

# Field to Fork Weekends



The well known Chef n Farmer team Brian Mellor, Master Chef and Andrew Pimbley from Claremont Farm have teamed up with Mere Brook House a luxurious country house on the Wirral to provide you with a truly unique and exciting weekend involving a farm walk, cooking demonstration, lots of tastings and chat in wonderful surroundings.

You will walk the fields to see various crops growing, have a go at harvesting, visit the farm shop, watch the Master Chef cooking and share his tips and secrets and enjoy afternoon tea and your evening meals in an impressive country house where the discussions with the experts can continue.

## The programme

### Friday / Tuesday evening

7.00 pm drinks reception at Mere Brook House - welcome from Lorna, introducing Andrew and Brian

Andrew and Brian to give a briefing about the following day

8.00 pm supper at Mere Brook House

### Saturday / Wednesday

8.30 am breakfast for Mere Brook House (residents only)

10.00 am Andrew meets all guests (resident and non resident) at Mere Brook House and takes you on a farm walk where you get the chance to harvest the seasonal produce, hear about the history of the farm, how it has developed over the years, food production, working with the environment and all the trials and tribulations of modern day farming in the UK.

12.30 noon arrive at Claremont Farm for tour of the farm shop followed by a light lunch kitchen

1.30 pm Master Chef Brian Mellor provides a demonstration

- of different methods of cooking and presenting the produce seen during the farm walk – including tastings

- of a main course and dessert incorporating local produce that will form the basis of an evening meal at Mere Brook House

And shares tips and secrets and recipes

4.00 pm Leave Claremont to return to Mere Brook House

4.30 pm Coffee/tea and cakes at Mere Brook House

Non residents either go home if local or can relax in the garden room at Mere Brook House, residents stay at Mere Brook

## Field to Fork Weekends



7.30 pm Three course evening meal prepared by Brian in the dining room at Mere Brook, followed by cheese and Biscuits and coffee in the lounge

### **The dates on offer for 2009 are**

Friday and Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – theme “Asparagus”

Tuesday and Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> July 2009 -theme "Summer Fruits"

Friday and Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July 2009 – theme “Summer Fruits”

Friday and Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Sept 2009 – theme “Autumn Harvest”

The cost is £125 per head which includes a drinks reception and supper on Friday evening, farm walk, light lunch, cooking demonstration, tastings, afternoon tea and evening dinner on Saturday.

A deposit of £25 per head is required to secure a place on the weekend.

Accommodation costs are additional and will be offered from £80 for two people in a double ensuite room including full English breakfast. Further details can be found on [www.merebrookhouse.co.uk](http://www.merebrookhouse.co.uk)

To view the full programme and find out more about all those involved take a look at the above website or [www.claremontfarm.co.uk](http://www.claremontfarm.co.uk) or [www.brianmellor.co.uk](http://www.brianmellor.co.uk)

For further details or to make a booking please phone Lorna on 07713 189949

PLEASE NOTE THIS WEEKEND IS OPEN TO NON RESIDENTS IN ADDITION TO THOSE REQUIRING ACCOMMODATION

### Read about your expert hosts

#### **Brian Mellor**

**Brian Mellor** is an award winning Master Chef of Great Britain who has been involved in almost everything to do with food from cooking for celebrities, royalty and Prime Ministers to overseeing dozens of chefs in busy restaurants. Never limiting himself to one area, he has carefully engineered his career to experience different aspects of preparing and serving food. From fine dining and gastro pubs to brasseries, private and corporate hospitality then more recently media, festivals and international events.

Training and competing has always featured strongly and along the way he has attracted awards and the recognition of his peers being awarded Master Craftsman Status by the Craft Guild of Chefs. He is increasingly in demand for his wide-ranging expertise demonstrating at events, exhibitions and shows across this country and abroad.

His passion for good food and ingredients lead him to have an integral role in establishing the NW Young Chef Competition and has been Chairman of Judges since its inception. At one point faced with the loss of the event he rallied the support of other leading chefs, competitors and sponsors successfully saving this showcase for emerging talent.

## Field to Fork Weekends



As a 'whites on – hands on' consultant Brian works with a variety of clients to develop their food businesses and enthuse their chef teams. Equally Brian is renowned for his cookery demonstrations that engage audiences whilst being informative, entertaining and enjoyable.

Whatever he's done, one theme has constantly inspired him – a passion for carefully produced ingredients that create good food. Brian Mellor is well known to the regions' foodies and food producers, appearing at all the major food events in the North West and beyond, being a long time and loyal supporter and promoter of local and seasonal ingredients.

Brian is so passionate about good food that he's recently based himself on a farm and is now based at the 250 acre Claremont Farm. He enjoys meeting and sharing his knowledge with people, believing that carefully grown ingredients and cooking nutritious food should be available for everyone. Of course he's now perfectly positioned on the farm to bring all this together.

A session with him is unlike many other food experiences, whether you are cooking with him or simply watching, his enthusiasm is infectious and you'll be able to share the secrets of a Master Chef.

### **Andrew Pimbley (Claremont Farm)**

Andrew Pimbley is a 31 year old farmer from the Wirral. He works with his family on a 250 acre arable farm, growing produce ranging from asparagus and rhubarb to strawberries and raspberries, broccoli to sprouts, with all the traditional combinable crops and potatoes.

Andrew has worked and travelled the globe, including tobacco farming in Zimbabwe and cattle ranching in Venezuela. His passion for agriculture and his natural sense of adventure has enabled him to gain a wide experience from many different types of farming enterprises.

He left school and immediately set off for Australia where he spent a year hopping from farm to farm, harvesting asparagus, fruit picking and doing anything to earn a living. From there he then returned to England and began his National Diploma in Agriculture and using his new found college friendships, he set off for Zimbabwe and Mozambique for his work placement.

After Andrew completed his studies at Reaseheath College, work on the farm was scarce and with agriculture not boasting particularly good prospects he decided to look for employment else where. Little did everyone know Andrew was to find a job, looking after 10,000 head of cattle, on ranches averaging 40,000Ha in size in Venezuela.

After three years in South America, a national coup, the devaluation of the national currency and with kidnappings and cattle rustlers on the increase, Andrew made the decision to return home and make a job and a future for himself in the UK.

Andrew returned in 2004 to find that the farm shop was doing well, nurtured by mother Pauline, and being supplied with the quality produce grown at the farm by father Ian and brother Guy, who had returned after his apprentice with Vauxhall motors. The family was reunited and the pressure was on to make a living for everyone.

## Field to Fork Weekends



Over the next five years Claremont Farm developed a successful wholesale enterprise delivering to over 30 restaurants and farm shops locally. At the same time Andrew helped set up the Wirral Food and Drink Festival which in the first year attracted 14,000 people to the farm and 26,000 in 2009.

Claremont also boasts one of the best up and coming small course fisheries in the country, a very popular PYO enterprise and the latest addition to the farm, Claremont Kitchen.

Claremont kitchen is home to “Chef n Farmer”, where those wishing to experience the farm first hand and embrace the whole process from field to fork visit Brian and Andrew throughout the year.

### **Donald and Lorna Tyson (Farmers and Proprietors of Mere Brook House)**

Donald was born in Barrow but moved to Blackburn when three years old as his father was transferred to a new position within the civil service. From an early age despite living in an urban environment Donald demonstrated his interest in animals and crops although this was restricted to breeding budgerigars and bantams and buying and selling potatoes. An entrepreneur in the making he sold his potatoes to the local shop and sent his mother to buy some and then return and report on how good they were to the shop owner. As a teenager much of his spare time was spent working on a school friend's family farm which was always a more attractive proposition than his academic studies. On leaving school he worked full time for the Wilsons on their family farm which was run by Mr Wilson and his nine children.

Three years later Donald went to the Lancashire College of Agriculture to study agriculture initially for one year but he extended his studies completing a total of four years and gaining the top award within his group. Whilst at college he met Lorna a farmer's daughter from Cheshire who was studying dairying. On completing her course Lorna gained a position as a chemistry technician at Myerscough College.

In 1975 Donald and Lorna married when Lorna was working as a Lecturer of Agriculture and Donald as a herdsman for Myerscough College. Despite having a secure position he was determined to start farming on his own and in 1978 was successful in gaining the tenancy of an 80 acre Lancashire County Council dairy farm. Over the next nine years he developed the business increasing the herd to 90 pedigree Holstein cows with heifer replacements home reared and 2,000 turkeys reared and hand plucked for the Xmas market..

Having outgrown the farm Donald and Lorna were fortunate in 1987 to gain the tenancy of a much larger Leverhulme dairy farm on the Wirral. Donald has continued to grow the business and currently has 260 dairy cows, rears all heifer replacements and has developed a DIY livery yard and an internet based business selling beef semen online.

Over the years Lorna held many positions at the college including Marketing Manager, Section Leader Business, Head of Department and Director. In the latter part of her career she developed a Rural Business Centre and Rural Business Incubator offering courses and

## Field to Fork Weekends



business development services to adults and small rural businesses. In 2004 she was awarded an MBE for services to rural enterprise in the North West.

In June 2007 Lorna left Myerscough College after working their for over 34 years in order to help Donald develop their latest business venture Mere Brook House.