



THE WYRE DRAWER

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AUTUMN 2008



At the Ammunition Technical Officers' Award Ceremony at Kineton in May The Master holds the decanter presented by HRH The Princess Royal to the Best Student, Captain Carl Griffiths.

Master's Message

I now appreciate more than ever the tremendous privilege one enjoys as Master of a City Livery Company. In recent months I have, as promised, used my best endeavours to uphold the dignity and great traditions of our glorious City. Whilst I must admit at times this has been personally demanding, the underlying theme has been immense pleasure to be involved in the 'affairs of the City'.

One aspect remains very much in focus - improving philanthropic commitments within our Company. Progress has been made - witness the wonderful response to my appeal to sponsor the Commanding Officer of HMS Victorious, David Pollock, who completed the London Marathon in three hours 25 minutes. Our Company's contribution raised close to £17,000 for the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association (BLESMA)

But we would all do well to remember that when we were clothed we committed ourselves to supporting the charitable aspects of our membership. Please never lose sight of this obligation. Whilst it is said "it is never too late to learn", nor "is it ever too late to give"!

James Simmons, Master 2008-2009

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Church Service and Dinner

After the April Court Meeting the traditional Church Service was held in St. James' Garlickhythe - the Company's spiritual home.

I was particularly pleased to read St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians, for I feel it reflects our Company motto - *Amicitiam Trahit Amor* - Friendship draws forth Love. The principles of Faith, Hope and Charity are at the very core of our Company and our Chaplain, The Very Reverend Dr Richard Fenwick, eruditely moulded his sermon around this theme. In good heart we left for Dinner at Vintners' Hall where we enjoyed a splendid repast. Before the speeches we were entertained by a soprano accompanied by a pianist.

Second Warden John Edgcumbe proposed the Toast to the Guests, embracing visiting Masters from the Fanmakers, Innholders, Painter-Stainers and Cutlers and new Liverymen Remco Bloemkolk and Jane Ware. As an ardent railway enthusiast, John gave a special welcome for our principal guest Adrian Shooter, Chairman of Chiltern Railways, the UK's most successful train operating company, who delivered a very interesting presentation.

James Simmons, Master 2008-2009



Left to Right: After the Church Service. The Company Chaplain, The Very Reverend Dr Richard Fenwick, The Master James Simmons, Second Warden John Edgcumbe, and the Beadle John Hollingsworth.



Adrian Shooter, Chairman of Chiltern Railways, the principal guest at the Dinner.

Sechseläuten

The Master and Clerk were invited in April to take part in the Swiss Spring festival, Sechseläuten, in Zurich, held each year by the 25 Swiss Guilds. Our Company is affiliated to the *Zunft zu den Drei Königen* (Guild of the Three Kings) of which two Liverymen, Thomas Hofer and Walter Isler, are members.

The day began with an early reception, followed by lunch with long speeches in Swiss German, requiring more than an 'O' level to understand. We then took part in the parade through the streets, marching behind the band, while the



Left to right: Liveryman Thomas Hofer, Past Master Michael Roberts, The Master James Simmons, The Clerk Robin House, Past Master Stuart Holmes, Liveryman Walter Isler.

Master rode in state in a carriage. We managed to keep our gowns and hats dry from the rain and hail and witnessed the burning of the Böögg, an effigy of winter, while mounted horsemen from each Guild rode around it. We then returned to the Hall of the Three Kings for dinner and more speeches. The evening was spent visiting the halls of other Guilds, on foot behind the band or by specially hired tram. It was a very different slant on the Lord Mayor's Show with plenty of colourful pageantry and ceremony. The difference is that in Zurich, the girls run out from the crowds and exchange flowers for a kiss!

Robin House, Clerk

Whitechapel Bell Foundry Visit

In April the Master and 40 Liverymen and their guests visited the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in East London, the oldest in the UK, and one of only seven still in existence. Founded in 1570 by Robert Mot, its history can be traced even further back - to 1420. The Foundry has produced bells of all sizes, ranging from small hand bells to the most famous bell in the world, Big Ben in Westminster, cast in 1858 and weighing in at 13.5 tons. The tour was hosted by Alan Hughes, a fourth generation Foundry owner. His entertaining and informative tour and talk took us all over the very cramped and Dickensian building to see every aspect of bell production. The party emerged unscathed, if a little dusty, to enjoy a delicious buffet in the family living quarters above the Foundry. Our thanks to Liveryman John Walsham for helping organise the visit.

Nick Sillitoe



Graduation Ceremony, Kineton

The Master, First Warden, Clerk and Liaison Officer were present at Marlborough Barracks, Kineton on 15 May when, this year exceptionally, HRH The Princess Royal, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Logistic Corps, presented prizes to soldiers graduating at the annual Ammunition Technical Officers' Parade. Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. Martin Gliniecki welcomed guests before the Master announced the overall winner and passed a crystal decanter to Her Royal Highness to present to Captain Carl Griffiths.

Graduation is the culmination of training bringing the Ammunition Technician (AT) to a common standard in maths, physics, explosives chemistry and technology. It includes an introduction to ballistics, systems design and render safe procedures. Students also receive training in ammunition systems and explosives management, repair, surveillance and disposal. Teaching includes interactive instruction, simulation and practical exercises. ATs are supported throughout their careers with further training and experience.

Our gratitude goes to everyone training these fine young officers who risk their lives in the defence of our nation.

Malcolm Craig

Ladies' Court Dinner

The Dinner at Pewterers' Hall on 21 May was hosted by the Master, James Simmons, and his wife Jill. The earliest reference to the Pewterers' Company is in the Corporation of London's records dated 1348. Its first Charter, granted in 1474, hangs in the elegant modern hall where we dined.

The sumptuous dinner had a traditional British flavour and was accompanied by wines from the old and new worlds. The Master, who had presented each lady with a charming personally researched and chosen pewter pillbox, proposed the Toast to the Ladies in a brief and witty speech. His wife, Jill, responded and an impromptu vote of thanks by Caroline Nathan was much appreciated.



The Master and his Lady at the Ladies' Court Dinner

After dinner, guests were delightfully entertained by 'Con Brio', a trio who performed a selection of songs from popular musicals, including the Master's favourite 'Les Miserables'.

Tim Humm

Visit to Kineton Barracks Royal Logistic Corps

The Company were guests in July at the Army School of Ammunition (AS of A) at Marlborough Barracks.

A welcoming address was followed by a talk and video describing the historical background of the AS of A and the Ammunitions Depot. The school educates and trains through to graduation Ammunition Technical Officers, who are primarily involved in bomb disposal. A tour followed when practical examples of the AS of A in action were demonstrated, including bomb disposal training in circumstances similar to street terrorist warfare. Practical examples of different types of explosives and the damage they cause were also demonstrated.

We were also shown the site of the first battle of the English Civil War, Edgehill, marked by a small memorial stone. A local historian outlined the history and strategy of the armies' battle plans. Finally, the party enjoyed an excellent lunch in the Officers' Mess.

The Company would like to thank Commanding Officers, Lt. Col Martin Gliniecki (AS of A) and Lt. Col Richard Maybery (DEMSS) for kindly arranging to host this very interesting and enjoyable day.

Malcolm Craig

Royal Ballet School

A small party from the livery led by the Master once again were invited to attend the Royal Ballet School's end of year performance at the Royal Opera House in July. The performance is always packed with families of members of the school as well as those who sponsor the school in any way.

The level of performance is always outstanding and this year the teamwork was especially noteworthy. We were all thrilled by the discipline, skill and overall performance.

After the performance the school held its usual Graduation Leavers ceremony in Floral Street when the Master presented the Company's Prize to second year student Vadim Muntagirov on behalf of the livery.

Brian Jones, Master 2007-2008



Vadim Muntagirov, winner of the Company's Prize. Picture: Johan Persson

Saddlers' Hall Luncheon



The Master with the guest of honour, Dr Hamish Hale.



The Master with Bella Lane, Royal School of Needlework gold and silver wire work winner.

At the Luncheon, held in July, John Coker made an excellent Toast to the Guests who included His Excellency the Fijian High Commissioner, four Masters, and the Royal School of Needlework gold and silver wire work winner, Bella Lane, who was presented with her certificate and cheque by the Master. The principal guest, Dr Hamish Hale, described himself as a 'jobbing scientist'. In fact, during his career he was at the cutting edge of medical research and he gave guests an account of the many projects in which he had been involved which included Dolly the sheep. His presentation

was scientifically extremely interesting - delivered in a pithy, witty and amusing style.

During the preceding Court meeting Dr. Jonathan Richardson was clothed as Liveryman. At the same meeting the Court decided to make the July 2009 meeting an evening event with the aim of assisting younger Liverymen to attend.

James Simmons, Master 2008-2009

HQS Wellington

Ninety one Liverymen and their guests assembled in black tie under the awning on the quarterdeck of the Headquarters Ship (formerly HMS) Wellington, the Livery Hall of the Master Mariners' Company on 23 July. It was a lovely summer's evening and the ship rocked gently to the movement of the tidal stream. After the reception, the Master and Wardens led the way down below to the former engine and boiler room, converted into a fine wood-panelled dining room where dinner was served. After the Loyal Toast and a suitable break to admire the



The Shooshoo Babies entertain guests on board HQS Wellington.

view of the South Bank from the portholes, a truly excellent cabaret was provided by Shooshoo Baby, who sang, flirted outrageously with the guests, and sat on the Master's knee!

Robin House, Clerk

Weekend in York

A full and interesting programme had been arranged for the 49 participants, reflecting the history of the City. The weekend began on the evening of 12 September with a champagne reception. This was followed by buffet supper in the atmospheric National Railway Museum's Great Hall, surrounded by the world renowned heritage collection of locomotives.

On Saturday the group was welcomed to the Mansion House by the Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Brian Watson. The Mansion House Manager then led a tour when the party was able to admire the City Mace, the renowned Sword and other artefacts. The visit concluded with wine and canapés. In the evening there was a black tie dinner in the 14th-Century Bedern Hall – home to three of York's Guilds. This was preceded by a champagne reception courtesy of



Left to right: The Master; the Lady Mayoress of York, Mrs Brian Watson; The Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Brian Watson; the Master's Lady.

the Master, whose guests included the Lord and Lady Mayoress of York and the Clerk to the Merchant Adventurers' Company and his wife.

Finally on Sunday there was a visit to Merchant Adventurers' Hall where the Clerk gave an informative account of the Company's history.

All in all an excellent weekend!

Grahame Hattam

Website

The GSWD website is at <http://www.gswd.co.uk>. We are working to make the site more useful and relevant to Liverymen.

On the site you will find electronic versions of The Wyre Drawer going back to edition five (Autumn 2003) as well as Masters' Reports to the Livery from Ken Blundell to Stuart Holmes.

We have now added some photographic galleries of Livery lunches, dinners and social events back to the start of this Livery year. You can find these under 'News.' There is also a calendar which is updated as new events are notified. Please also read the Charity pages.

Finally, we have a 'Members' Only' area which currently contains an electronic version of the 2008 Livery List but will have other documents of relevance to Liverymen which we would not wish to make totally public. The UserID and



The Master and his Lady on the footplate of a locomotive at the National Railway Museum in York.

password will be changed periodically and Liverymen will be notified in The Wyre Drawer as this happens. *The current UserID is 'member' and the password is 'summer'* (both lower case and without the quotes).

Please look at the site and let the webmaster or Clerk know what else you would find useful and would like to see.

David Bondy, Webmaster
(webmaster@gswd.co.uk)

Obituaries

The Company regrets to inform Liverymen of the deaths of Robert Haxforth (clothed October 1966), Noel Porter (clothed April 2003) and Edward Scopes (clothed July 1970).

Past Master Leslie Murray Johnson

Leslie Murray Johnson died peacefully in August, aged 88. He joined the Livery in January 1942, the Court in 1949 and was Master in 1958, the fifth generation Johnson to become Master. He was therefore able to celebrate earlier this year his 50th anniversary as a Past Master, a fine achievement in the annals of any Livery Company.

He was a strong personality, never short of a forceful opinion and never afraid to express his views, no matter how contentious. His encyclopaedic knowledge of wyre drawing and many other subjects was legendary. He was a longstanding member of the Lodge of Love and Friendship, where he served with distinction the offices of Secretary and Master.

He was a member of Southgate Hockey Club for whom he played for over 30 years, after which he took up umpiring to County Standard. He also served the Club in many capacities culminating in Life Vice President.

An inveterate traveller and gifted linguist, he visited countries throughout the world both on holiday and on behalf of his business, the firm of Toye Kenning and Spencer, for whom he was a Director until his retirement in 1985.

He was very widely read, a great conversationalist and a keen Bridge player, a game he enjoyed throughout his long life, belonging to three clubs and becoming renowned for his post mortems.

He will be sorely missed by his family and many friends.



Golfing Society

Liverymen interested in joining should contact: Geoffrey Perkins, FRICS, 'Fairlight', 25 Stagbury Avenue, Chipstead, Surrey. CR5 3PD.

Tel: 01737 553565

Lodge of Love and Friendship No 6123

The Lodge is open to male members of the Company. Those already entitled to join or wishing to become Freemasons should contact the Lodge Secretary: Tel 020 8953 1084
Email bobnuttall@btinternet.com

CLERK'S NOTES

**Please note the Clerk's new contact details:
9A Prince of Wales Mansions, Prince of
Wales Drive, London SW11 4BG.
Tel: 0207 498 0590**

Livery Company Briefings are advertised on the annual social and civic events list. The briefings provide a short introduction to the work of the City of London Corporation, especially the relationship with Livery Companies and are designed for all Liverymen, old and new, as well as wives, husbands and partners. Further details from the Clerk, from liverycourses@chandlers.ndonet.com or 0207 606 3591.

Forthcoming Events

For up-to-date details please visit the Company's website at www.gswd.co.uk

8 Nov	Lord Mayor's Show
3 Dec	Banquet, Mansion House
11 Dec	Carol Service, St Sepulchre-without-Newgate
12 Jan 2009	Common Hall and Installation Lunch, Vintners' Hall
10 Feb 2009	Magic Circle Visit and Supper

New Liverymen



April 2008 Jane Ware, Remco Bloemkolk

Past Master Emeritus

The following have been raised to the status of Past Master Emeritus:

Dennis Johnson
Richard Vanderpump

Charities Supported

Since the last edition, the Company has made grants to the following charities:

City of London Freeman's School
Sussex Heart Charity
Hackney Carriage Drivers Disneyland Tour
Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus
Coram Family Trust
Airborne Forces Museum Duxford (Use of gold and silver wire)
Help for Heroes
Sam Beare Hospice
St Paul's Cathedral vestments project (Use of gold and silver wire)
Mansion House Scholarship Scheme
Tower Hamlets
Lord Mayor's Show



July 2008 Jonathan Richardson