

# Fond memories of Briar Wilkinson



It was with huge sadness that we learned of the death early in January of Briar Wilkinson of Drywite Ltd, sponsor of the annual Young Fish Frier of the Year Competition won by Frankie's manager Carlyn Kearney in 2013.

Briar (photographed with Carlyn and Rory Bremner above) was a staunch supporter of the industry and was an inspirational and influential figure to the many young people starting out in fish and chips businesses and trying to reach the highest level. She will be sorely missed.

"She was always so enthusiastic and encouraging and we all looked up to her," said Carlyn. "She was a force of nature and would always have a big smile and warm welcome when you met her.

"I know from speaking to past and present Young Fish Frier winners just how important she was when it came to giving you the confidence and belief to excel. She knew the industry inside out, She knew her stuff and would always keep you on your toes. I'm so sad that she has gone."

Andrew Crook, the current President of the National Federation of Fish Friers, observed: "This is absolutely devastating news. Our thoughts go out to Ken, Kelvin and all at Drywite at this sad time.

"The difference Briar has made to the industry is immeasurable, many would not be where they are today without her desire to develop the skills of the young people in this industry."

## Scallops and crab on course for MSC renewal

Scallops and crab caught within six miles of the Shetland coastline, and sold here at Frankie's, are set to be re-accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), which rules on sustainability of fish stocks.

It follows an attack on marine conservation lobbyists by managers of Shetland's inshore shellfish fleet and local scientists for a series of false allegations about the sustainability of scallops from the islands.

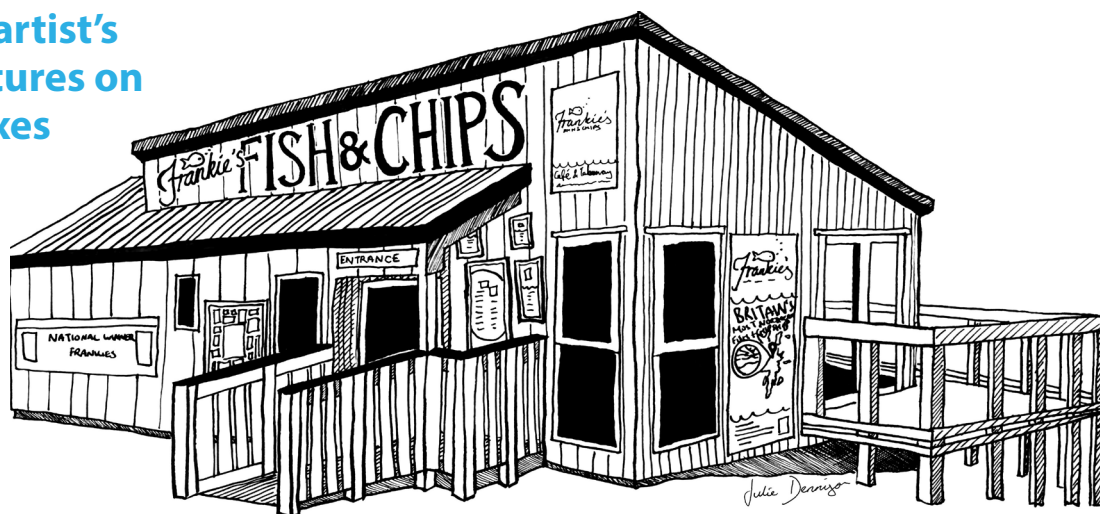
Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation (SSMO) and the NAFC Marine Centre UHI accused Open Seas of mounting a "smear campaign" designed to derail the re-accreditation process.

The two organisations also highlighted a series of factual errors relating to Shetland shellfish published on the Open Seas website, including a claim that the stock of scallops has almost halved in size since MSC

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## Muckle Roe artist's drawing features on Frankie's boxes

Local artist Julie Dennison from Muckle Roe was commissioned to do a pencil drawing of Frankie's, which now features on our boxes.



## 'Open Seas has resorted to incorrect assertions'

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status was first attained in 2012, when the biomass has in fact remained stable.

SSMO Chairman Ian Walterson said: "We have a very well managed and sustainable scallop fishery in Shetland because fishermen, scientists and government have actively worked together to make and keep it that way.

"To attain MSC status five years ago we had to provide a huge amount of information that was fully audited, a process that we have repeated for the re-accreditation, although the final decision will not be taken until January.

"By contrast, Open Seas has resorted to a series of incorrect assertions utterly devoid of supporting evidence that together amount to a smear campaign.

"They must correct these errors now and apologise to the fishermen whose livelihoods they seem intent on destroying for no good reason."

Mr Walterson added: "Their blanket characterisation of scallop dredging as ecologically damaging is just plain silly – our fishermen dredge in areas where the seabed is frequently disturbed by natural wave action and currents.

"Anyone who knows anything about Shetland will understand that waves and currents are considerable.

In total, just five per cent of the seabed out to the six-mile limit is dredged."

Dr Beth Mouat, Joint Head of Marine Science & Technology at the NAFC Marine Centre, has challenged the assertions made by Open Seas on its website.

"It is very disappointing to see the facts and science misrepresented or in some cases completely ignored, purely to meet a political agenda," she said.

Meanwhile the local whitefish market continued its record-breaking streak by topping the 400,000-box mark in 2017.

A combination of healthy fish stocks, rising quotas and Shetland's advantages as a landing port propelled landings to 402,997 boxes for the year, well up on the 357,101 boxes in 2016 and over three times the total recorded in 2003, when the electronic auction was introduced.

Martin Leyland of Shetland Seafood Auctions said: "Importantly, record volumes were matched this year with consistently high prices.

"This is a reflection of the quality of the fish we present to buyers and smart logistics right through the supply chain.

"The major stocks are in a very healthy condition, and fishermen consistently report back that they haven't seen such big volumes for a generation or more."



## Promotional videos with a humorous twist

We have been working with the talented Steve Mercer on a range of promotional videos primarily aimed at showing off the high-quality food we produce here at Frankie's.

But as if to prove the old adage that humour is always the best-seller, his April Fool film about the monster crab caught by a Shetland fisherman generated huge interest, with more than 1 million views and coverage right across the country! A surprising number believe the story to be true.

The videos can be viewed on the Frankie's Facebook page and will soon be available on our website.



## Local Food Festival reaches new heights

Food and drink producers in Shetland have been making a major effort to promote their quality wares locally and further afield.

As well as the annual A Taste of Shetland Festival, which took place in early October at the Clickimin Leisure Complex and was bigger than ever, there is now a new Taste of Shetland website which showcases the best of island produce and features dedicated sections on each of the full members of the organisation.

Head to [www.tasteofshetland.com](http://www.tasteofshetland.com), then click on Outlets and you'll see our entry, links to videos and images. There's also a



handy location map.

The dates for this year's Festival are 5th to 7th October, so we look forward to seeing you there.

Continued local support for Shetland's food and drink producers

will strengthen the burgeoning sector and help all to develop and promote themselves both to visitors and to the wider world.

Why not, when we have such fantastic fresh produce to offer?

## Continuing to Taste Our Best

Regular customers will know that we have held the VisitScotland Taste Our Best award for several years now.

It is in recognition of the quality of our food, the commitment of our staff and the extent to which we prepare and serve local and Scottish produce.

For the 2017-18 award it was the assessor's first visit to Frankie's and he enjoyed it, describing the staff as friendly and efficient and the fish and chips as excellent.





## Our great big summer barbecue!

Last July, to mark the Come to Brae days, we held a successful barbecue in fine Shetland summer weather – thanks to Steve Mercer for the photos. We will be holding another one this year, on 30th June and 1st July.





## Primary school pupils learn about MSC fish



Frankie's was among 39 Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified fish and chip shops to take part in an initiative last September to raise seafood sustainability awareness among school children in their local communities.

Under the MSC-run "Murdock's Fish Club", schools across the UK were treated to a variety of activities aimed at encouraging them to recognise fish with the blue MSC label and what it stands for.

Frankie's manager Carlyn Kearney visited Sound Primary School in Lerwick to host an assembly on sustainable fishing, including a hands-on session for the children with some of the species of fish and shellfish caught in local waters.

Carlyn said: "Living in a fishing community like Shetland, we feel strongly about protecting the industry and the oceans.

"Our assembly is a fun way of teaching children about where some of their favourite food comes from and how they can ensure it's around for them to enjoy for many years. Ninety-eight per cent of the seafood we serve comes from MSC-accredited stocks, all of premium quality and freshly cooked."

### News in Brief

Thanks to your generous support via the counter and table collections at Frankie's, we were again able to make a donation to the Fishermen's Mission this year. We presented a cheque for £456.22 to grateful local superintendent Aubrey Jamieson in October.

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At Frankie's, we have always worked hard to ensure our business has a minimum impact on

the environment. So it made clear sense for us to sign up to the campaign being run by Tagon Stores owner Ryan Thomson to eradicate single-use plastic. Once current stocks are used up shortly, all our packaging will be 100% biodegradable.

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Visits to Frankie's by Cruise Ship passengers have been rising steadily, and 2018 looks like being a bumper year judging by bookings so far. There's

no doubt food and drink is why many people are visiting, with *Great British Food Magazine* describing the isles as the "new must-visit destination for food lovers".

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When you visit Frankie's, don't forget to take a look at our daily specials menu and the exciting range of tasty food available, including for example lobster, squid and crab cakes. Also remember that we have a dedicated

gluten free menu for anyone who requires their food cooked in this way.

The Lerwick Up Helly Aa is always a popular time for visitors, and as usual we will be open, with a range of exciting specials to complement our award-winning fish and chips!

Finally, we're off to the 30th National Fish & Chip Awards in late January. Then we'll have to think about our own birthday - Frankie's will be 10 years open in September!