out ideas to Robin Duke at The Food File, The Weekend, The Gazette, Avroe House, Avroe Crescent, Blackpool Business Park, Blackpool FY4 2DP or contact him at 01253 361833 (e.mail robin.duke@blackpoolgazette.co.uk).

# Restaurant wins place at top table

THE prestigious London Restaurant Awards 2008 were held this week and for the first time ever there was an award to recognise the top 10 best restaurants outside of London – with Northcote Manor at Langho (between Preston and Blackburn) taking one of the places.

"This is a fantastic award for us to be recognised as one of the top 10 restaurants outside of London," said Craig

Bancroft, joint managing director of Northcote. "We feel privileged to be ranked alongside such great restaurants as The Fat Duck, Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons and The Waterside Inn.

"It's a great achievement. We're also delighted that through these awards our region can once again be recognised as a place worth visiting for top quality dining and for great local produce. British

chefs and restaurants dominated the winners' list at the awards, held at the Grosvenor House hotel in London.

Leading the charge, Rowley Leigh scooped the night's flagship award, the aAIM London Restaurant of the Year, as well as New Restaurant of the Year for Le Café Anglais.

Rowley was joined as a double-award winner by Michael Belben, recognised

as the founder of gastropub dining, who won the coveted Restaurateur of the Year, picking up another prize for his latest venture Great Queen Street, which won British Restaurant of the Year.

The Greenhouse also claimed two awards-winning Outstanding Restaurant Service and the Award of Excellence, recognising restaurants for special occasions.

# Top eating chain is heading for Fylde

By Robin Duke  
Entertainment Editor

**A**fter opening its third Lancashire outlet – the Clog & Billycock near Blackburn – Ribble Valley Inns is now "actively looking" to expand into the Fylde.

The Clog & Billycock joins the pub and food company's award winning Three Fishes in Mitton and The Highwayman in Kirkby Lonsdale. Menus at the three venues are developed by this year's BBC2's Great British menu finalist – Nigel Haworth. "We have been looking to expand the group and particularly to open one towards the Preston/Fylde area, as feedback from our existing Fylde customers was they would like one nearer, so we are moving a little closer – less than six miles from junction 31 on the M6," a spokesman for the company said. "We would very much like to open a pub on the Fylde coast, as we are visited by so many from the Fylde area and we are actively looking and hope to be able to bring a Ribble Valley Inn to the area soon."

The Clog & Billycock on Billinge End Road, Pleasington, has been months in the planning and represents no less than a £1.3m investment in a total refurbishment making it part of Ribble Valley Inns' growing collection of destination pubs.

The famous old hostelry, just a hefty kick's distance from the site of Blackburn Rovers original pitch, has been a landmark for around 150 years. But never before has it had quite such a broad appeal.

Originally known as the Bay Horse Inn, it now takes its name from the sartorial habits of an early 20th century landlord who was rarely seen without clogs on his feet and a billycock perched on his head.

Visitors to the Clog shouldn't expect anyone to be wearing anything similar, although this hat trick for RVI is a feast for the eyes as well as the healthiest of appetites.

Nigel Haworth and Craig Bancroft



HAPPY CUSTOMERS: Diners enjoy a night out at the Clog & Billycock

have once again teamed up with Thwaites Brewery to create the kind of venue that wins awards as well as admiring looks.

The Three Fishes at Mitton and the Highwayman at Nether Burrow have already scooped most of the country's top accolades between them, and the Clog & Billycock bears all the hallmarks of its two stablemates.

"There's no secret to our success", says Nigel, who is also Chef Patron at the Michelin-starred Northcote Manor and finalist in BBC2's Great British Menu 2008. "We're blessed by living in the food capital of Britain. My job is to find the cream of the local producers and growers, secure supplies of their finest, freshest, seasonal ingredients, and then create a menu packed with our traditional local dishes...but each with a contemporary twist."

With some of the best artisan producers in the world working right on their doorstep, he didn't have to look very

far. While "food with roots" may be the order of the day and Thwaites' line-up of cask ales might have a distinctly local flavour, the wine list has been chosen by leading expert, Craig Bancroft, to have international appeal.

"It's always a challenge matching wines to a new menu", says Craig. "But when you see some of the dishes Nigel has created, the ideas come thick and fast."

As for that menu...it's seriously impressive. How about Sandham's Creamy, Curd Cheese & Onion Pie or Potted Goosnargh Duck Legs with Pickled Damsons? Or Bowland Heather-fed Lonk Lamb Hot Pot?

RVI Awards already include Best Pub and Bar Operator (Caterer & Hotelkeeper); Best British Cheese Board and Best Newcomer (The Good Food Guide); Marketing Pub of the Year (The Publican); AA Regional Food Award; County Pub Winner (Good Food Guide).

To celebrate the opening of the Clog & Billycock and hopefully welcome Ribble Valley Inns to the Fylde soon The Weekend is giving away a meal for four up to the value of £100 at the new pub and food venue.

Just correctly answer the following question and you could be a winner:

What was the original name of the Clog & Billycock?

- The White Horse Inn
- The Bay Horse Inn
- The Black Horse Inn

Now write your answers on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope and send to Clog Competition, The Weekend, The Gazette, Avroe House, Avroe Crescent, Blackpool Business Park, Blackpool FY4 2DP.

The closing date is Friday, September 19. Normal Gazette competition rules apply.