

Machrihanish Marine Farm opening ceremony by HRH the Princess Royal

Derek Robertson

May 29th was a special day for MMF Ltd as it marked the formal opening of the new cod hatchery at Machrihanish, some 18 months after building commenced. The omens were not good the week leading up to the 29th as the wind refused to stop blowing, the polytunnel installers fell off their ladders (and also into Campbeltown loch) so the opening was held partly outdoors. Fortunately the sun shone on the day and didn't go in until November.

The week leading up to the meeting had been pandemonium finishing off tanks, pumps, drains and filters with visits from special branch, the Lord Lieutenant of Argyll, Royal press officers, Royal bodyguards, caterers, the works! The big day dawned dull and misty but the sun soon shone on tired eyes, following a dinner with the invited guests the night before. These

lucky guests were shipped off to Springbank Distillery to sample the famous local tippie prior to being bussed to Lossit House to await the arrival of the Princess Royal. The police sniffer dogs arrived at the hatchery with 7 armed guards at 9am and staff were grilled, drains checked and areas sealed off with tape prior to the armed police merging into the hills and woods surrounding the hatchery.

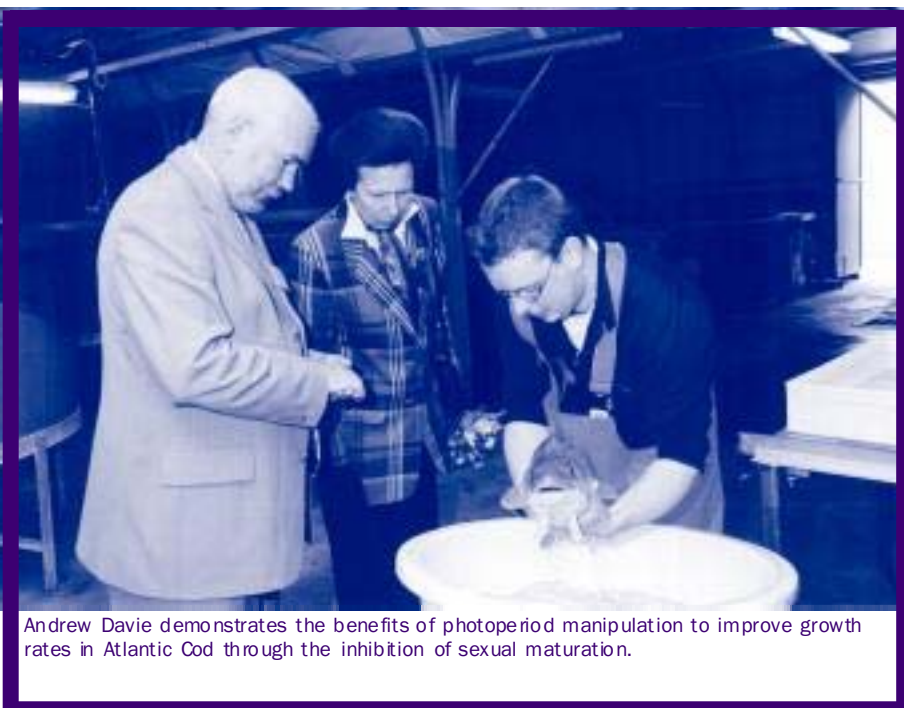
The welcoming party of Professor Christine Hallett, acting Principal, who had kindly stepped in to fill the place left by Colin Bell's untimely death, Bjorn Myrseth, Managing Director of Marine Farms ASA, Patrick Stewart, deputy Lord Lieutenant of Argyll, Randolph Richards, Derek Robertson, Richard Prickett and Julian Pajak were all lined up at 10.55 when special branch signalled the Princess Royal's helicopter had arrived. One minute later a people carrier full of Mum, Dad and 4 kids came around the corner and were highly impressed with the welcoming party standing stiffly to attention for them, special branch moved in and sent them on their way. Precisely at 11 am the Royal

Volvo arrived and Princess Anne beautifully attired in tweed and gloves, with bag lady in tow, was met by Patrick Stewart. Following short speeches by Bjorn Myrseth and Christine Hallett the Princess Royal unveiled the plaque commemorating the opening and said "Thank you all for doing so much work here, especially in this part of Scotland". Derek Robertson then took her on a guided tour of the hatchery and showed her the processes involved in cod production. HRH seemed impressed by all that she saw but said that she was not too keen on salmon farming in some places as their jumping kept her awake at night when her yacht was moored next door to them! Cod would be much quieter neighbours!

Derek was impressed by the Princess Royals' knowledge of Argyll and the importance of fish farming to the area and her impressive recall of meeting him at a smoked salmon factory opening, 10 years previously. The staff were all introduced and the bowing and curtseying lessons paid off handsomely. David Whitaker (MSC 2002) particularly pleased HRH by addressing her as "your majesty" and the "Royal Handrail" specially commissioned for the day for one of the broodstock rooms was put to good use. The cod performed to cue for the cameras and looked wonderful and the visitor book was duly signed, Anne.

Following the tour of the hatchery the Princess Royal then visited the Marine Lab next door and Bill Roy and his team were all introduced, Andrew Davie gave an impressive display of cod gonads, Cam displayed his prowess with sea bass and Chris Sommerville and Janet Stone explained the intricacies of sea lice cycles.

95 minutes after arrival and half an hour over schedule, much to the consternation of the Royal Protection Officer, HRH departed to Lossit House, the beautiful home of Colonel Hector and Wendy Macneal, to meet



Andrew Davie demonstrates the benefits of photoperiod manipulation to improve growth rates in Atlantic Cod through the inhibition of sexual maturation.



Derek Robertson and David Whitaker discussing production with Princess Anne.

around 70 invited guests for lunch. These guests, consisting of University officials, Institute staff and advisory committee members, MP's, MSP's, local Councillors, fish farmers and local dignitaries were all bowled over by HRH's charm and humour and obvious love of and interest in Argyll.

Following HRH's departure to open a wind farm at Tangy Hill, the guests were split into seven groups and given an escorted tour of the hatchery before departing to all corners of the country.

The day was a huge success and everything ran like clockwork, the party that night at Craigard house was memorable for many reasons, but that is another story!!

Thesis Update

MSc Aquaculture

Av Reyni L.

The use of pure oxygen in the pre-growing unit at a sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) and sea bream (*Sparus aurata*) hatchery in Portugal.

Baglina A. M.

The efficacy of alternative compounds for the treatment of *Ichthyophthirius multifiliis* (Fouquet, 1870) infecting rainbow trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss* (Walbaum).

Buray P. R.

The effect of dietary arachidonic acid on mit quality in the Atlantic halibut (*Hippoglossus hippoglossus*).

Campbell S.

n-3 fatty acid requirement of *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*.

Dickson G.

Comparison of reproductive and hatchery performance of *Oreochromis niloticus* strains under commercial seed production conditions.

Dowd S.

Observations on the cardinal tetra (*Paracheirodon axelrodi*) ornamental fishery with an emphasis on assessments of stress.

Gislason H. R.

The role of antioxidants in fish feed pigmentation.

Gongora M. E.

Resource management in Belize: The diversification of aquaculture using geographical information system.

Herlin M.

A nitrogen budget for farmed Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua* L.).

Kakos A. I.

A quantitative assessment of the efficacy of Hyperkote™ for foulant removal from fish cage farming.

Kanellopoulos I.

Effectiveness of safety legislation in fish-farming.

McDonald N.

Investigations on feed related ammonia concentration in commercially reared Atlantic halibut *Hippoglossus hippoglossus* (L.)

McMullan R. A.

An examination of rainbow trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss* (Walbaum, 1972) egg incubation success in the wild in Scotland.

Minimilü P.

Broodstock management of brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) using microsatellite and passive integrated transponder (PIT) tag system.

Newton R. W.

Determinants of egg quality and the significance of blastomere morphology for assessment of egg quality in cod *Gadus morhua*.

Oliver R. L. A.

Investigation into the growth performance of juvenile Nile tilapia, *Oreochromis niloticus* L. fed on mixed feeding schedules, with particular attention to the compensatory response.

Price C.

A participatory observation study on the use of pesticides in integrated farming systems of central Thailand.

Schram M.

A qualitative study of the attachment mechanisms of fouling organisms onto fish-cage nets coated with Hyperkote™, a novel fouling-release coating.

Smith J. E.

The effects of fallowing on the biodiversity of sediments under Atlantic salmon marine cages.

Tan Y. W.

Investigation of particulate waste dispersion from a salmon farm and comparison with results predicted by spreadsheet and GIS waste dispersion models.