

# Riverside News

Spring 2009

We re-opened for the season on 13 February and look forward to welcoming you in our 45<sup>th</sup> year at The Riverside!!



## 45 YEARS AT THE RIVERSIDE

A little bit of history will be celebrated when we reopen for the season on Friday 13th February, as it will be the 45th anniversary of the ownership of the Riverside by Janet and Arthur Watson. Next year [2010] will be the 50th anniversary of the acquisition of the lease by the family.

The actual site has always been involved with catering. In the mid-1900s tea was served from water boilers in tents and progressively a series of wooden huts was erected to provide refreshments for locals and visitors alike. Disastrous floods in the 1970s called into question the future viability of the site, but in 1976 permission was granted for the present building to be erected at a higher level and a design was commissioned from the [now] well known Architect Piers Gough, whose innovative and imaginative skills are being used at the Eldridge Pope Brewery Scheme in Dorchester.

Local produce and seafoods have always featured prominently on the Menu, even before the present tide of celebrity chefs discovered them. Locals would bring in buckets of Mackerel, Whitebait or Sprats and any other thing they caught. Monkfish, Squid, John Dory and Spider crabs were considered to be bait fish and were practically given away. Cream teas and Roast Dinners were also on the menu and a West Bay Lobster Tea was very special. We still continue our emphasis on fresh and local produce and are proud that over 90% of our purchases come from local sources.

We have always employed staff from the local community and several of the present team have been with us for over 10 years and some nearer 20 [including the Manager Neil Chilcott and Sue Turner, our Restaurant Manager]. We have also been able to offer holiday employment to some 500 young people during school holidays and this has been of benefit both to us and them, we hope.

"My wife would have quite happily died after her langoustines here!"; this "stunningly-located" seaside café, "on a little island in the river", has long been "one of the best-known restaurants on the south coast", and with good reason - "fish doesn't come any better" than the "huge range" on offer here.

Hardens Restaurant Guide 2009



*The Riverside Team in 1993*

*Back row: Michaela, Stephanie, Jan & Arthur (Watson), Marilyn (Hedditch), Kim*

*Front row: Tom (Watson), Nick (Larcombe), Neil (Chilli) and Safi the dog!*

This photo was taken over 15 years ago. Some of the faces I am sure you will recognise although looking a little older [not much!!], as we are fortunate to have them still working with us today, namely.. Nick Larcombe, our Assistant Manager, Marilyn Hedditch one of our waitresses and, of course, Neil Chilcott [Chilli] our Manager. Safi the Dog has retired!!

There have been many tough times during almost five decades with sky high interest rates and financial crises and none more so than the present situation. However, we must be confident that we can see this one through with the help of our loyal staff, our top quality suppliers and the continued support of our wonderful customers who have stood by us for so many years.

Our detailed plans for the year ahead have not been finalised at this stage but our opening hours for February and March will be as follows:

## OPENING TIMES

- Lunch from Tuesday to Sunday (not Tuesday 24th or March 3rd).
- Dinner on Friday and Saturday.
- Additional evenings from mid March (please phone).
- We shall also be opening weekdays for morning coffee from 11:00 am.

## EXAMPLE LUNCHTIME MENU

We will be continuing to run our special midweek lunches of one, two or three courses... you choose.

Try a starter or sweet for £5.00, Main course £9.75,  
Two courses £14.50, Three courses £19.50

### Starter Choice:

Scallop & Crab Chowder

Or

Grilled Mackerel fillets with a herb crust

### Main Course Choice:

[Served with a choice of new potatoes, chips or sauté]

Grilled plaice fillets with a saffron, tomato & chive sauce

Or

Roasted Crab cakes with a lime & coriander mayonnaise

### Sweet Choice:

Raspberry crème brulee

Or

Warm treacle tart with cream or ice cream

We will, as always, have a good choice of meat and vegetarian dishes on the menu for those who prefer not to eat fish.

**'Simply Superb Seafood'**

## BOOKINGS ARE NOW BEING TAKEN.

Call 01308 422011 to make a reservation... please do leave a message if we are not there and we will ring you back. If you are planning a special occasion please do give us a call for a quote... we can cater for all numbers and all tastes... and would be delighted to help make the event extra special for you.



## 2009 MARKET PRESSURES

We think that 2009 is going to be unlike any other year that we have experienced. It is going to be a roller coaster ride that will be frightening and exhilarating. The customer will be King as never before and we will have to use every endeavour to win favour, with a mixture of innovation, price and quality. However, there can be no future in giving things away needlessly because sooner or later the bills arrive and have to be paid. If the supply chain fails we will all end up with nothing!

International events could well govern the market price of all raw materials in the coming year. At this time [Feb 2009] the power of the Euro is a very significant factor in our daily life. Imports will be dearer and some Wine merchants are talking about a 25% hike in their cost price of wines from Europe with similar possibilities in supplies from South America and Down Under. Raw materials sourced in Europe will cost more and the ability of European buyers to force up the price of our produce cannot be underestimated. Let us hope that there will be an ever increasing flow of tourists to take advantage of their strong currency. We can only hope for a good summer and better times ahead and in the true British tradition, keep cheerful.

## FOOD SUPPLIES

We will watch the market carefully and always try to provide real value for money dishes as well as our traditional menu with its emphasis on the finest quality of local fish and shellfish. In addition we will expand the number of non fish items available and we are always open to suggestions or special requests.

We hear from our local fish supplier that fish stocks are holding up well. Currently lemon sole, sprats and wild bass are in abundance and good value. Pete the Worm, who fishes from West Bay and supplies us with our locally caught crabs and lobsters, is also confident that supplies will be good which could keep the prices at last year's level.. and as we are one of his main customers we can guarantee that we get the best quality daily straight from the boat.

*At the Riverside we will continue to produce quality food as cost effectively as we can. We look forward to welcoming you.*

## PS. HOLIDAY VILLA AVAILABLE TO LET - SPECIAL REDUCTIONS FOR RIVERSIDE CUSTOMERS!

The lovely house Couly Bas in SW France near Lauzerte still has some vacant dates in 2009. Sleeps 10, heated swimming pool, rural setting.

Please visit [www.coulybas.com](http://www.coulybas.com) for more details or phone 01308 897368 if you are interested in renting it.

