



THE WYRE DRAWER

EDITION 25

AUTUMN 2013



ENGLAND EXPECTS

We marched purposefully up the gangway in Portsmouth Dockyard onto the oldest commissioned warship in the World. It was mid May and the major Fundraising Dinner of 2013 beckoned.

We were to dine on the Lower Gun Deck of HMS VICTORY, following pre-dinner drinks on the Quarterdeck, where Nelson fell on that famous but fateful day in 1805. During drinks we were entertained from the quayside by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth who played magnificently for us, in recognition of the Gold and Silver Wyre Drawer's initiatives and charity support for SW Scotland RnR where injured Royal Marines recover, rest and recuperate.

Prior to this, however, we were treated to a guided tour of this remarkable ship, built in Chatham between 1759 and 1764, and manned by 850 men who ate, slept and fought on her seven decks. We saw Nelson's cabin and the three gun decks where over 100 cannons were in action at Trafalgar. Also the gunpowder magazine and punishment deck where you could be clapped in irons (which helped to maintain discipline over dinner later!) The ladies gamely handled the very steep steps between decks.

Over Dinner the Master spoke of our great honour to be able to dine in these historic surroundings and thanked the Second Sea Lord for allowing us to do so, and also the Band of the Royal Marines for playing for us.

He also welcomed Jennefer Tobin of SW Scotland RnR and Holly Davies of The Felix Fund, the Master's two chosen charities, to whom the major part of the proceeds of the evening would be given.

EVENTS DIARY

29 November
Banquet at the
Mansion House

3 December
Carol service
St James
Garlickhythe

7 December
Military Tournament
Earls Court

2014

13 January
Installation Lunch
Skinners' Hall

March
Visit Imperial War
Museum

7 April
Church Service
St James Garlickhythe
and
Master's Dinner
Skinners' Hall



Master and Commander

Finally, at the end of Dinner, the Honorary Chaplain delivered a fine and specially composed grace to round off a wonderful evening for the 102 Liverymen and their guests who attended.

Jeremy Ray



The Band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth

The Court Ladies Dinner

The Court Ladies Dinner was held this year on 26 April at the Carlton Club, St James's. The evening was well attended and started with a glass of bubbles at "Cads Corner" under the watchful eye of David Cameron's portrait while the late Baroness Thatcher looked down from the other end.

Dinner was held in the Churchill room and was followed by a delightful musical interlude by a string trio from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, who played Schubert and Mozart. The Master proposed the toast to the ladies, Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor replied and Caroline Nathan proposed a vote of thanks for the handmade jugs which each lady received as a gift from the Master.



Court Meeting and Dinner, Skinners' Hall

Held on 1st July, liverymen were, for the second time, permitted to invite their ladies. This again proved very popular and brought the total number attending the dinner to a recent record of 166.

Good weather enabled the wonderful first floor open courtyard to be used for the pre-dinner drinks. Livery's military guests included Lt. Commander Dan Simmonds RN and, from the RLC, Colonel Gareth Bex, Major Rob Browne and Captain Tony Brazier. A number of other Livery Companies were also represented.

The Master's principal guest, Mr Murray Craig, Clerk to the Chamberlain's Court, responded with lively humour to a toast to the guests.

The Master welcomed all guests and those new Liverymen admitted at the earlier Court Meeting: Maurio Liviero, Kenneth Needham and Nicholas Walters. He presented a cheque for the Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment Trust to Major Rob Browne RLC, 2nd in Command of 10 QOGLR, and our prize to Miss Adeline Schwab for the best goldwork on the Royal School of Needlework course.



Our new Liverymen

He also had much pleasure in clothing and completing the Clerk's Honorary membership of the Livery. Commander Robin House expressed his thanks in a warm and humorous fashion.

Our bursary student Lauren Zolezzi was unwell, so the excellent musical interlude was provided by pianist Darren Saady and singer Joshua Owen Mills of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Michael Gunston

Royal Ballet School

Forty five Lower and Upper School students opened this year's programme performing a "Youth Concerto" choreographed to show aspiring students' progress from White Lodge to the Upper School. This interesting opening was warmly applauded.

A senior School trio of male students then enthralled us with an excerpt from "Le Soufflé de l' Esprit", danced to the music of Pachelbel's canon; superb. A very well danced Sonata for Six

followed, and then the first half concluded with seven lively Greek dances to the ever popular music of Mikis Theodarkis evoking the vitality of the Mediterranean; all agreed that fondly remembered attempts to emulate Zorba the Greek in some distant Taverna left much room for improvement!

The second half, dedicated to the indisposed School principal Gailene Stock, was performed by senior school students; "La Destinee", a moving story of unrequited love. This beautifully dressed and skilful offering was in part accompanied by a string quintet from the Royal Academy of Music.

We were spell-bound, and Miss Stock can once again be justifiably proud of her students' performance. And finally came the "Grand Defile", with the entire School gathering on stage to take well deserved applause from a very appreciative audience.



Matthew Knight with the Master and Liveryman Bill MacConnol (photo by Brian Slater)

The Master and his Lady were invited to attend the Leavers ceremony in Floral St. and to present the GSWD prize. Our award went to Matthew Knight who took up his first professional appointment at the Zurich Ballet Company in September. We wish him every success.

Bill MacConnol

Verona Fellowship Weekend

In late July a large party of 68 Liverymen and their guests assembled with anticipation at the Byblos Art hotel, an 18th century villa in Valpolicella country between Verona and Lake Garda, for an Italian gastronomic and operatic weekend! The eponymous “art” in the hotel’s name was soon apparent from the many examples of revealing contemporary paintings and sculptures.



The Master and his Lady with Marquese and Marquesa Armando and Roberta Fumanelli

On the first evening the Master greeted us at the Rusticale restaurant owned by the Marquese Fumanelli.

The next day was spent on Lake Garda on board a former gunboat for a very pleasant tour and lunch, and in the evening the Marquese and his wife entertained us at their beautiful villa where, preceded by a glass or two of Prosecco amid the Roman ruins and cypress trees, we had a sumptuous al fresco dinner on the terrace overlooking the vineyards.



The start of an idyllic evening

Saturday was spent visiting the Sigurta gardens and Vallegio, culminating in a performance of Il Trovatore in the timeless surroundings of the Roman amphitheatre, a true “spectacolo” - punctuated of course with a further opportunity for a glass of Prosecco in the interval!



The Master contemplates his next career!

I cannot end without particular mention of the very gracious and generous hospitality extended to us by Armando and Roberta, Marquese and Marquesa Fumanelli, for which we were, and remain, extremely appreciative.

**Timothy L Fitzgerald-O’Connor
Master**

Visit to Bletchley Park

In early September Liverymen and their guests visited Bletchley Park, the World War 11 Code Breaking Centre chosen in 1939 for its proximity to the Oxford and Cambridge railway line, and manned by mathematicians, post office engineers and many servicewomen from the 3 Services, all of whom kept the secrets of their work for many, many years.

Starting in the Manor House, we had coffee and an introductory historical brief before splitting into 2 groups. The visit was brought to life by Liveryman Nick Miers, a very knowledgeable guide who gave us a walk/talk firstly through the history behind the German Enigma encoding machines and then the evolution of the code breaking process which followed. Before war broke out the Poles had already cracked the raw principles of the Enigma and this work was passed on to the British who refined and completed the process.

After a wartime lunch of Shepherds Pie we were

taken into the National Museum of Computing for a jog round Colossus, the code breaking computer conceived and built by Alan Turing. Also on show here are early computers, forerunners of Apple and Microsoft which were viewed with interest and in some cases fond memories!

Despite the complexity of the subject the story was brought to life by the knowledge and enthusiasm of all the guides. Indeed a very informative and enjoyable day for us all.

Cynthia Fowler



Enigma Machines on display

The Haven Dinner

In mid September, the Master, accompanied by his Lady and over 40 Liverymen and their guests, attended the annual fundraising dinner at the Haven restaurant in Whetstone, North London. Once again, the Haven's owner, Liveryman Julius Oberegger, offered a champagne and canapè reception, followed by a wonderful meal and accompanying wines.

As in previous years, Julius sponsored the whole evening, which enabled the Master's chosen charities of the Felix Fund and SW Scotland RnR to benefit greatly from this very generous offer. The evening meal was followed by live music from a talented Australian duo who encouraged guests to dance the night away!

As usual, the whole event was expertly managed by Julius' team, and was much appreciated by everyone present. Our thanks go to Julius and Warden Michael Powell for organising such a successful evening.

Nick Sillitoe

Court Dinner, HQS Wellington

On 7th October, Liverymen and their guests assembled on the quarterdeck of the former Royal Naval sloop, Wellington, for a glass of sparkling Burgundy before descending to the boiler and engine room space converted into a Court room and dining room.

After an excellent dinner the 4th Warden welcomed the guests, and Rear Admiral James Morse, Commandant of the Joint Service Command and Staff College, spoke thoughtfully and amusingly about the College and the role of the modern Royal Navy, contrasting this with the service HQS Wellington had given in the Pacific and on convoy escort work in the Battle of the Atlantic.



The Master and Rear Admiral James Morse

At the earlier Court meeting, 3 new Liverymen were clothed; Colin Riches, David Chapman and Luis Hui.



The three new Liverymen

And, following two trial years, the Court decided to permit the attendance of spouses at the July dinner for the years to come.

Disneyland Visit



Once again, supported by our Company and many others, the Master attended the breakfast send off in September for terminally ill children, organised by the Hackney Carriage Drivers Company, when volunteer cabbies drive children and their carers to Disneyland, Paris for the weekend.

Golf Society

The year started at Tandridge where we were joined by 3 Masons and 2 Farmers which made us 20. The Clifford Jeapes Cup was retained by Luke Edgcumbe, beating me again and 3rd prize went to the Captain, Nigel Vaughan. The Farmers' prize was won by Follett Balch and the Masons' by Neil Barnes. The Guests' prize was won by Don Ford, followed by Allan Chisholm.

Denham Course was next and the golf was excellent; our two trophies were won by low handicappers, John Kenyon-Muir and Cynthia Fowler - Cynthia winning the trophy she missed last year! Richard Peskin scored highest for the Guests. We entered a team again in the Ray Jeffs Cup at Hartley Wintney: John Kenyon-Muir, John Edney, Tony Carpenter and myself. A very pleasant team outing, although we failed to capitalise on offered chances.

Captain's Day at Ashridge clashed with the Bletchley Park visit so was not well attended; we still had a delightful day, Greg Wright's team winning by one point from my team. The final event was Swinley Forest, lovely but expensive, John Kenyon-Muir winning the morning trophy and Richard Peskin the Guests trophy. George Constantinidi produced an amazing performance for 2nd place. The afternoon was won by Alastair Troughton and his guest Jeffrey Brantly over 15

holes; this year the weather was kind to us, and I won the Spring and Autumn combined meetings Cup!

Finally, the AGM and lunch is at Jamies Wine Bar on Ludgate Hill on 5th December. Anyone interested in joining us please contact me.

John Edgcumbe

Apprentice News



Tim Copeman, a great-grandson of Alderman Sir Frederick Tidbury Beer (Master 1947) and apprenticed to Past Master Brian Jones in 2008, was the beneficiary of GSWD support during his A level years at King Edward's School Witley.

He has recently gained his Royal Marine Green Beret (right, above) after his training at Lympstone, Devon. He also won two other awards, the Charnock Trophy and the Commando Medal for outstanding qualities of unselfishness, determination and courage under adversity. He is now serving with his unit, 43 Commando, in Scotland and we hope to see him again at a future dinner.

The Clerk

Affiliations

HMS VICTORIOUS

The Master and Honorary Chaplain visited VICTORIOUS in July at Faslane to present the annual 'Man of the Boat' award. Established in 2011, the award, a pewter tankard engraved with our coat of arms, is given to the member of the Ship's Company judged by the CO to have contributed most significantly to the ship in the past 'running period'. The Honorary Chaplain then led prayers with the crew after Ship's Divisions.



The recipient of the award was CPO MacFarlane. Joining the ship in 2011, he qualified as a mine clearance diver and then as a Marine Engineer Technician, quickly integrating with the Ship's Company, tirelessly analysing and rectifying defects to ensure the safety of the Ship's Company. He took on responsibility for running the Ship's Canteen, excelling in this vital 'morale' role, and introducing a "Meal Deal" which was extremely popular with the Ship's Company. MacFarlane clearly demonstrated commitment beyond the call of duty to the submarine and his peers, and thoroughly deserved the award of Man of the Running Period.

Gordon Warren

Ghurkha Hospitality



In early June the Master and 16 Liverymen with their guests visited the 10th Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment at Aldershot, as part of our close affiliation with the Royal Logistic Corp, and were initially briefed by Senior Major Rob Browne on the history of the Gurkhas in the British Army, dating back to 1817, and their unique role in the modern Army.

Then, after the Laser Shooting Range and 'problem solving' in the main Gym we were welcomed very graciously to lunch in the Gurkha Messing Village, under the trees, by the Gurkha Major and Regimental bagpipers, and served a most delicious regional curry, Dahl Baht. This was followed by a traditional dance display, with Khukuris, the famous Gurkha curved knife, before

we moved on to the afternoon's activities. Cross country driving in the enormous MAN and 16 Ton Oshkosh vehicles, the key to the Regiment's battlefield role, alongside Gurkha drivers who had operated under fire in Afganistan, was a great experience.

Finally the CO, Colonel Tim Blackmore, bade us farewell and thanked us for our visit, to which the Master responded in appreciation of their great hospitality and our respect for these remarkable, quietly spoken and invariably smiling Nepalese soldiers.

Jeremy Ray

Queen's Colour Squadron RAF



The Master with Corporal Spencer

In late April the Master, 2nd Warden, RAFLO and the Clerk reported to the Guardroom at RAF Northolt. The Master's duty that day was to present the Company's Annual Prize to the Airman or Junior NCO of the Queen's Colour Squadron (QCS) who had contributed the most to the Squadron.

We were treated first to an immaculate display of continuity drill – a long sequence of drill movements stemming from only one initial word of command. Then Corporal Spencer came forward to receive his commendation, a tankard and cheque; no doubt the latter helped to road test the tankard! An excellent afternoon which further cemented our strong bond with the QCS. Well done Corporal Spencer!

Paul Hughesdon

Clerk's Corner

Recruiting new Liverymen

Do you have a friend or family member who might like to join the Company? We have a good number of younger as well as older members joining at present and more will be welcome. Joining fee for those under 40 is £400 and quarterage is only £200. Further details from the Clerk.

New Liverymen admitted recently are Kenneth Needham (Retired), Mauro Liviero (Director Management Consultancy), Nicholas Waters (GP), Colin Riches (Registered Nurse), David Chapman (Property Management) and Luis Hui (Entrepreneur).

The 2013 Fundraising events on board HMS VICTORY and at the Haven restaurant together have raised over £10,000 for the Master's charities.

Charities Supported

South West Scotland RnR (Master's Charity).

Felix Fund (Master's Charity).

Army Benevolent Fund.

Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Milton Court project.

Hackney Carriage Drivers Disneyland taxi tour for terminally ill children.

Royal Marines Association building project Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham.

Outward Bound Trust.

Gardening leave for the rehabilitation for injured servicemen.

Tall Ships Youth Trust.

City of London Annual Festival.

Defence Medical Welfare Service.

Marine Society and Sea Cadets.

National Memorial Arboretum.

HMS VICTORIOUS Amenities Fund.

Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment Trust RLC.

RAF Benevolent Fund.

Queen's Colour Squadron RAF.

Deaths

The Company regrets to inform Liverymen of the deaths of Michael Bowman-Vaughan and John Padley-Smith.

Award conferred on the Master

Liverymen will wish to know that the President of Finland has awarded to our Master the Grand Order Knight, 1st Class, of the Lion of Finland for services to the Finnish insurance market over the past 35 years. The investiture took place on 27th September conducted by His Excellency the Finnish Ambassador to the Court of St James.

Our congratulations to the Master!

Published by
The Worshipful Company of
Gold and Silver Wyre
Drawers

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DESIGNED & PRINTED BY
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