



# THE WYRE DRAWER

EDITION 20

SPRING 2011



*The Master 2011-12 and His Wardens after the Installation Ceremony in January. Left to right: Third Warden Robin Hope, Second Warden Tim Fitzgerald-O'Connor, First Warden Rodney Brody and the Master, Vernon Knapper.*

## Master's Message

As a provincial lad I had no City connections but, once introduced to the Liveries, I was quickly caught up in their history, tradition and fellowship. I hope to carry these values through my year. My interest in the Livery has been rewarded by an abundance of fellowship, which I feel we Liverymen should encourage others to experience, as well as to increase our membership.

A busy year ahead for the Company includes informal and fundraising events and a visit to Stockholm for the Fellowship weekend plus, for some, a visit to the Swiss Guilds in Zurich.

We are extremely proud of our strong relationship with our armed services. I am pleased to confirm a new affiliation with No 101 Squadron RAF, based in Oxfordshire, who fly VC10 air-to-air refuelling tankers (see page 6) A liaison with St John Ambulance (London) cadets has also been arranged, reinforcing our support of youth, already represented by our affiliation with the Sea Cadets.

My charity is the Mission to Seafarers, whose worldwide efforts support a body of men and women whose efforts helped develop trade in the City of London from earliest times.

My immediate predecessors have addressed the Company's financial health in a continually difficult financial climate and I am endeavouring to continue this work.

I do hope you will continue to support and enjoy the year with Christina and myself.

**Vernon Knapper**  
Master 2011-12

## Fundraising Events

*not to miss*

**Two events to raise  
funds for the  
Charitable Trust and  
the Master's Charity –  
The Mission to  
Seafarers.**

**15 July**

***Fundraising Concert at  
St Anne's Limehouse***

In this splendid  
Hawksmoor Church with  
pre-concert supper in a  
nearby hostelry

**16 September**

***Dinner Dance at the  
Haven***

This very special event  
will include a champagne  
reception, three course  
dinner and dancing



## **The New Master**

Vernon Knapper was born in December 1940 in Bournemouth where he grew up and was educated.

His business career has from an early age been with private companies, mainly in the catering and property investment industries. He has a particular interest in renovating existing structures and listed buildings for which he has won several awards.

He took time out to become a professional diving instructor in the mid 1960s. During the 1970s he became a National Examining Instructor and a National Officer (both Honorary National Treasurer and Secretary) of the Governing body of the British Sub Aqua Club.

He was a private pilot for many years and is interested in yachting as a member of Royal Motor Yacht Club and other sailing clubs, as well as skiing and curling.

He joined the Company in 1987, the Court in 1997, was Assistant Clerk in 2000 and Warden from 2007.

## **Autumn Court Dinner**

This proved to be a special occasion for me as my grandson, Christopher, became my apprentice. Four new Liverymen, Nigel Vaughan, Roger Carter, Gordon Beer and Jeremy Ray were introduced. We had a large representation from our Forces affiliates. The CO of the Ammunition Training

School was present as well as the Station Commander from Kineton together with Captain Ciaron Dyer, recovering from wounds in Afghanistan, and the Senior Pilot from 814 Naval Air Squadron. Also attending were four Masters and their Clerks and four other Masters with whom I formed friendships during my year. The icing on the cake was our guest speaker, Major General Martin White, who was formerly in charge of the RLC and is now also in charge (as Lord Lieutenant) of the Isle of Wight, where he and I went to school together. All in all an evening to remember!

### **John Edgcumbe Immediate Past Master**



*Binding Christopher Edgcumbe as an Apprentice and executing Indentures.*

## **Haven Charity Dinner**

Liveryman Julius Oberegger once again hosted a charity dinner for 32 liverymen and their guests at his restaurant, The Haven, in North London on 18 October. The evening began with a champagne reception and canapés followed by an excellent three-course dinner.

Through the generosity of Julius, the Haven Charity dinner is now a fixture in our calendar. It has raised considerable amounts for our charity which receives all the proceeds. This is the fifth year that Julius has hosted the dinner and, although numbers were slightly down on previous years, everyone who attended agreed it was an excellent event. Thanks to Julius, £2,000 was raised for our charitable fund.

The next dinner will be a larger affair on Friday 16 September and further information will be available nearer the time.

### **Michael Powell**



Left to right: Helen Powell; liveryman Julius Oberegger, owner of the Haven; Jill Lamond, his partner; and Assistant Michael Powell, organizer of the evening.

## St Paul's Visit



The party admire Flare II by Antony Gormley which hangs over the Cathedral's Geometric Staircase.

A group of 50 Liverymen, their wives and guests joined the Master and his lady for a privileged tour of the upper Triforium Galleries at St Paul's Cathedral in early November. These Galleries, which are not normally open to the public, comprise the Model Room with the huge original architect's model of St Paul's, the Library with its vast collection of delicate and historic books, and the space known as 'the BBC view' where cameras are located on key occasions to provide the most splendid panorama of the nave through to the choir stalls and high altar. The tour ended with the party descending the magnificent Geometric staircase and admiring Antony Gormley's installation, *Flare II*. With two guides and the Cathedral's librarian to host us, the visit was both educational and enjoyable.

Afterwards everyone adjourned to nearby Chez Gerard for a convivial dinner.

**John Edney**

## Lord Mayor's Day Flotilla

As part of this year's Lord Mayor's Show celebrations the Lord Mayor, Michael Bear, re-activated the tradition of a waterborne flotilla, believed to have last been enacted in 1927. It was timed to coincide with the early evening firework display.

Accordingly, The Thames Traditional Rowing Association assembled 20 traditional oared boats. Assistant (now Third Warden) Robin Hope's rowing club the 'Thames Traditional Boat Society' ([www.ttbs.org](http://www.ttbs.org)), was asked to take part in their quad skiff and, despite keen competition, Robin was included in the crew.

The flotilla, including four livery company cutters, with Masters and their wives on board, and crewing from their naval affiliations, assembled in a strong and choppy tide below Tower Bridge around the Queen's shallop 'Jubilant'. They then set off to row past HQS Wellington moored on the tideway below Waterloo Bridge. Here the new Lord Mayor, as Admiral of the Port of London, was saluted with the traditional tossing of oars and given three hearty cheers by the crews, who then enjoyed the impressive firework display from the river.



The Thames Traditional Rowing Society (left of picture) approaches Waterloo Bridge. Robin Hope is rowing three, directly behind stroke. Picture courtesy of Sue Milton – [thames-cards.co.uk](http://thames-cards.co.uk)

It was a truly memorable experience and everyone involved hoped it would not be another 83 years for this tradition to be repeated!

**Robin Hope**

## *The Banquet*

Over 200 liverymen and guests braved the snow, ice and missing trains to attend the Banquet on 2 December in the delightful surroundings of Fishmongers' Hall. They were rewarded by a splendid fishy meal and an excellent rendition of the Post Horn Gallop by Thames Fanfare Brass. The guest of honour, Alderman and Sheriff Fiona Woolf, responded to the Civic Toast proposed by the Master, thanked him for the cheque towards the Lord Mayor's charity Bear Necessities, and made a presentation to the Master on behalf of the Lord Mayor. The toast to the guests was proposed by Past Master Michael Roberts and the response was by the Baroness Valentine of Putney. It was an unusual pleasure to have two ladies responding to the toasts. Both focussed on the importance of London and the City for the wellbeing of the country. The Master thanked everyone for the efforts they had made to be present and hoped they would be warmed by a stirrup cup before departing.

**John Edgcumbe**  
**Immediate Past Master**



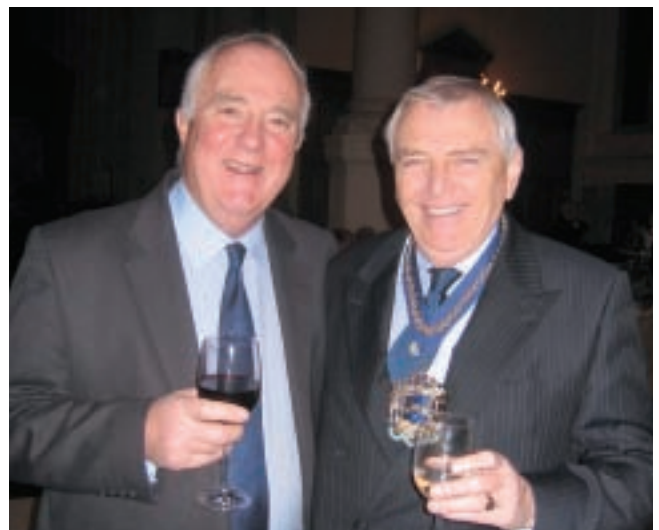
*Members of the Sea Cadet Corps and St John Ambulance Cadets line the stairs of the Fishmongers' Hall*



*The Court and top table guests at the Banquet.*

## *Carol Service*

The annual Carol Service was held on 9 December at St Sepulchre- without- Newgate. The Service was shared jointly with other City livery companies. Our Master read a lesson and after the service the congregation enjoyed a meal in the aisles of the church. The collection was donated to Combat Stress, the military charity specialising in the care of Veterans' mental health. Our picture shows the Master John Edgcumbe with Past Master Michael Roberts after the Service.



*Past Master Michael Roberts (left) with the Master at the Carol Service.*

## *Visit to Faslane*

The Master and six Liverymen were met on a frosty December evening at Glasgow airport by a young Naval rating who had given up his leave day to chauffeur us through snow covered countryside to Faslane. After a rapid health and safety briefing and some security photographs

we were soon unpacking in our spacious ensuite cabins in the Faslane Wardroom.

In the mess we met several of the crew of VICTORIOUS who entertained us with salty stories before a late supper. The following morning we were given a comprehensive tour of HMS VICTORIOUS, a five decked 16,000 ton submarine. We even had a quick look at the onboard nuclear reactor. After lunch we visited the submarine training facility and a very realistic simulator where we watched a mock attack on an enemy vessel. We then moved upstairs to push the buttons and steer a Royal Navy full colour simulator of a frigate into port. In the evening we were hosted by the Officers in the wardroom of HMS NEPTUNE, the submarine supply and training base. An excellent dinner saw us cementing our long and cherished liaison with the crew of VICTORIOUS.

We were privileged to experience this brief visit to VICTORIOUS and were encouraged by the enthusiasm, professionalism, dedication and sheer team commitment of the modern Royal Naval submarine service, particularly as every crew member we met was at least half our age.

**Gordon Warren**  
**VICTORIOUS Liaison Officer**

*See page 7 for further information on the Company's affiliation with HMS Victorious.*



*HMS Victorious.*

## ***Installation and Lunch***

After the Court Meeting on 10 January the Master presided at Common Hall and gave his valedictory address. After the oath had been administered to the First Warden, Vernon Knapper was installed and robed as Master for the forthcoming year. The new Master then installed Rodney Brody as First Warden, Tim Fitzgerald-O'Connor as Second Warden and Robin Hope as Third Warden as well as Richard Fenwick as Hon Chaplain. Sadly, John Coker had had to withdraw as a Warden through ill health.

An enjoyable lunch followed, attended by 120 Liverymen and their guests. Past Master Tim Waller proposed the toast to the Guests, introducing the new Liverymen Dr. Peter Lawrence, Mark Richardson and Frank Rycroft. The principal guest, Tony Mellery-Pratt, Past Master of the Innholders' Company, gave an accomplished and amusing speech in reply.

The Master concluded the formalities by thanking Tony Mellery-Pratt and congratulating his predecessor, John Edgcumbe, on an excellent year and outlining some events for 2011.

**Vernon Knapper**  
**Master 2011-12**

## ***Immediate Past Master's Overview***

In spite of all the warnings I had not appreciated how being Master takes over your life. I attended about 140 events, quite a number reinforcing our Forces affiliations, including our new one with 101 Squadron RAF at Brize Norton.

I came to realise what a huge amount of work our Clerk Robin House does behind the scenes and also Fourth Warden and Almoner Tim Fitzgerald-O'Connor, who sadly had a lot to do last year and did it well.

The Charity, Fund Raising and Events Committee members contribute a huge amount to the programme put together for your amusement and entertainment during the year. My only sadness is that we did not raise more for charity at our two main events.

I do appreciate the enormous support my wife, Jan, gave me during the year and my thanks to all who supported, and I hope enjoyed, all that we did. Finally, my thanks to the Court for electing me as Master 2010–11.

## Join the Golfers

After 37 years as Secretary of the Company's Golf Society, Past Master Geoffrey Perkins handed over the role to the me, John Edgcumbe, at the AGM in March. Everyone in the Society thanks Geoffrey and Barbara for the enormous effort they have put into making it run smoothly for so long.

We, like many others, are finding numbers declining. We do hope that liverymen who indicated when they joined the Society that they are keen golfers, will attend our fixtures during the year. We normally have four separate days plus a Triangular Match between the Carmen's Company and the RLC at the Army Golf Club at Aldershot. This year we hope to have joint days



*John Edgcumbe presents a prize to Geoffrey Perkins (left) at the Charity Golf Day.*

with other Liveries to swell numbers and meet other liverymen. We have a Spring Meeting, yet to be fixed, and then on 19 May we put a team of four into the Prince Arthur Cup at Walton Heath to play against all the other Companies. We will be at Denham in June, the RLC/Carmen match on 14 July, the Captain's Day at the Berkshire on 3 August and lastly Swinley Forest on 10 October. If you are a keen golfer, please give us your support.

**John Edgcumbe**

## COMPANY AFFILIATIONS

### New Affiliation –101 Squadron

The Company is delighted to have recently established a formal Association with No 101 Squadron of the Royal Air Force. The Squadron is based at RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire and flies VC10 aircraft in the air-to-air refuelling role. Formed on 12 July 1917 at South Farnborough, the Squadron has been in service from the Somme to Suez, Berlin to Baghdad, in Malaya, the Falklands and now, of course, Afghanistan. The Squadron is commanded by Wing Commander Steve Lushington who said "We are delighted to have established a formal Association with the Company. We look forward to inviting the Company to Brize Norton to demonstrate our formidable and vital contribution to current operations, and giving you a better understanding of our proud history."

#### Assistant Air Commodore Paul Hughesdon



*A VC10 aircraft refuelling two fast jet aircraft, with another waiting for a 'top up'.*

### New Company Liaison with St John Cadets

As part of our support for youth, the Company is delighted to have formed a formal liaison with the St John Ambulance (London) cadets based in Bexley Heath. Cadets aged between 10 and 17 take part in a full programme, working towards their Grand Prior Award. This is designed to help young people to learn important life skills in a fun and safe environment, but with challenge and excitement suitable for their age. Cadets can choose from over 70 different subjects to help complete their award, ranging

from fire prevention to sports and photography. Younger Cadets learn first aid skills through a special training course for young people while older Cadets can undertake a community first aid or first aid at work course. Cadets can put their skills into practice by providing first aid to the public at events or teaching other young people and adults.

## **HMS Victorious**

HMS VICTORIOUS is a nuclear powered submarine which, along with her sister submarines, provides the UK's independent strategic deterrent. Commissioned in 1995, VICTORIOUS is currently under the command of Commander Stephen Walker Royal Navy. She may be armed with up to 16 Trident missiles.

Roughly speaking, the submarine runs on a six month cycle: three months of maintenance and training is followed by three months at sea, patrolling beneath the ocean, always ready. On return from patrol the cycle begins again, ensuring the crew's skills remain well honed and the submarine remains in fighting condition. When on patrol life for the 170 men on board falls into a steady routine, with periods on watch alternating with opportunities for study, exercise and rest. Though the submarine is cramped, some gym kit has been squeezed between pieces of equipment, offsetting the worst effects of months of confinement. Almost everyone on board has a goal to work towards while at sea, whether it is the next exam for professional advancement or GCSEs and A-levels.

On return from her next patrol HMS VICTORIOUS will gain a second crew, with the two ship's companies alternating patrol cycles. This will reduce the hectic pace of life that has been endured since she came out of her last refit and allow personnel to catch up on courses, spend time with their families and take some long overdue leave.

### **Lodge of Love & Friendship No 6123**

The Lodge, founded in 1945, is open to male members of the Company. Those already entitled to join, or those wishing to become Freemasons, should contact the Lodge Secretary:

Tel: 01992 641628 or email [lodge@gswd.co.uk](mailto:lodge@gswd.co.uk)

## **New Court Assistant**

**Michael Gunston**

## **New Liverymen**



*October (left to right): Jeremy Ray, Roger Carter, Nigel Vaughan and Gordon Beer.*



*January 2011 (left to right): Frank Rycroft, Peter Lawrence and Mark Richardson.*

## **Join the 200 Club**

We are looking for new members for the 200 Club. Last year our members kindly contributed over £8,500, of which half goes to the Livery's Second Charitable Trust. The other half is given back to the members in cash prizes, which are drawn each quarter, and the winners are published on our website. Tickets cost £50 each, and can be paid for by cheque or annual Bankers Order.

By joining the 200 Club, you are not only supporting the Livery's charitable aims, but also you have the chance of winning a handsome prize. To join, please contact myself or the Clerk, and we will be pleased to provide you with the necessary application form.

**Robert Lampitt**

## Clerk's Notes

### Charitable Contributions

Some Liverymen may not be aware that the quarterage (or subscription) which you pay to the Company's General Fund is completely distinct from any charitable contribution which you make to the Charitable Trust, from which the Company makes donations every year to a variety of worthy and carefully selected causes, some espoused by individual Liverymen. For further details about this and the 200 Club, please contact the Clerk (0207 498 0590 or [clerk@gswd.co.uk](mailto:clerk@gswd.co.uk)).

## Bernays Fund

Income from the GSWD Bernays Fund may be used to fund entertainment of guests who come from former British colonies. Please ask the Clerk for more details.

## Forthcoming Events

4 April	Master's Dinner, Vintners' Hall
11 April	Sechesläuten, Zurich
12 May	Ladies' Court Dinner
17 May	Sons of the Clergy Service, St Paul's Cathedral
3 June	Fellowship Weekend, Stockholm
24 June	Sheriffs' Election and Lunch
25 June	RLC Open Day, Deepcut
4 July	Court Dinner Apothecaries' Hall
15 July	Fundraising concert and supper, Limehouse
16 Sept	Fundraising Dinner/Dance, The Haven
3 Oct	Lord Mayor's Election
3 Oct	Court Dinner, Vintners' Hall
20 Oct	Edgehill Dinner
25 Oct	Informal Court Dinner
1 Nov	Visit to Dennis Severs House

## Charities Supported

St Paul's Cathedral Foundation (*gold and silver wire vestments*)  
St Peter's Trust (*prostate cancer*)  
Carers UK (*Carers of the sick at home*)  
Outward Bound Trust (*youth adventure*)  
Visually Impaired Sailing (*blind sailing Liveryman P Burke*)  
Lord Mayor's Charity Bear Necessities (*vulnerable children*)  
St Giles Trust (*reduction of youth crime*)  
London Air Ambulance (*life saving helicopter*)  
St Mary le Bow (*young homeless*)  
Gardening Leave (*ex service post traumatic stress*)  
City Police (*widows and orphans fund*)  
Sick Children's Trust

## Livery Website

Our website is updated regularly and always has the latest information about forthcoming events, photographs of past events and general information. There is a private area open only to our members. The password is changed periodically and notified to all Liverymen by the Clerk. You will find back issues of The Wyre Drawer and the more recent Masters' reports.

The Charity, Fund-raising and Events Committee publish details of the 200 Club winners on the site. We are now building a photographic archive not just of events but also of Past Masters and significant events from the past. This is a work in progress and is growing all the time.

When you visit the site, and we hope you will, don't forget to sign the guest book!

**Assistant David Bondy**  
[webmaster@gswd.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@gswd.co.uk)

**Published by**  
**The Worshipful Company of**  
**Gold and Silver Wyre**  
**Drawers**

**9A Prince of Wales Mansions**  
**Prince of Wales Drive**  
**London SW11 4BG**

[www.gswd.co.uk](http://www.gswd.co.uk)

**MASTER 2011 – 2012**

E M Vernon Knapper

**WARDENS**

Rodney D Brody

Timothy L Fitzgerald-O'Connor

Robin J d'O Hope

**CLERK**

Commander Robin E D House

**NEWSLETTER EDITORS**

Christine Lea

[christine@cleapr.co.uk](mailto:christine@cleapr.co.uk)

Michael I Gunston

[michaelgunston@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:michaelgunston@yahoo.co.uk)

**DESIGNED & PRINTED BY**

GB Print & Design