

Wicked Stepmothers World goes global



GLOBAL SUCCESS: Victoria Merrick of Home Farm House, Somerby, who runs Wicked Stepmothers World

COOKING kangaroo in Sydney and painting in Bath are two of the new offerings from a north Lincolnshire woman as she expands her lifestyle courses across the world.

In 2007 Australia-born Victoria Merrick started offering lifestyle courses from her home in Somerby near Brigg, subjects including the kitchen, the garden, the arts, body and soul.

Courses range from half-a-day to a weekend and both tutors and students have been coming to northern Lincolnshire from around the UK for them.

But now the autumn and winter programme for the business, which is called Wicked Stepmothers World, sees it spreading its wings across the globe.

Victoria herself travelled the world as children's nanny to Oscar and Rupert, the two sons of Barry Humphries (Dame Edna Everage) and was at one time in the café business in Sydney.

When she moved to Somerby she became interested in the garden, did a Royal Horticultural Society course for two years at Bishop Burton College, and also felt that with such a large farmhouse and garden it could be used as a venue for lifestyle courses.

Courses being offered in north Lincolnshire during the autumn and winter will include felt making, cooking game, baking and Christmas wreath making.

But there are courses in Wimbledon, including one on planning a cutting garden, as well as the painting weekend in Bath and a course called 'How to cook a kangaroo' in Sydney.

It is the first time courses have gone outside northern Lincolnshire.

Victoria explained that an Australian friend of hers who is in Wimbledon asked why she did not offer courses there and she said: "I thought wherever I want to go I will develop a course."

She said eating kangaroo was not at all uncommon, but neither she nor several of her friends had done it before she experienced Hugh Wennerbom cooking kangaroo when she was visiting Sydney.

Victoria said: "I asked him if he would run a demonstration."

Now she is also planning an aboriginal art exhibition for Somerby in May and, subject to sponsorship, could even have Hugh Wennerbom here cooking.

And she said: "There will definitely be other venues coming up and I'm planning a cooking event in Italy in the spring."

Currently the business is running about 30 courses a year and Victoria said: "The last few courses I have had this year have been really good. It's really picking up."

The business can be contacted on 01652 628560 or e-mail info@wickedstepmothersworld.co.uk

The website is at www.wickedstepmothersworld.co.uk.



SKY HIGH: Left, Gabrielle Francis, 8, of Barton St Peter's, whose winning poster (seen above) is displayed on the Humber Bridge gantry while works are being carried out.

School's winning poster is on the Humber Bridge

A COMPANY which is working on a £2.1-million project at the Humber Bridge forged a link with a nearby school.

The work being carried out by Barrow-Upon-Humber business C Spencer enables the main suspension cables of the bridge to be inspected and involves men working in gantries at heights of up to 90 metres.

The firm approached St Peter's C of E

Primary School in Barton-Upon-Humber, asking it to name one of the gantries.

They decided to call it the St Peter's Gantry and then the children were asked to design a poster or logo.

Now a poster designed by eight-year-old pupil Gabrielle Francis is proudly on display up to 90 metres above the road across the Humber Bridge.

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