

The Essence of Bowland ...Bottled

Richard and Rachel's vapour infused tippie using wildflowers is helping re-GIN-erate traditional meadows across Lancashire

A second serving of a seasonal gin distilled with wild herbs, grasses and blooms from some of the richest wildflower meadows in England will be released at a celebration of traditional hay meadows in Slaidburn this summer.

And last year's HayTime gin was a huge success, selling out within just six weeks of its release.

Goosnargh Gin distillers Richard and Rachel Trenchard have been working with farmer Peter Blackwell and Forest of Bowland AONB Farming and Wildlife officer Sarah Robinson to source and harvest a blend of wild herbs, grasses and flowers to impart distinct verdant tones to the finished gin.

HayTime is just one of Goosnargh Gin's creations which are distilled in small batches, using traditional methods in copper alembic stills near Bleasdale, in the shadow of Beacon Fell. The company uses local, organic and sustainably grown botanicals.

"We're keeping the exact blend of HayTime a secret, but we have used flowers, grasses and leaves from species like meadow vetchling, sweet vernal grass, red clover and yellow rattle to distil the gin, giving it the unique essence of Bowland," explained Rachel.

"A sip of this carefully distilled gin – served with tonic and a garnish of fresh green apple – will transport you straight to these exceptionally special and ecologically significant Bowland meadows on a sunny summer's day – alive with birdsong and the gentle background hum of bees."

“Until now, Peter's sheep and cattle have been the primary beneficiaries of this rich oasis of biodiversity”

The enterprising couple has already achieved significant success since launching in October 2018, with international and local awards for their gins, which are

inspired by the stunning landscapes of Bowland.

For every bottle of HayTime gin sold, Richard and Rachel will donate £5 to projects in the Forest of Bowland, to encourage the education of young children about the importance of protecting these areas.





The wildflower-rich Coronation Meadows at Bell Sykes Farm act as a living seedbank – one of the last unimproved flower-rich grasslands in this part of Lancashire.

Established by HRH Prince Charles in 2013 to mark the 60th anniversary of the Coronation of Her Majesty the Queen, Coronation Meadows are a network of some 90 protected wildflower meadows which maintain a living seedbank to provide a springboard for the restoration and creation of new sites across the country.

These very special meadows encourage the growth of native species and are home to iconic northern upland species including meadow crane's-bill and melancholy thistle along with a colourful mix of yellow rattle, eyebrights, pignut, buttercups and lady's mantle.

Peter lets the grasses grow much longer before cutting and bailing, so that the seeds can develop and then be used to regenerate wildflower meadows elsewhere.

“We hope a sip of this carefully distilled gin – served with tonic and an appropriate garnish – will transport you straight to these exceptionally special and ecologically significant Bowland meadows”

“Peter’s meadows really are some of the finest examples of upland unimproved grassland anywhere in England,” said Sarah. “They typically produce around 10 times the variety of species you’d find in more intensively cropped meadows and attract a whole host of insects and pollinators to create a really rich base to the food chain.

“Until now, Peter’s sheep and cattle have been the primary beneficiaries of this rich oasis of biodiversity, but with the first bottling of this very special gin, we humans can discover what we’ve been missing... and help safeguard the future of this vitally important habitat.”

National Meadows Day celebrations take place at Bell Sykes Farm from 10am on Saturday, July 4th.

Richard and Rachel from Goosnargh Gin will be available to chat at the event and bottles of Hay Time gin will be available to purchase (over 18s only).

Bell Sykes Farm is within easy walking distance of Slaidburn. Park in the car park next to the bridge, cross the River Hodder and follow the footpath signs upstream to reach the meadows. The best time of year to visit is June. A footpath map can be downloaded from the Forest of Bowland AONB Website at:

<https://www.forestofbowland.com/files/uploads/pdfs/viewranger/Bell-Sykes-Hay-Meadow.pdf>