

# The healthy spices of life

There was a full house for our Spice Night at Benares, Mayfair's upmarket Indian restaurant.

Guild members were greeted with a relaxing cup of sponsor Pukka Herb's liquorice and cinnamon tea, before settling back to listen to our esteemed speakers talk about the latest in the culinary and medical applications of spices.

After the talks, we were served a delicious three course meal from the innovative Benares menu with exotic cocktails and wines that admirably complemented the food. We would like to thank Pukka Herbs for their generous sponsorship of this lovely and unusual event.



**Turmeric, cinnamon and chilli were very much on the menu at the last Guild event as we explored the culinary and medicinal benefits of spices**

Pharmacognosy and Phytotherapy, London School of Pharmacy, took us through the botanical and pharmacological properties of curcumin, noting that on its own it is not well absorbed by the body, so its therapeutic benefits may be lost. Cooking, and the addition of pepper, can increase absorption by as much as 2,000 times and it is also soluble in alcohol. As Dr Booker put it, to get optimal use from turmeric 'eat curry, drink beer.'

## Talking about turmeric

Curcumin, the active ingredient of turmeric, is well known for its anti-inflammatory and anti-

cancer properties. Dr Tony Booker, Research Associate, Centre for

## A journey into herbal medicine

Katie Pande, member of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, described how she uses herbs and spices in her own practice. She sees many patients

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A huge thank you to all of those who braved the weather to make it to our AGM at the end of April. The Guild business was actually over in less than an hour which meant the rest of the evening was spent eating, drinking and catching up with old friends, so it was a great chance to network.

I do know that there were some members who were hoping to make the meeting but weren't able to. It's good to know that so many of you want to be involved.

In fact, after my email a month or so ago, telling you that we were unsure whether we could continue as, constitutionally, we simply didn't have enough committee members, I was overwhelmed by how tremendously

## A word from the chair



supportive many of you were. I had many emails saying how much the Guild meant to you and asking what you could do to ensure that we continued.

What a terrific membership you are! The upshot is we have a new – and up to strength – committee full of passion, enthusiasm and new ideas, so watch this space!

And starting how we mean to go on, I am delighted to tell you that we now have a confirmed date for the Guild's Summer Party: it's 14 July so please put it in your diaries as it is, without doubt, one of the highlights in the Guild's calendar!

Looking forward to seeing you soon  
*Michele*

**SAVE THE DATE!** The Guild Summer Party, July 14 @ The Royal Society of Medicine's

Chandos House, 2 Queen Anne Street, London W1G 9LQ



Dr Tony Booker



Katie Pande



Rob Hobson



Turmeric root

with chronic pain, where ginger, turmeric, pepper and frankincense can prove particularly useful. Meanwhile, cumin, coriander, fenugreek and cardamom are all applicable to the treatment of digestive disorders, including food allergies and intolerances. 'These kitchen herbs are incredibly powerful,' she said.

**Cooking for health with spices**

Registered nutritionist Rob Hobson, co-author of *The Detox Food Bible* began by



sharing how much he loves the concept of the old spice routes and value that has historically been placed on these plants. His own work involves using the high mineral content of spices to help meet the needs of vegans, women and children.

For older people, spices can re-orient food memory as well as boosting nutrition. They can also help everyone to cut down on salt and sugar by providing different ways of stimulating the taste buds. 'Spices provide maximum nutrition for few calories,' he said. He concluded with some easy cooking tips to boost your spice intake – add turmeric to scrambled egg; cacao to fresh tomato sauce; chilli to mango.

**THE SPEAKERS** **TONY BOOKER:** He has published work in a wide variety of academic journals and reference literature and has given interviews on television and radio regarding issues concerning the quality and safety of herbal medicinal products. In 2015 his work on the quality of ginkgo and milk thistle products was featured on the BBC's 'Trust me I'm a Doctor' series. His current research interests include the transformation of traditional medical knowledge into international

commodities and the quality and safety of herbal medicinal products.

**KATIE PANDE:** Katie's decision to study herbal medicine was sparked when she became ill as a student working in Egypt for the summer. No conventional medicines proved effective, and it was only after taking advice from the local Bedouin 'medicine man' that she started to recover. Katie later deduced that this miracle plant was a relative of the

thyme family. It was this experience that encouraged her to embark on following her degree in Plant Biology with a second degree in Herbal Medicine.

**ROB HOBSON:** Rob is an obsessive foodie, skilled cook, and consultant to the NHS, Tesco, Giraffe Restaurants, 3663, Healthspan, Soulmate Food and TLC Care Homes. He also specialises in nutrition for dementia care.

## Frances Ive



Frances Ive is a freelance journalist, specialising in health, and the author of several non-fiction books. “I have reinvented myself several times,” she says. “I started my career as a journalist aged 22, and eventually had my own PR and copywriting business for 15 years. Then I followed my passion for complementary health and wrote for health magazines and national newspapers – Daily Express, The Times, The Guardian and Sunday Mirror.

“I had an excellent run for several years with most of my pitches being accepted, but things changed. The Internet made it much harder for freelancers and many of the publications I wrote

for closed down or cut pages, so I diversified, freelancing for PR companies, writing online copy and publications for companies

and charities, such as Macmillan and Marie Curie. I’ve now turned my hand to fiction, and trained as a TEFL teacher, which often involves writing training for business or exams.”

### What are you working on at the moment?

I’ve recently had two interesting jobs which I got through recommendations from Guild members – content writing for a charity website and research for a book by a Guild member. I run the website, Healthy Soul ([www.healthysoul.co.uk](http://www.healthysoul.co.uk)) and write several blog posts a month and a newsletter.

I like to give people information that they won’t hear elsewhere and address topical issues. For instance, I recently interviewed people whose health has been transformed by laser treatment for fibromyalgia, back pain, and chronic pain.

### Do you work from home or in an office?

About 20 years ago I gave up having an office and worked from home, which I now love. As a long-time freelance, I’m pretty disciplined, but have I do rules about leisure time. So, I’ve

always tried to take Fridays off.

### How has your workload changed over the years?

It’s been very up and down. I was in my heyday in the early ‘noughties’ with regular articles in national newspapers and magazines, but I was still able to pick my son up from school and have a good work/life balance.

Then I went through a lull where freelance journalism became hard and I had to diversify, and I was spending too much time pitching and selling myself. Now I teach English to foreigners as well, so I am busy with that, so I actually have a lot more to do now than I did 10 years ago.

### What are the best, and worst, things about being a freelance health writer?

The best thing is the freedom to choose when you work and what work you do. But the downside is that when there

isn’t enough work, you don’t have a financial buffer, so that you may accept jobs that you’re not so keen on and which don’t pay well. Rates have definitely gone down, and I find that I cannot command any more for a job than I did in the 80s.

### What ambitions do you still have?

I am very keen to get a novel published. I have one that I wrote several years ago and I’m still trying. I have two others which are incomplete.

### What are your favourite leisure time activities?

I love tennis – I still play and I watch it avidly. I am just back from a trip to the US where I spent three days at the Miami Masters Open Tennis tournament, which was fantastic. My one regret – I would love to have been a tennis writer!

SPOTLIGHT ON . . . networking

Guild events and professional meetings provide some great opportunities for networking. But networking is a skill you need to learn to make it work for you.

## How to improve your networking skills

**Kate Atkin** runs networking and confidence workshops and her definition of this key skill is 'Networking is a label for something we do all the time in our everyday lives – meeting and talking to other people while looking out for opportunities to help others and be helped by them.'

### Here are some of her Top Tips

**1 Define your objectives before the networking event.** Are you looking for a commission or are you just curious to see who is there? Don't go with the attitude "What am I going to get out of this" instead think of the other person "What do I have to offer them?"

**2 Think about your contact cards.** Please don't be the one who says "Oh, I didn't bring them with me" or "I've just run out of them". If you don't have any, get them and use both sides – one side for contact details, the other to expand on what you have to offer.

Figure out a way to manage them during the event, as you could be juggling a glass/plate, a bag and a handshake. One way is to have a jacket with pockets – one used as an in tray, one as an out tray. Why not use those cards to set yourself a goal before the event? Such as – I will not leave until I have collected 10 cards/given 10 away?



**KATE ATKIN** is author of *The Confident Manager* and *The Presentation Workout*.

For more information, coaching, keynotes or workshops on how to boost your confidence and network effectively, see [www.kateatkin.com](http://www.kateatkin.com) or contact **Kate** on 07779 646 976 or email [kate@kateatkin.com](mailto:kate@kateatkin.com)

You can download a free copy of **Kate's tips booklet, *The Networking Factor*** from her website: [www.kateatkin.com/the-networking-factor/](http://www.kateatkin.com/the-networking-factor/)  
You can also follow **Kate** on Twitter @kateatkin

**3 Use your elevator pitch.** If you are looking for work, or to make an impression, condense your offer into a few sentences that you can deliver over the time a lift would take to travel through a few floors – around 30 seconds. And, ideally, do this without sounding 'wooden' or 'mechanical' (it gets easier with practice).

**4 Circulate.** For some of us, this is the hardest aspect of networking.

It can be so easy to stay in your comfort zone, spending the whole event catching up with someone you know well, rather than moving on and meeting someone new. Small groups surrounding the speaker or sponsor can seem intimidating but, if you really want to speak to them, feel free to move in.

Opening lines that work are: "Hello, do you mind if I join you...?" "Did you enjoy the presentations?" "I'd just like to introduce myself". If they won't let you in, move away and try again later.

If you get 'stuck' with someone, it's OK to move on, saying politely "I must just catch X over there..." or "Lovely to meet you...I'm just going to circulate a bit". If that's too difficult, then ask if they know X and offer to introduce them. Go over and leave them with X while you move on. And, finally, remember that others will need/want to move on from you too ... so be prepared to continue any in-depth discussions on another occasion.

**5 Follow up.** During the few days after the event, sort out those cards. Tag each one with the date you met and where and any promises you may have made (eg, send them a pdf of your latest article, copy of the magazine you work for). Send a short 'lovely to meet you, do keep in touch' email, but don't bombard them with information unless they have asked for it.

MEMBERS' NEWS

**NEW BOOKS** by members

**Engaging with the media**

**John Illman's** *Handling the media: communication and presentation skills for healthcare professionals\** is the first book of its kind to focus on both the written and spoken word. This title covers everything from the news business to media interviews; from blogging to medical case histories; and from therapeutic writing to the history of medical journalism.



John maintains that vociferous lobbies and snake-oil salesmen appreciate the importance of engaging with the media more readily than reputable experts who stand back, naively believing that "the evidence will speak for itself". Journalists, he argues, are only as good as their sources.

\*Published by JIC Books, £14.99 including p&p, and available from [www.jicmedia.org](http://www.jicmedia.org)

**Katherine is a real pro winner**



**Katharine Tate**, The Food Teacher, has recently been announced as the UK winner in the 'Best Cookbook for Professionals' category for the Gormand World Cookbook Awards.

She self-published her award-winning book *No Kitchen Cookery*

for Primary Schools last November and this has now been entered into the Best in The World Awards to be held in China on 28 May. She wrote the book following requests from a number of schools who were struggling to deliver the cooking and nutrition curriculum without equipment or space.

For more details about her book visit [www.thefoodteacher.co.uk/shop/no-kitchen-cookery-for-primary-schools/](http://www.thefoodteacher.co.uk/shop/no-kitchen-cookery-for-primary-schools/) or contact her direct at [info@thefoodteacher.co.uk](mailto:info@thefoodteacher.co.uk)

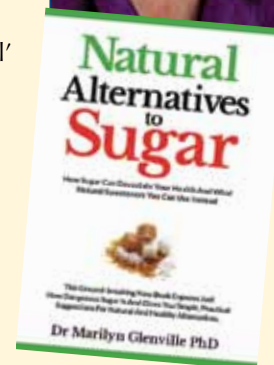
**Tackling the sugar challenge**

Dr Marilyn Glenville's new book *Natural Alternatives to Sugar\** exposes just how dangerous sugar is to your health and gives you simple, practical suggestions for natural and healthy alternatives.



Backed by the scientific evidence, this volume covers:

- What is 'sugar' and how does it increase your risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity?
- Just how 'natural' are 'natural' sweeteners?
- Can supplements help curb your cravings?
- A simple 5-day sugar detox plan
- 36 delicious sweet recipes made without sugar



It's time to ditch the sugar, banish those sugar cravings once and for all and enjoy a healthy sugar-free life. And this book will show you how.

\*Published by Lifestyles Press, £9.97, and available from Amazon and [www.marilynglenville.com](http://www.marilynglenville.com)

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MEMBERS' NEWS

## New online help for MI sufferers

Alex Gazzola has launched a new website and blog for sufferers of allergy to methylisothiazolinone (MI), to help the thousands affected by the current epidemic of sensitivity to this preservative.

MI is found in cosmetics, wet wipes, household cleaning products, paints, varnishes and air fresheners, and sufferers of allergy to MI experience painful inflammation and rashes on the skin when exposed to it. Find it at [www.mi-free.com](http://www.mi-free.com)



## GUILD COMMITTEE

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freelance food and healthwriter

Radhika Narayan  
freelance digital health writer

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**The Guild Summer Party, July 14**  
@ The Royal Society of Medicine's Chandos House, 2 Queen Anne Street, London W1G 9LQ

## New agony aunt at JC

### Hilary Freeman joins the JC as its agony aunt

By Joanna Mitchell, April 1, 2016



The JC is to launch an agony aunt column. Hilary Freeman will be joining the JC to give advice on relationships and the problems.

She said: "It's a pleasure to be the new agony aunt for the Jewish Chronicle and I hope that my advice will both comfort and help readers with their personal dilemmas."

Ms Freeman, who lives in north London with her partner and baby daughter, has recently agony aunts for six years at *Woman's Own* magazine before taking her professional skills to the JC.

She has written for a range of publications, including *The Times*, *The Daily Mail*, *Us Weekly* and *Marie Claire*.

Hilary Freeman's agony column in the *Jewish Chronicle* will answer personal and relationship problems and will feature in the paper and online twice a month.

## Christine's one-stop showcase website



Christine Michael has a new website at [www.christinemichael.co.uk](http://www.christinemichael.co.uk). This is Christine's 'one-stop' showcase for her work. It was developed by Liz Walsh ([www.elizabeth-walsh.co.uk](http://www.elizabeth-walsh.co.uk)) and the photography is by Linda Scannell ([www.lindascannell.com](http://www.lindascannell.com)).