

Branch News

Trent Branch

From Allan Gimson

In September, 13 Members of the Branch visited the Dudson Pottery in Stoke.

Although crockery is something that we all use every day, the only time that I have really thought about it was when there was a cheer in the wash-up area as a pile of plates hit the deck, and I had to write a requisition to get some more!

Following a welcome from Dudson's Martin Brown and Jane Pye, we heard about the history of the company which was founded in 1800 and is now run by a ninth generation member of the Dudson family.

The trip around the factory was really enlightening. We watched the whole process from start to finish, which began with the raw clay and a number of 'secret ingredients'. What amazed us was the sheer amount of hand finishing still involved in the process. Thankfully, we were not let loose to try making anything ourselves, as the Dudson staff were obviously highly skilled and

experienced in what they were doing, and the pace seemed relentless.

Also, we ought to mention the young lady who paints the gold line on the fine dining ranges. Despite being closely interrogated by Dave Grundy about the process and the price of gold she did not falter and carried on as though we were not there. Perfect lines, and all done by hand. I wonder if she ices cakes as well?

Our thanks to everyone at Dudson for their hospitality.

In October, we visited Williams Refrigeration in King's Lynn for our Branch meeting. We were hosted by Trent Branch Member Gary Allitt, Area Sales Manager for the Midlands and the North East.

Prior to the meeting we were given a tour of the factory and saw all kinds of refrigerated units being produced - from small under-counter fridges and freezers, through uprights, sandwich prep counters and merchandisers, right up to the largest walk-in coldrooms.

We found the foam injection section most impressive. We were all aware that



Trent Members at Dudson Pottery

fridges are lined with foam, and most of us are familiar with using the DIY expanding foam when filling large gaps. But this was nothing like it. The cabinets are bolted into jigs which allow the foam to be injected at a pressure of several tons. When the cabinets are finished they are rock solid and ready to stand the worst that we caterers can do to them.

Gary also told us about the use of Glycol as a refrigerant for new builds, which would eliminate the need for potentially

harmful gases and help towards our green credentials.

This was a very informative visit and our thanks to everyone at Williams for the hospitality.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 25 November at Goole Hospital and was followed a few days later, on 3 December, by our Christmas Social at Ringwood Hall Hotel in Chesterfield. See the next Journal for a full report.

West of England Branch

From Karoline Rowlands

North Bristol NHS Trust hosted a successful and highly participative Branch meeting at the end of September. Various topics were discussed including the ratification of a terms of reference for the Branch and feedback on staff catering costing systems.

The meeting concluded with a presentation of HCA certificates to Ian Forbes, Hotel Services Lead, East Somerset PCT and Simon Willars from NH Case.

This was followed by three interesting and informative presentations. First, Gary Wilkins, Catering Operations Manager at North Bristol Trust, spoke about his Trust becoming the first in the South West to obtain the Soil Association's 'Food for Life Catering Mark' at bronze level.

The second presentation was given by Katherine Lord, Head of Nutrition and Dietetics for the Trust, focusing on the dietetic side of the Food for Life Bronze award. She also highlighted the work undertaken to establish what staff want to see in the restaurants and dining areas in relation to healthy eating.



Caroline Darvill, West of England Branch Treasurer, presents HCA certificates to Ian Forbes, Hotel Services Lead, East Somerset PCT and Simon Willars from NH Case



Gary Wilkins (left), Catering Operations Manager, North Bristol Trust, and Mike Byrne, General Manager - Catering Services, Gloucester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The final presentation was by Mike Byrne, General Manager - Catering Services, Gloucester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, about the 'Healthier Food Mark'. Mike explained what the Mark entails and provided feedback on the stakeholder consultation meeting which took place earlier this year.

All in all it was a very productive day, rounded off with highly professional and topical presentations.

Representatives from the West of England Branch joined Members of the Wales Branch for its annual Dinner Dance, which was held at the Park Hotel, Cardiff, in October.

