



MEMBERSHIP

The following were clothed as Liverymen at the Court meeting on 9 December 2014:

Richard Henry Davies
Michael John Lampard
Ms Rachel Margaret Watkins
Hugh Donald Wykes

The following were clothed as Liverymen at the Court meeting on 10 March 2015:

Mrs Erica Bargman
Michael Gordon Chennells
Derek Alfred Kelly MBE

The following were made Freemen by Redemption at the Court meeting on 14 October 2014:

Andrew Irwin Blenkiron
Proposed by A J Brown
Seconded by L H Hargreaves

John Robert Coles
Proposed by H M C Coghill
Seconded by N D S Brown

John Douglas Heath
Proposed by R T Halhead
Seconded by Miss R S N Carne

The following were made Freemen by Redemption at the Court meeting on 9 December 2014:

Jeremy Paul Godsmark Finnis
Proposed by C A Monk
Seconded by D J H Bolton

Ambrose Eric John Fowler
Proposed by C J Day
Seconded by H C Bourne

Thomas Michael Green
Proposed by W R T Crane
Seconded by G J Dodgson

Derek Alfred Kelly
Proposed by T A Copas
Seconded by Baroness Byford
Roderick George Balfour Parker
Proposed by Sir Bertie Ross
Seconded by W Cumber

The following were made Freemen by Redemption at the Court meeting on 10 March 2015:

Peta Lady Clifton
Proposed by A J Alston
Seconded by A R Beard

Anthony Edward Kenney-Herbert
Proposed by T H Wheatley-Hubbard
Seconded by M R Sheldon

Scott John Norris
Proposed by J D Courtney
Seconded by J K Reynolds

Mark John Riches
Proposed by Baroness Byford
Seconded by R J Soffe

Roger James Wyatt
Proposed by I A Bell
Seconded by H E Johnson

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Liveryman **Tony Worth** (Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire) awarded CVO in the New Year Honours List 2015.

Liveryman **Nick Padwick**, presented with the Livery Salver at the Annual Banquet 2015.

Liveryman **Andrew Brown** appointed High Sheriff for Rutland 2015/16.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2015

Wednesday 15 April
The Agricultural Lecture & Dinner at Merchant Taylors' Hall, 30 Threadneedle Street, EC2R 8JB

Tuesday 9 June
Court Meeting and Livery Luncheon in Ironmongers' Hall, Barbican, EC2Y 8AA.
Details of events in Farmers' and Fletchers' Hall following re-opening will be posted on the website.

Tuesday 13 October
Court Meeting, Harvest Thanksgiving, Installation and Livery Luncheon in Haberdashers' Hall, 18 West Smithfield, EC1A 9HQ

Saturday 14 November
Lord Mayor's Show followed by lunch in Farmer Fletchers' Hall

Tuesday 8 December
Court Meeting and Christmas Luncheon in Skinners' Hall, 8 ½ Dowgate Hill, EC4R 2SP

2016

Wednesday 20 January
The Banquet in Clothworkers' Hall, Mincing Lane, EC3R 7AH

Tuesday 16 February
City Food Lecture at Guildhall

Tuesday 8 March
Court Meeting and Livery Luncheon in Farmer Fletchers' Hall

Friday 11 March
United Guilds Service at St Paul's Cathedral and Luncheon in Farmer Fletchers' Hall

Tuesday 7 June
Court Meeting and Livery Luncheon in Farmer Fletchers' Hall

Friday 24 June
Election of Sheriffs and luncheon in Farmers' and Fletchers' Hall

Thursday 29 September
Election of Lord Mayor and luncheon in Farmer Fletchers' Hall

Tuesday 11 October
Court Meeting, Harvest Thanksgiving and Installation at St Bartholomew the Great, Livery Luncheon at Haberdashers' Hall

DEATHS

It is with sadness and regret we announce the death of the following:

Liveryman **Keith MacWilliam Flemington** of Pear Tree House, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire died on 12 November 2014. He was Clothed on 2 December 1991.

Yeoman **Derek Craig Dalton** of Orchard Cottage, Brailsford, Ashbourne, Derbyshire died on 7 December 2014. He was Clothed on 12 March 1984 and made Yeoman in October 2013.

Liveryman **John Bernard Gould** of Wirswall Hall, Whitchurch, Shropshire died on 20 January 2015. He was Clothed on 8 June 1987.

Liveryman **William Joseph Parker** of 26 Knighton Grange Road, Leicester died on 6 February 2015. He was Clothed on 30 November 1998.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

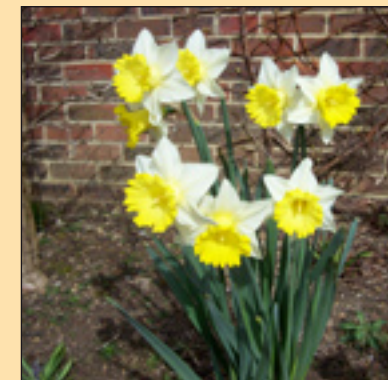
The copy date for the Autumn newsletter is October 23rd 2015.

This edition of the newsletter covers many of the activities of the Company from last November to April this year. Due to the large number of clothings this year my note has to be brief. I would urge you to look at our website for further updates. My email address is johnnevans740@btinternet.com

The Worshipful Company of Farmers publishes the Newsletter. Clerk from June: Mr Graham Bamford FIH MI, 24, Herons Place, Old Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 7BE Tel: 0208 326 2945 mobile: 07802 785573 Email: clerk@farmerslivery.org.uk www.farmerslivery.org.uk



A HARD ACT TO FOLLOW



SPRING CAME EARLY



JUST TRUGGING ALONG



Anticipating another fine Livery Banquet



WE HAVE A NEW CLERK

Farewell David, welcome Graham



The Clerk models the new gown with its embroidered coat of arms

2015 sees a very significant change for the Company with the retirement of David King after ten years of unstinting effort as our Gallant Clerk to be succeeded by Graham Bamford who takes over the reins as our Learned Clerk at the June 9th luncheon.

During his tenure as Clerk David, aka Col King OBE, has gained a reputation amongst the Clerks of other Liveries as the 'guru' on process and protocol in the city and the livery movement and will be sorely missed by his colleagues. However he will not be lost to the Farmers as he will become an Honorary Liveryman at the June Court and continue to chair the Affiliations Committee. All the Masters he has worked with wished to publish their thanks to David and his wife Pam, but in summary, all said 'I don't know how I would have got through my year without his help and support'.

However this year the cloak of responsibility moves from Oxford to West London to the broad shoulders of Graham Bamford. Graham has an un-rivalled background in the hospitality world which will be key to the future management of our much upgraded hall at 3 Cloth Street, due

to re-open in June this year. Revenues from letting the hall facilities to other organisations will provide a welcome boost to the income for our charitable funds.

Graham served a six year 'apprenticeship' at the Savoy Group including stints at The Savoy Hotel in the Strand, Claridge's in Brook Street and Le Beau Rivage Palace in Lausanne. Whilst at the Savoy he married his wife Janet who is still involved in the hospitality world. Graham then did the traditional hospitality career progression of working at a number of similar hotels to broaden his experience including the Carlton Tower in Knightsbridge, the Royal Garden in Kensington and the Park Lane in Piccadilly. From there he ventured to the Far East spending three years in Singapore and Indonesia before returning to London.

He spent two years as deputy general manager at the Hyde Park Hotel before being head hunted to be the re-opening general manager of the Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington which had been closed for two years whilst undergoing a multi-million pound refurbishment. He continued there for nineteen years welcoming

the great and the good from Heads of State to International Sports personalities before retiring in March last year. After enjoying one nice summer relaxing and travelling he needed a challenge and being Clerk to a Worshipful Company certainly is one!

Graham already has wide experience of the Livery world as he is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Innholders and has been a Master Innholder since 1997 and their chairman from 2003 to 2005. By coincidence Innholders' Hall was home to the Farmers Company from March 1951 until the opening of 3 Cloth Street thirty years later. His experience will be invaluable to the Farmers' in the management of our new hall which will be actively marketed as an ideal venue for corporate events in central London along with quality catering. He will also oversee a sea change in the administration of the Company through the introduction of modern digital processes such as on-line booking and payment for Livery events and the extensive use of emailing to keep members apprised of news and events.

Welcome Graham to a very progressive and friendly Livery Company.



Graham Bamford

INTER-LIVERY ACTIVITIES

Champion Skiers

Once more unto the breach dear friends. No, this was not Shakespeare's Henry V at Agincourt, but us about to enter our own battle on French soil. This time it was the turn of our intrepid ski trio to compete at the massive Porte Du Soleil region on the borders of France and Switzerland.

Liverymen John Martin, Hugh Wykes and Richard Whitlock represented the Farmers' Livery at the Annual Inter-Livery Skiing Competition in January. As youth and recent ski-racing practice was not on our side, none of us were expecting any medals in the slalom and giant slalom races and once again we lived down to our expectations. This is not to say that we didn't try hard, although some might consider that we didn't try hard enough, because no one had any spectacular crashes, in fact no crashes at all! We're either getting old or wise, probably not both though. How did we fare you might ask? Well, certainly not last and not even in the lower third. Our top racer was Hugh



Farmers skiing for victory

Wykes with a slalom time of less than 20 seconds and a giant slalom time of 1 minute, John Martin was a good second, closely followed by yours truly. I tried to earn myself some free beer by suggesting to my two cohorts that if they kept me suitably imbibed, I would write nice things about them. They didn't buy me excess beer, but being a decent chap, I will still write quite nice things about them both.

John Martin, who is nearly 50, going on 30, thinks he can still keep up with the late nights and early starts of The Mercers' Company, who were certainly out in force this season. John, you should know better at your age and at least turn

up on time each morning. Nippy Hugh still skis with style and speed and was a very affable and welcome new boy to the party. As in previous years, the ever genial and increasingly eccentric

George Bastin of the Ironmongers organised the whole event - well done to him, especially now that it has grown to around 150 competitors and guests. This is our third year of attendance and we hope more Farmers' Liverymen will wish to come in the future. Competing is great, skiing in this region is superb and the other Liveries are good fun. The dates for 2016 are January the 22nd and 23rd, so make a note in your diary if you might wish to participate. For further information contact Liveryman Richard Whitlock - richard@richardwhitlockltd.co.uk

Inter-Livery Pancake Races at Guildhall Yard, Shrove Tuesday

On a bright sunny February day a cannon fired by Sheriff Fiona Adler reverberated around the majestic Guildhall Yard to start the Inter-Livery Pancake Races.

The Master expected to come first in his race, but as there were no disqualifications, he had to be dissatisfied with third place. Not a bad performance for a former Diss rugby player! In the Liverymen's Race, Nick Padwick came a very close second to last year's championship winner who was taking things very seriously and wearing shorts. The Master took the opportunity to lodge a complaint of inappropriate dress and Liveryman Padwick was promoted to heat winner. In the Final he came second but concluded that it was easier to organise The Lord Mayor's Show exhibit than win a Pancake Race!

Nick's son, Apprentice George Padwick, came second in the Fancy Dress race as did Penny Anscombe in the Ladies' race. Penny had been 'volunteered' at the Banquet and she was supported by her coach and personal trainer Richard Anscombe. Unfortunately there were no disqualifications in these two races so we had to be content with the second placings which enabled the team to retire early to the Crypt and achieve first place in the lunch queue, where wine was taken.

The team was actively supported by



Our 'TEAM' at the ready

the Clerk Elect, Graham Bamford, and Liveryman John Evans and his camera with much vocal support from Liverymen in the large crowd. It is some years since The Farmers won a first with Past Master Graham Wilkinson so instructions have been given to Senior Warden Thomas Wheatley-Hubbard to start training as soon as possible.

Tony Alston, Master



THE 64TH ADVANCED COURSE IN AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT - JANUARY 2015

Business Management for Agricultural Leaders



The Class of 2015 at the Royal Agricultural University

The 64th Worshipful Company of Farmers Advanced Course in Agricultural Business Management has, undoubtedly, changed my life. (writes Helen Clarke former teacher but now farming 3,500 acres in Lincolnshire).

On a cold, grey Sunday evening in January I approached the gates of the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, with huge trepidation. Coincidentally I had been at the Lincolnshire agricultural dinner earlier in the week and Christopher Day had been the after dinner speaker. Christopher had extolled the virtues of the course to over 500 of the Lincolnshire agricultural community. He had used adjectives such as “inspiring”, “life changing” and “thought provoking” and certainly got my colleagues on the table intrigued as to what I was in for.

During the first few days of the course we spoke earnestly about the businesses we are involved in and began to share the challenges and limitations that we felt we faced going forward. This really set the tone for the whole course. Through the selection process 17 people had been gathered from a multitude of

farming professions and from as far afield as New Zealand and Australia as well from all across England. Within a matter of days we had built up an impressive level of trust and openness within our cohort that made for a greater level of group and self-development.

The three weeks were packed full of industry speakers, farm visits and group case study work. The speakers covered a huge range of subjects such as CAP reform, capital investment appraisal, utilizing social media and leadership lessons learnt whilst in the army. It was a privilege and an honour to listen to many of these and personal highlights must include Allan Wilkinson, John Alvis, Rob Shepherd and Professor David Hughes. Lively discussions often followed the speakers and this was taken further when we were also offered the opportunity to partake in two panel debate sessions. The first was chaired by Lord Henry Plumb and featured the differing opinions of George Dunn, Martin Haworth, Chris Leney and Professor Allan Buckwell, whilst the second covered many current agricultural issues and was expertly chaired by Professor David Hopkins who may well have missed his calling to host BBC’s Question Time!

Between the speakers we worked on our group case studies. The first centered on our own businesses and the second, during our final week, concentrated on Bill Allen and his family’s pig and arable farm. Bill handed his business to us to analyze, critique, and comment upon. The level of trust and openness was inspiring. The case study process was invaluable; it opened up a wealth of discussions and resulted in focused, practical advice being given that related to objectives that were established by each delegate concerned and which was pooled from the expertise and experiences of each of its group members.

Overall the course has given me a very privileged vantage point to see agriculture through the eyes of industry leaders. It has, perhaps more importantly, equipped me with 16 new friends to share whatever the industry has in store for us all in the future. From the inspirational setting at the RAU to the incredible organizational skills shown by Professor John Alliston, Rita, Rhonda and Naomi the course will have a huge impact on the way I approach whatever challenges lie ahead.

Helen Clarke

THE 19TH CHALLENGE OF RURAL LEADERSHIP COURSE - JANUARY 2015

Developing Rural Leadership Skills



The attendees with the Master at The Duchy Course 2015

‘Leadership is more than just a state of mind. Every good leader needs loyal followers’. That was the main impression left on delegates who attended the Worshipful Company of Farmers’ 19th Challenge of Rural Leadership course in January 2015, held at Dartington Hall in Devon.

The intensive two week programme saw 16 individuals from across the industry engage in tutorials and interactive workshops on topics such as presentation skills, media training, mind-mapping, and psychometric testing. With the course members having backgrounds in accountancy, lobbying, agronomy and marketing to name but a few, and with two members hailing from Australia and one from Slovakia, the two week experience certainly did not suffer from lack of diversity. “The future for rural industries has never been more challenging,” said Richard Soffe, head of the Rural Business School at the Duchy College who led the course programme. “Increased demands for countryside access, domination of food supply by multinational companies, and changes to government and political representation are just some of the obstacles the industry is facing” he commented.

Delegates heard from a varied set of external speakers, who offered personal reflections on their career and life in the industry. They included, NFU President Meurig Raymond; Baroness Hazel Byford, Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Farmers and President of LEAF; and Philip Lymbery, Chief Executive of Compassion in World Farming. Howard Petch CBE, Chief Executive of Landex, another of the speakers, stated that “we judge ourselves by our intent, but we judge others on their output”. Accountability to others is very important he said, but also the ability to leverage others into sharing a vision was a vastly underrated skill.

With controversial topics such as GM and sustainable intensification also discussed, the subject of morals and ethics within leadership was explored, alongside sessions on courage, risk and strategy. Mr Soffe added, “This course, although a demanding programme, equips those working in the industry with the necessary skills and capabilities to grow and thrive in continuously changing conditions.” Week One focused on the leadership of an agri-food business and Week Two put the spotlight on our own personal leadership development. The underlying aspect and importance of “fellowship” throughout the course

became more pertinent as each day passed. We also undertook a week-long live case study on an organic milk and cheese producing business in the South West region culminating in a presentation to members of the Board on the future of the brand and its business direction.

An end-of-course presentation was also made to Tony Alston, Master, and Graham Shooter, Education Committee Chair, of the Worshipful Company of Farmers, who commented that the candidates had “clearly been inspired and empowered” by Mr Soffe’s team.

Top leadership tips:

- Surround yourself with a loyal team
- Understand and appreciate your exposure to risk
- Have the ability to withstand external pressure, and stand by your decision making
- Take advantage of opportunities as they arise
- Develop a strong support network of confidantes
- Aim to practice reflective learning
- Offer support and acknowledgment, listen to others, and share in their ideas
- Avoid complacency but do not be afraid to admit you were wrong
- Be motivational, be educational, and change perceptions

Simon Haley



The Master with the Cadets



Happy Diners



The Top Table

THE ANNUAL LIVERY BANQUET at DRAPERS' HALL



Past Master Creighton Redman with Mrs Angie Coham in Leander Pink



Karen Mercer and John Stokes



The Three Graces



Livoryman Nick Padwick receiving the Livery salver from Hon. Ben Gummer MP

This year's Livery banquet was another glittering affair held at the stunning Drapers' Hall in the heart of London's financial district. The Drapers' Company was granted its royal charter in 1438 and is one of the oldest Companies in the City.

As always guests were greeted by six Air Cadets from two of our affiliated squadrons under the guidance of W.O. Christopher Pocock. They were ushered upstairs under the watchful eye of the two Company

Stewards before being introduced by the Beadle to the Master's party. The Master's Scottish background resulted in a number of kilted guests appearing, having braved sub-zero temperatures.

The banquet is always a very popular event and this year there were 263 Livorymen and guests arranged in a large horseshoe shaped outer table with two inner spurs. The setting was fabulous with colourful ceiling and murals as well

as impressive paintings reflecting the Drapers' long traditions. Before the meal the Senior Warden, Thomas Wheatley-Hubbard, welcomed the many guests and as always it was a culinary triumph featuring delicious Gressingham Duck complemented by fine French wines.

The ability to co-ordinate the serving of so many people is always a mystery to those not familiar with catering skills!

As always we enjoyed the ceremony of the Loving Cup which guarantees much amusement accompanied by the singing of The Farmer's Boy led by Livorymen Andrew Brown and Julian Sayers.

After the meal we were entertained by a very professional group of singers, some from Queens College Cambridge, organised of course by the Master's wife Mary, a Livoryman with the Worshipful Company of Art Scholars.

This was followed by a speech proposing a toast to the Company by Dr Christine Rigden, one of the City's Ale Connors, and a candidate to become the non-Aldermanic Sheriff. The Master replied and announced that the hall refurbishment was now well underway with a 'guaranteed' completion date of May 25th. He also paid tribute to our 'gallant' Clerk who is retiring after ten years in the post but will continue his association with the Company as an Honorary

Livoryman. One hard act to follow! The Master then announced the winner of the Livery Silver Salver, Nick Padwick, who has for three years organised the Company's superb displays at the Lord Mayor's Show. The Salver was presented by the Guest of Honour, The Hon. Ben Gummer, the Member of Parliament for Ipswich. The Master then proposed a toast to the guests and introduced Ben Gummer whom he had known from his teenage years.



3 CLOTH STREET UPDATE

Update on the refurbishment of Farmer Fletchers' Hall

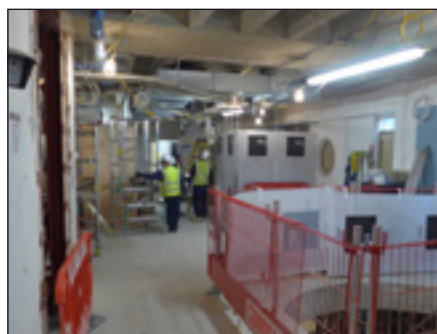


The building site under wraps

This report on the progress of the refurbishment of our Hall at 3 Cloth Street is a combination of an update from the Chairman of the Joint Project Board, Past Master Peter Faulkner, and a Charity funding update from Liveryman Richard Halhead.

In the Autumn Newsletter I told you all about our plans for transforming our Livery Hall. Then it was all imagination and expectation, now the works are tangible. The building is a hive of activity, frequently very noisy, as concrete is drilled, sawn, hammered and, in places, demolished. On my last visit the kango hammers were destroying the old staircase from the entrance lobby to loud cheers from me. The photographs highlight the progress.

The building was stripped back to the bare bones of the concrete structure. Above the ceilings were cables, ducts and pipes to be removed. Some are being replaced with modern materials;



The spectacular spiral staircase under construction

there seem to be miles of wiring and, in the case of the ventilation, we have a much more sophisticated array of trunking and equipment for the full air conditioning. It looks very complex but the operatives all seem very knowledgeable and work together as teams.

None of this happens by chance. Our contractors, ISG, work hard on their health and safety and operational efficiency. Complex working at high and low levels could generate all sorts of hazards and the way they handle this could probably act as a good model on many of our farms and estates.

Of course there are surprises, some good and some less so. That applies on all contracts like this and the



Checking the progress in the new reception area

Joint Project Board meets regularly to ensure that we keep on track and on budget. As I write we are achieving both. By the time of the Autumn Newsletter the works will be complete, the Hall will be open and we will be celebrating our achievement.

Peter Faulkner (12 March)

CHARITY UPDATE

Now that work is well underway on the refurbishment of 3 Cloth St. substantial bills are falling onto the Clerk's desk for payment. We have just over £600,000 of our £1 million target at our disposal so we still have much more to do. The fact that not all of the Livery have yet contributed gives me optimism that we can achieve the sum required.

I sincerely hope you can support your Livery Company in creating an exciting new Hall which will give pleasure and pride to us and future generations of Liverymen and will also provide us with income to support our charitable activities. The appeal will close at the end of September 2015 so we have six months to complete our task.

If you cannot make a capital contribution we are able to accept standing orders over an agreed term or set up interest free loans. We have also received several gifts

of shares and please bear in mind the advantage of giving to a charity as regards Income Tax, CGT and Inheritance Tax – consult your advisor before deciding.

You can monitor progress at any time by viewing the work as it proceeds on our web site. There will be a celebratory opening party for those of you who support the appeal and your names will be acknowledged and recorded for posterity in a suitable leather bound volume.

Cheques should be in favour of the Worshipful Company of Farmers Charitable Fund and sent to the Clerk at his usual address. To discuss or pledge your support please do not hesitate to contact me.

Richard T Halhead FRAGS
rthalhead@gmail.com 01524752421
or 07774417087
Charity Coordinator
Norbreck Farm, Cockerham,
Lancaster, LA2 0DY

MILITARY AFFILIATIONS

HMS Defender

This edition of the newsletter concentrates on our affiliation with HMS Defender, the ultra-modern Type 45 destroyer which entered full service in 2014 and is back in Portsmouth being made ready for new deployment this year.

2014 was a very exciting and action packed year for Defender, under Commanding Officer Commander Phil Nash, on her first major deployment after commissioning during which she covered more than 35,000 nautical miles in only six months. She first operated in the Mediterranean before traversing the Suez Canal to the Arabian Sea where she held joint manoeuvres with other navies including Oman, Qatar, UAE and Bahrain. Her first operational activity was being part of a major operation to eradicate piracy and terrorist activities in the Gulf and in the Indian Ocean where a contingent of Royal Marines from 43 Commando were on board. The extremely volatile political situation in the Middle East resulted in her being assigned to the Northern Gulf sector where she was requested by the US military to provide defensive cover for their super carrier USS George H W Bush whose aircraft were engaged in strategic bombing attacks against Islamic State targets. The weaponry aboard Defender is staggering with a wide array of guns and missiles and the photograph is of a Lynx helicopter taking off from her sister ship HMS Dragon surrounded by defensive flares. Dragon is now commanded by our old friend Captain Rex Cox who was in charge of HMS York. Defender arrived back in Portsmouth on December 12th in time for her crew to join their families for Christmas and was greeted by the Military Wives Choir and the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines. She is now under Commander Steve Higham. On February 26th the Master led a group of 30 liverymen on a visit to Defender whilst she was undergoing maintenance. We were first given



Liverymen aboard Defender with Commander Higham

a briefing on her activities and capabilities and Commander Higham emphasized his view that Defender was the number one vessel in the Royal Navy! It is a crucial element of the UK defence capability. The party then split into three groups and were shown around the key areas of the ship. The engineers' area where crew were responsible for all mechanical, electronic and electrical elements of the ship with multiple screens displaying the status of each section. That was followed by a visit to the ship's bridge where the crew have a panoramic view of activities and a plethora of computer screens. Interestingly there are no portholes or windows on the ship except for one in the captain's cabin! The third part of our visit was to the Control Room, located in the heart of the vessel, where the surveillance activity is centered along with the control of the many and varied defensive and attack weaponry. This part of Defender demonstrated vividly how powerful her capabilities are and how vital these destroyers are to our security. After the tour of the ship the liverymen assembled in the covered hanger area along with the full ship's complement to witness the presentation by the Master of the Worshipful

Company's Leadership trophy to Chief Petty Officer Graham Baxter for his outstanding work during Defender's deployment. The trophy was originally donated by Sir Graham Wilkinson during his year as Master in 2007 and now every recipient receives a keepsake, also donated by Sir Graham, based on a piece of timber from HMS Victory. Lunch was taken in the shore establishment HMS Nelson where we hosted Ship's Officers and Chief Baxter. Liverymen had an opportunity to see the Wardroom with its hammerhead ceiling and the 75 ft. Wylie painting of the Battle of Trafalgar. The Master thanked Commander Higham for this visit to his Warship and also Sir Graham Wilkinson for his service as our Royal Navy Representative.



Sister ship HMS Dragon in defensive manoeuvres



The Lord Mayor's Show November 2014



The Master, Wardens with the Young Farmers

This year's display by the Farmers' Company was the outstanding hit of the whole show featuring a massive John Deere combine harvester.

The S685i harvester was supplied by John Deere along with a header which was towed separately by a John Deere 1946 model D tractor and a huge thank you to John Deere Ltd for providing the kit in immaculate condition. The impressive hardware was accompanied by eight young farmers from all over the UK sporting banners extolling different aspects of British Farming and of course by Master Tony Alston, Senior Warden

Thomas Wheatley-Hubbard, and Junior Warden Phillip Wynn in full regalia.

The complex task of organizing and coordinating the impressive display was again in the capable hands of Liveryman Nick Padwick who should be congratulated for an outstanding success and incidentally he is a former Farmers Weekly Farmer of the Year. The S685i harvester has a 570hp engine and weighs some 30 tonnes, a satellite guidance system to optimize efficiency and can harvest up to 750 tonnes of grain a day. The model D tractor cost £220 new but a modern tractor with at least four times the power costs around £95,000!

The new Worshipful Company Website

Whilst many members are not regular visitors to our website, or even frequent computer users, there are changes underway where our website will be an important port of call. For technical reasons we had to upgrade the present website to a more 'whizzy' version and we are taking advantage of this change to introduce more modern processes to save money and make the Clerk's role easier. The website will continue to report on events and have all the current content but in addition will be promoting the enlarged and refurbished Hall at 3 Cloth Street to other organisations as an attractive location to hold their meetings and functions. The letting of the hall will bring in much needed additional funds to boost our charitable income. The other major improvement will be the provision of a secure 'Members Area' on the website to enable the Clerk to communicate with members by email and to book and pay for attendance at events. Most members are familiar with 'on-line' banking systems, which eliminate the need for cheques, and ours will be tailored to our needs. For those not comfortable with new-fangled methods we will continue to offer the booking form plus cheque facility. Work on providing the new processes is well underway and will be ready and proven when the new Clerk takes control in June. Full details will be sent to all members in plenty of time.

SURREY DOCKS FARM

This little agricultural jewel, hidden in the heart of Rotherhithe and fronting on to the Thames, is thriving and provides many opportunities for local folk with learning disabilities to work with animals and grow their own produce as well as being a show piece for local children to watch and touch the farm animals.

They regularly email newsletters to their supporters with news of events and activities. Since they do not charge for admission to the farm they rely on donations from the public and supporters, rent from organisations that use the farm buildings and income from sales of their own

produce to pay their way. They sell all the fresh eggs that are laid, they sell their homemade cakes and vegetables from the gardens and the breeding sows are a significant source of income.

The Farmers' Company plays a vital role in the running of the farm with regular financial grants towards specific projects, and Liveryman Edward Hitchcock provides very practical support in the form of 'muck' clearance and the regular supply of hay and straw. This year, thanks to a grant from the Henry Plumb Foundation, the farm now has an apprentice, Tom Goody, working full time. The photograph is of Tom receiving his award from Past Master



Edward, Claire, Tom, Lord Plumb and Prof. Alliston

Henry Plumb along with Prof John Alliston from RAU Cirencester, Claire Elson and Edward. Tom and Claire also attended the Livery luncheon at Stationers' Hall this March as our guests.

MISCELLANEOUS



The Master, Prof. Dick Godwin and Prof. David Leaver

Launch of the 'No Till' research paper

On November 4th at Harper Adams University the Company launched our latest research paper entitled 'Potential of No-till Systems for Arable Farmers'.

The report was authored by Professor Dick Godwin and examines the potential for no-till systems in the UK using UK farm case studies and identified gaps where further R&D is needed. He was joined at the launch by five farmers involved in the case studies of the report who have been practising no-till arable farming for some years and presented strong views in support of the system.

No-till arable farming has the potential to address the economic and environmental challenges ahead through reducing costs of machinery, fuel and labour, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing soil organic matter. The author concludes that continuing research is required

to address problems relating to the control of weeds, slugs and snails and to improve the operation of equipment in wet soils.

The launch was very well reported in the industry press and has been referred to by many independent speakers at subsequent events. The photograph is of Professor Godwin with the Master and Liveryman Professor David Leaver who manages our research efforts. A full copy of the report is available on the website.

The City Food Lecture

This year's City Food Lecture, held at The Guildhall, was given by Richard Evans the President of PepsiCo UK and Ireland on the topic 'The responsibility of the Food Industry for Improving the Nation's Health'.

He made the case that the responsibility for the current deteriorating state of the Nation's health with ballooning obesity, especially in younger children, was not solely that of the food manufacturers but of society in general. He cited the many improvements companies such as PepsiCo had made in their formulations through dramatic reductions in sugar, saturated fat and salt content but stressed that other factors such as regular exercise and focusing on staff wellbeing played a major role. His lecture was followed by a lively question and answer session with a panel of three industry experts,

superbly chaired by Margaret Mountford. However as always the star of the evening was HRH The Princess Royal, a Past Master of The Farmers' Company, who gave the closing address and mingled with the attendees for hours at the reception.

CULL A BADGER OR SLAUGHTER A COW?

Every week Alan Spedding emails news briefs on behalf of the Rank Centre on interesting and current topics and here is his update on the badger culling, Feb 19th.

Is the badger cull working?

It's very early days so we mustn't get too excited but the following appeared at the end of a recent NFU press release: "Information compiled by farmers in the Somerset cull zone indicate there has been a huge reduction in the number of herds under TB restriction since culling started in 2013, from 34 per cent to 11 per cent. Meanwhile, initial data compiled by farmers in the Gloucestershire cull area suggests there has been a reduction in TB in cattle since culling began. Information from a number of farms where whole herd TB tests were carried out by two veterinary practices in early to mid-2013 and again in late 2014/early 2015 has shown a five-fold reduction in the number of TB reactors, from 28 to five. The sample represents more than 4,000 cattle from a total of approximately 15,000 in the Gloucestershire cull area."

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Past Master Assistant John Reynolds has continued his mission to establish formal links with many of the leading companies who are engaged in the farming sector who are happy to contribute to our Charitable Trust objectives.

Agrovista UK Ltd, ForFarmers, Frontier Agriculture, HSBC Bank and Savills are all Corporate Partners, principally because our educational objectives align with their own corporate philosophies. This is by encouraging and fostering agricultural and ancillary occupations through the provision of courses and

conferences aimed at developing productive agriculture in tandem with managed sustainability.

Savills specifically partner the Company in the sponsorship of a Nuffield Scholarship. Our latest Corporate Partner is Roythornes Solicitors of Spalding and they have extended an invitation to members attending Cereals to join them for tea at 3.00pm on June 10th. To accept their invitation please email markdodds@roythornes.co.uk by May 27th.

We are also grateful for sponsorship of the annual Agricultural Dinner & Lecture; in 2013 & 2014 by HSBC Bank and in 2015 by Frontier Agriculture. This

event has become a highly regarded forum for debate on issues of the day, stimulated and led by an internationally recognised speaker on the subject to be debated.

The Company is also most grateful for the sponsorship of Yara UK for the printing and publication of Research Papers commissioned from time to time covering topics of crops and animal management, enabling these valuable studies to reach a wide audience in the UK, Europe and beyond. Saffery Champness Chartered Accountants generously sponsor the annual Livery Handbook, a digest of members, committees and areas of responsibility.