

The Trafalgar Dispatch arrives in style for a symbolic re-enactment



HISTORY REVISITED: The arrival of the the Trafalgar Dispatch at Weymouth, watched by hundreds of spectators

Pictures: Geoff Moore G1325G

Hundreds watch as history is revisited

THE Trafalgar Dispatch was greeted by hundreds of spectators and blazing sunshine in Weymouth.

The horse-drawn replica post chaise carrying the dispatch travelled along the beach wall and promenade from Lcdmoor to the Jubilee Clock.

Eager spectators lined the promenade as the actor playing Lieutenant Lapenotière handed a copy of the dispatch to Weymouth and Portland Mayor Les Ames.

Two Royal Marine buglers and drummers in authentic 1805 uniforms along with Weymouth Concert Brass Band provided the music adding to the atmosphere of the symbolic re-enactment.

Standing alongside several naval officers in full uniform was Lord Digby, of Minterne Magna, near Cerne Abbas, from carrying a genuine Trafalgar sword.

His great great grandfather Sir Henry Digby was the captain of HMS Africa which fought alongside Nelson's HMS Victory in the Battle of Trafalgar.

Lord Digby, 81, a retired Commander in Chief in the Army in the Far East, said: "It was awarded for meritorious services of signal victory over the combined fleets of France and Spain in the Battle of Trafalgar."

By LAURA WILLIAMS

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"I love these events because I was Lord Lieutenant for Dorset for fifteen years so I had a lot of ceremonial functions. It is good to be a part of these celebrations."

The dispatch was led on to the Pavilion by the crew of HMS Hurworth which arrived in from Portsmouth yesterday morning.

Travelling with the post chaise was Wey Valley pupil Lewis Bartlett, 12, from Weymouth Drama Club. His job was to shovel any mess left behind by the horses.

He had a well deserved break at the reception in the Pavilion where he was joined by more members of Weymouth Drama Club dressed in specially made period dress.

The actor playing Lt John Lapenotière, Alex Price, was accompanied by Marc Jones, 23, a present-day Royal Naval Officer from Dartmouth to signify naval achievement past and present.

Organiser Rear Admiral John Croydon, who spent 37 years serving in the Royal Navy, said in his commentary: "Two hundred years on we live in a different world from that of Trafalgar and Lord Nelson."

"There are new dangers and new enemies."



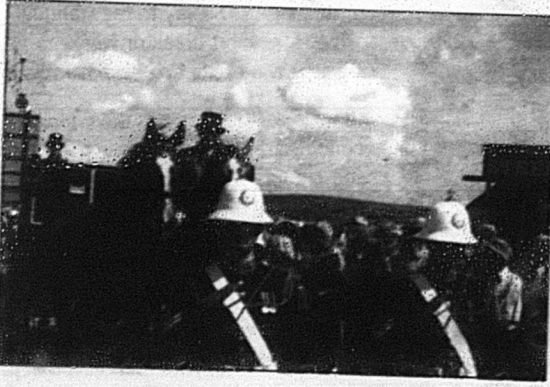
LOOKING SHARP: Lord Digby shows the Trafalgar sword to actor Alex Price

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DISPATCH TIME: Crowds waiting, left, and, right, the arrival of the historic document at Weymouth

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Organic produce checks warning

By PETER HAWKINS

ORGANIC produce is coming under the spotlight in an undercover trading standards investigation.

Officers are warning that they plan to check the history of products with an organic label to ensure claims can be justified.

They will also be touring farmers' markets to ensure that products on sale have been grown, reared, caught or processed in a way that matches claims by the stallholder.

Dorset County Council trading standards divisional manager Ivan Hancock said: "We will be concentrating largely on Dorset-based businesses but with a particular focus on the farmers' markets."

He said concentrating on farmers' markets in the county was due to the large amount of organic products on sale and not an indication of a problem with the markets or stallholders themselves.

"Organic food sales are growing massively and products have more and more shelf space.

"There definitely is a premium attached to it which consumers are prepared to pay and it's an area where consumers find it very difficult to challenge the claims themselves."

Mr Hancock said that officers would be carrying out undercover checks over the next few months and said that mislabelling organic food was "a very serious misdescription".

"You really are hoodwinking the public with a fairly limited chance of the public noticing."

Manor Farm owner Will Best, who produces organic milk, said it was good to see that the council was willing to stamp out people who misused the organic label.

He said: "It's a very time consuming process and if someone is trying to bypass it and call themselves organic then it's not on."

"In order to be certified as organic you have to follow a very stringent book of rules. Most of us are doing this honestly."

He added: "There is no doubt that there are people who are breaking the rules and skimping here and there."

Dinner money

DINERS have been asked to go without lunch in response to the African famine crisis.

Jane Ciark is holding a 'No Lunch For Niger' event at her home at 4, Clearmount Cottages, Old Castle Road, Weymouth, from 12 noon until 2pm on Saturday, September 3.

The idea is for participants to donate the costs of their meal. For more information, contact 01305 777017.