

THE BASKETMAKER



The Worshipful Company of Basketmakers
Review 2019 and 2020



Due to the pandemic taking over our lives in 2020 and the curtailment of face-to-face activity in the Livery this issue of the Company review combines the years of Prime Wardens Chris Hipkins and Anne Holden, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.

The content reflects on the 450th Anniversary commemorations and celebrations in 2019 and the introduction of virtual dinners and meetings in 2020, two momentous and memorable occasions in our Company's history.

With thanks to Liveryman Philip Panchaud for his support of this publication.

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450 YEARS

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Celebrating 450 years, PPW Chris Hipkins

I would like to start by thanking everyone for their tremendous support throughout my year as Prime Warden. We certainly celebrated our 450th Anniversary in fine fashion. I felt very honoured and privileged that you elected me to preside over this special year. I had been warned by my predecessors that the year would be over very quickly but even though I was forewarned, my year just passed in an absolute flash with hardly a moment to draw breath. It was always my goal to make it a year full of celebration, enjoyment and fun. Mike and I certainly enjoyed ourselves immensely and we hope that you all did as well.

Lord Mayor's Show

The year of Premier Events started with a bang, and our entry in the Lord Mayors Show. We hired the 1925 open top Dennis Bus featured in the film Mary Poppins. It proved a little temperamental on the day, and on a couple of occasions it needed to be pushed to bump start it. All good fun, helped by a glass or two of the Basketmakers 450 Champagne, and for once we enjoyed some sunshine on Show day.

Trade Fair

The major event of the year was our Grand Trade Fair at the Old Library Guildhall in February. Opened by HRH the Duchess of Gloucester, we had 41 stands with Basketmaking Demonstrators and Exhibitors from all over the country. Our guests included more than 200 VIPs from the City, including the Lady Mayoress Lindy Estlin, Sheriff Liz Green, and Masters, Consorts, and Clerks representing 85 Livery Companies. This Fair was absolute proof that Basketry today is so much more than Baskets.

All our guests were amazed at the excellent craftsmanship and diversity of creations on display. We believe this was the biggest and most prestigious event ever organised by the Company and was over two years in the planning. It is still a talking point in the City. It was during this event that our new History of the Company Book written by Assistant Jonathan Pyzer and Liveryman Roger Barnes was launched. Copies were given to all our members and guests; the book was very generously funded by PPW Eddie Donaldson in memory of his late wife Liveryman and Steward Mary Jane.

Spring Ball

Our Grand Spring Ball in mid-May was a departure from our usual summer dinner in that we held it at the beautiful Drapers' Hall with dinner, dancing to a seven-piece band, and a casino for those less enthusiastic about dancing. We incorporated a number of surprise attractions including a Crystal Ball Juggler and an Accordionist during the reception and Singing Waiters as we finished dinner. We had amazing flower decorations on the tables created by Mandy Taylor. There was a full house with many commenting that there was a really fabulous atmosphere, more like a party than a traditional Livery dinner.

Thanksgiving Service

I was very lucky to find myself hosting the Duchess of Gloucester for the second time during my year at our Thanksgiving service at our Guild Church St Margaret Pattens. This made it a really special event for our members, giving almost everyone the opportunity to chat informally with her at the reception after the service.



Chris Hipkins, Past Prime Warden

The Banquet

Our final Premier Event was our 450 Banquet in September. What a way to finish the year, with over 300 attending and the full shrieval party of the Lord Mayor and both Sheriffs, each with their Consorts, and 40 of the Letzi Guild from Zurich in their colourful costumes. The winners of the Basketry of the year Competition run by our Charity produced wonderful examples of our craft once again. The prizes were presented by the Lord Mayor Peter Estlin. Surprise entertainment by West End Kids singing and dancing a medley from 'The Greatest Showman', added a new twist to entertainment at Mansion House, and confirmed yet again that the Basketmakers are happy to push the barriers.

Special Events

Apart from our Premier Events, we organised a number of Company visits during the year. The first was to Middle Temple and 2 Temple Place in March. These are wonderful historic buildings – the



Consort Mike Horton

tour of Middle Temple was expertly guided by Sue King a Liveryman of our Company who gave us a very personal insight. Lunch was taken in the superb surroundings of Inner Temple courtesy of UW Roger Harper MBE, followed by a guided tour of 2 Temple Place to view the John Ruskin exhibition.

The Court only Dinner was held at the Tower of London where members of the Court and Stewards together with their partners enjoyed a super reception and dinner at the Regimental Headquarters of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. We were fortunate to be able to see the Ceremony of the Keys afterwards – a ceremony that has taken place daily for over 700 years. This finished with a soulful rendition of 'The Last Post' played by a Ghurkha bugler which was very moving in the twilight.

Jailed and Bailed

This was not my only visit to the Tower of London during my year, as I was 'Jailed & Bailed' After being tried in the Old Bailey on charges trumped up by my Consort

and the Clerk, I was found guilty of aforesaid charges and transported to the Tower along with numerous other Masters, all of us sporting our full gowns and badges, and all shackled with balls and chains. On arrival at the Tower we were paraded in front of huge queues of bemused tourists who were being orchestrated to give us a hard time by Yeomen Warders brandishing very sharp axes. I was fingerprinted and only after proving that sufficient bail money had been raised (well done all those members and friends who contributed) was I allowed to have my bread and water (Pol Roger and a super lunch) and be released. Quite an experience. This event raises money for the Red Cross and is one of many City events that I participated in during the year to raise money for various charities, like the Big Curry Lunch, the Sheriffs Horseback ride round the City, the Inter Livery Walk of 40 Livery Halls to mention but a few (phew!)...

Letzi Guild

Mike and I attended the Sechseläuten festival in Zurich again as guests of the Letzi Guild. Wonderful hospitality as usual but as Prime Warden and principal guest this year I was encouraged to make a speech in Schweizerdeutsch.



Many thanks to Jürg Vogel, the Zunftmeister, for not only translating my speech from English but sending me an audio tape to practice the pronunciation a couple of weeks beforehand. Luckily by the time I got to speak the wine had already been flowing freely for some hours, so I got a few laughs and rapturous applause for the effort.

Museum of English Rural Life

Another Company visit was to the Museum of English Rural Life in Reading in May. It is a museum, library and archive dedicated to recording the changing face of farming and the countryside in England. It houses over 600 basketry items and tools with some rare examples from the 19th Century as well as some more contemporary pieces. We were personally guided by Curator Greta Bertram who incidentally spoke at our Trade dinner in 2018. This most appropriate visit for Basketmaking enthusiasts finished with a very convivial dinner at Bills restaurant. The whole day had been superbly organised by our Steward Margaret Burgess who was unfortunately taken seriously ill beforehand and was unable to attend. It was very good to see her back in circulation at the Stewards Club Dinner and hear that she is making good progress.

Following in the family tradition

One of the most personal moments during my year was installing my eldest granddaughter Jenny as a Freeman of the Company at my first Court meeting in January, just a couple of months after her 18th birthday. She is the fourth generation of my family to join the



Company. I was very happy that my other two young grandchildren were able to join in the fun at both the Spring Ball and the Banquet as I am hopeful, they will join our ranks as soon as they are old enough.

Being a Consort

Mike found himself in great demand at the many Consort events during the year as one of the few men on the Consort circuit, and he continued with our tradition of organising two of the very popular Consort Basketmaking days at the Dutch Church in March and September. Thanks to our Yeomen and our Trade Advisor Christiane Gunzi for supporting these, and all our other Trade events as well as producing all the exquisite baskets we give to our official guests at our Livery dinners and the Banquet. I am also very grateful for the help and support from the Basketmakers Association throughout the year and especially for the Trade Fair.

PW's Weekend

The highlights of my year would not be complete without a brief mention of the PW Weekend on the Isle of Wight. We were blessed with gorgeous weather from start to finish, which was lucky since most of our trips were on a vintage open top bus. Osborne House, the Brading Roman Villa, and Carisbrooke Castle were features on the busy itinerary, but my special memory is enjoying 450 Champagne in the waterside garden of George Alford's House (thanks to George & Corinne) accompanied by a local jazz band and followed by dinner at the nearby Royal Solent Yacht Club on the longest day of the Year, while watching the most amazing sunset from the terrace.

Our Charity

I would like to say a very special thank you to all those members who made such generous donations to our Premier Events this year making it possible to go that extra mile and have such a memorable time, while actually leaving both

the Company and the Charity with a small surplus on the year from our Celebrations. In addition, I must thank all those members who gave a huge amount of time and effort to organise the events, and everyone who attended our functions in great numbers to make them such a success. I must take this opportunity to thank my fellow Wardens – IPPW Stephen, Anne and Lewis respectively as Upper and Under Wardens, and especially Fiona Janczur our Learned Clerk for contributing so much in the way of advice and creative ideas, both to me personally, and to the Company, and frequently burning the midnight oil to keep everything on schedule.

And finally

I finish with my best wishes to Sarah Sinclair our new Clerk and hope that she will enjoy working with us, and to our second lady Prime Warden in 451 years who is organising another exciting year. Good luck and best wishes Anne, I hope you and Bob enjoy your year as much as Mike and I have enjoyed ours.

Annual Basketry Report – 2019

The 450th celebrations began with a splash in November 2018, with a splendid and original display of basketry at the Lord Mayors Show. Yeoman basketmaker Nadine Andersen and the Prime Warden's consort, Mike Horton, both wore handwoven rush 'Green Man' costumes (as seen on the front cover) that Nadine had designed and created especially for the occasion. The outfits were so remarkable that they also caught the eye of the BBC, who interviewed Nadine.

To continue the basketry celebrations in February 2019, the Company held a spectacular Grand Trade Fair in The Old Library at Guildhall. Dozens of basketmakers took part, many of them Yeomen Members of the Company, and all of them members of the Basketmakers' Association. The array of basketry and allied crafts was absolutely stunning, with everything from coracles, trugs, cribs and coffins to chair seating, animal sculpture, and every kind of basket that one could wish for. The basketmakers, chair seaters and willow artists put on a wonderful show of the best of British basketmaking today, and it was lovely to see so many talented makers enjoying themselves and talking about their work with all the guests.

In April The Basketmakers' Association celebrated its 20th year of basket courses held at York, where it has put on a fascinating timetable of classes for its members every Spring. As of 2020, due to a change in the school holiday dates, these highly successful courses will move to a new venue in Harrogate, where they will hopefully continue to be popular.

From May to August, artist Tim Johnson's original 'Lines & Fragment' exhibition at Farnham was extremely well received. Tim's unique weaving work is always an inspiration, and his current show in London is on until the end of January at the Sarah Myerscough Gallery, as part of an exhibition of artist-designer-makers, called 'Crop'.

Another inspiring weaver, Bob Johnson, was given a top-secret commission earlier this year, to create flying willow dragons to celebrate the premiere of season eight of Game of Thrones. The excitedly anticipated results were really fantastic, and all three pieces were suspended from the ceiling for the premiere party in Belfast, and looked incredible.

From July to October, an exhibition of British basketry, entitled 'Function & Ornament' took place at Ruthin Craft Centre in North Wales. This stunning contemporary show was curated by Gregory Parsons, and included 30 selected British basketmakers,



Hilary Burns Lifetime Award

most of whom also took part in the 450th Trade Fair at Guildhall.

At the Trade Dinner in July, Yeoman Hilary Burns was given a lifetime achievement award for her many contributions to basketry, and Alison Dickens gave an excellent talk about her experience at Cockpit Arts. Alison has been the first recipient of the new joint award between Cockpit Arts and The Worshipful Company of Basketmaker's Charitable Trust. This most welcome award gives a working basketmaker free studio space and valuable business coaching for one year. The winner of this prestigious place for 2020 is Esna Su, and we wish her the very best for her creative year at Cockpit Arts.

At the end of July, on what turned out to be the hottest day of the year, graduates of The City Lit's Basketry course put on their end of course exhibition. I for one, almost didn't get to the show due to the effect of the extreme weather on the transport system! 'Twist & Turn' at the Espacio Gallery was an innovative display



of technique and materials, with an exciting mix of styles, and at times an intriguing crossover between craft and art. Everyone, including the Prime Warden and his Consort Mike Horton, was really impressed by the standard of work on show, and it was a thoroughly enjoyable, if baking, evening.

In August, we heard of the sad death of one of the first Yeomen of the Company, Colin Manthorpe. This well-known Norfolk basketmaker had been weaving baskets since Queen Elizabeth took the throne in 1952, and he was held in great esteem in the Basketry world. Colin created baskets over six decades, producing up to three a day, and published a book on the craft, called 'Fifty Years on the Plank'. In 2012 Colin had the honour of being asked by The Worshipful Company to weave a picnic basket in commemoration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and he is said to have been delighted to accept.

In October, The Heritage Crafts Association and Basketmakers' Association hosted an 'Endangered Baskets Symposium' at The Museum of Rural Life, in Reading. This event was funded by The BA and The Worshipful Company's Charitable Trust. The current Prime Warden, Anne Holden attended the event with her husband Bob. Guest speakers included Mary Butcher, Lois Walpole, Hilary Burns, Stephanie Bunn and Jenny Crisp. The aim of this important



event was to collect and collate data from the British basketmaking community in order to learn the numbers of makers weaving heritage baskets and their allied crafts, as many types of traditional basket are now officially on the Red List of Endangered Crafts.

Fortunately, Basketmaking is very much in vogue at the moment, and its' popularity is on the rise. It is extremely heartening for all of us makers to see how much interest there is in the subject around the globe. Long make it last!

*Christiane Gunzi
Trade Advisor 2017-2019*

450th Anniversary Year & Company Events



Lord Mayor's Show

Vintage Open Top Bus & Rush Green Men
November 2018



Basketry: Weaving the Cycle of Life

Guildhall, London
February 2019





Basketmakers' Ball
Drapers Hall, May 2019



Thanksgiving Service
at the Guild Church of
St Margaret Pattens
June 2019



Annual Banquet at Mansion House
Attended by Lord Mayor Peter Estlin, September 2019



Other Company Events



Sechselauteuten

Prime Warden,
Chris Hipkins
& Consort Mike
Horton's visit to
Zurich
April 2019

Big Curry Lunch

HRH Prince Harry
chatting to Prime
Warden Chris Hipkins
at Lord Mayor's Big
Curry Lunch where
the Company had
a stand



Jailed & Bailed

Prime Warden,
Chris Hipkins
'Jailed & Bailed'
in aid of the
Red Cross



**Pancake
Race**
Inter-Livery
Pancake
Race,
Guildhall



Isle of Wight
Prime Warden's
Weekend
Isle of Wight
June 2019



Immediate Past Prime Warden

Reflections from Immediate Past Prime Warden, Anne Holden

Fellow Basketmakers! What a delight and enormous privilege it was to be your Prime Warden. I was, as you already know, the second lady Prime Warden in the history of our Company. It was an honour to represent our company.

My ambition for the year was to build on the huge success of our 450th Anniversary. What an exciting year that was for us, I'm sure you will all join me in congratulating my predecessor, Chris Hipkins, strongly supported by Mike Horton, for a magnificent year. Wonderful ambassadors for our Company. However, how things have changed for us all!

Challenging Times

My year started with a few challenges! Our Clerk Fiona Janczur retired in October 2019 after looking after us for over 5 years in a magnificent fashion. We started the procedure to recruit her replacement earlier in the year and had some excellent candidates apply. Our choice was Sarah Sinclair and she was installed into her position as Clerk on 14th October. Fiona said 'goodbye' and Sarah said 'hello'! I am pleased to report that Sarah has settled in very well, has got to grips with the office, the finances, membership and she would have been working on the events lined up for the year ahead but Coronavirus meant it was not to be.

Farewell to our Trade Advisor

We also bade farewell to our Trade Advisor Christiane Gunzi.

Sadly for us, Christiane needed to concentrate more on her basket making business, she had been a brilliant coordinator between us, the Basketmakers Association and the basket making trade in general in our 450 anniversary year. We have appointed a new Trade Adviser, Eleanor Morgan to be installed on Installation Day 14th October, 2020. We have also appointed an Archivist, Julie Cribb, it is many years since we have had someone to look after our records. We wish them well in their appointments.

We have been informed that Skinners' Hall will close for a refurbishment in summer 2021 and this may be for two years so we are looking for an alternative Hall that is suitable for our needs.

New website

Much credit goes to Mandy Taylor who has been a huge help in coordinating the work that needed to be done and guiding our new Clerk. She has helped the Company 'catch up' and has masterminded the website which has a new, fresh look. Please visit **www.basketmakersco.org** for up to date news and photographs. To buy a British made basket, visit the new 'Makers' page, for more information. Our Basketmakers need us more than ever at this time. If you have ever considered commissioning a basket for a special gift, or indeed a basket for yourself, a special colour or shape perhaps, now is the time to contact a maker. Our Basketmakers need you!



Photograph by Tony Holland

Anne Holden

Pandemic changes our lives

Never in any of our wildest dreams could we have imagined the situation we all found ourselves in. Covid 19 spoilt all our plans. Even though we were not following our usual pattern we were, and are, still supporting the Company's objectives – to support our trade and charity, ensure fellowship amongst Basketmakers and our fellow City Livery Companies, support the Lord Mayor and City Corporation. Above all, promote our motto 'Let us Love one another'.

We started the 2019-20 year in good shape with a well-supported Installation Service at St Margaret Pattens followed by a meal afterwards in Bakers Hall. A small team of us walked with Gog and Magog on Lord Mayor's Show Day, the weather was kind. We held the traditional Carol Service in December shared with the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers. In January, we had our Court Meeting, followed by Dinner, in Skinners' Hall. Our

speaker was Alderman Alison Gowman and liveryman Jean Aslet entertained us with great skill at the piano. We entertained Master Pattenmaker, Master Educator and the President of the City Livery Club.

The Annual Pancake Day on 25th February was as cold as usual. I thank Under Warden Roger Harper for representing us in the race and congratulate him on coming second in his heat. Nine of us lunched in the Crypt of Guildhall.

Tuesday 3rd March was 'Basketry Showcase Day' at the Dutch Church, Austin Friars. Primarily this event was to invite Livery Masters and Clerks to see the work of 14 Yeoman Basketmakers. They demonstrated, sold, displayed and showed their baskets and talents. 42 Livery Companies were represented, so not only did we promote our trade to the wider livery, we showed to our own Liverymen and guests as well. Honorary Liveryman Bunty Ball coordinated this project along with the Trade Committee.

We visited 2 Temple Place again as it was so popular and oversubscribed last time. Visited Temple Church, guided by our own Sue King and lunched at Middle Temple.

Thursday 5th March we entertained HRH the Duchess of Gloucester who wanted to make a basket. The Duchess had indicated at the Trade Fair in February 2019 that she would like to come and work in rush. John Page was our tutor and a Trustee from our Charity kindly paid his fee. We are most grateful to the Walduck family once again who sponsored an excellent room, The Wendy House, in the newly restored Bedford Hotel. We were most gratified when Her



Royal Highness made reference to us at the virtual Chelsea Flower Show and telephoned me at my home to enquire how the Company were coping with the demands of the virus.

What we didn't do! We didn't go to Zurich in April, to join our Letzi Guild friends for their Annual parade. We didn't go in May, to visit Gibraltar. The Chief Minister, Fabian Picardo, had agreed to meet us on our four night visit. Our Summer Dinner due to be held at Saddlers Hall and our Trade Dinner were not held either. It was with great regret that we had to announce our Annual Banquet to be held in September would not go ahead either.

However, we were able to meet via Zoom. We had a virtual talk the theme of which was the Battle of Britain, it being the 80th Anniversary and a virtual city walk, again sponsored by our own Liverymen. This meant that participating members did not have to pay. We held a drinks evenings for our Court, and one for our Yeoman Members, then in July we had our very first Zoom, or Virtual Dinner, black tie which was very successful. We were honoured that Sheriff Chris Hayward attended and spoke to us all, updating us with the civic news. So pleased with that, we made history again and held our first virtual Banquet on Thursday

17th September, white tie. Everyone entered into the spirit of the evening. The Lord Mayor attended and spoke. We were very lucky, as, if times were 'normal', the Lord Mayor would not have been there, he would have been overseas. We presented a log basket to the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress.

Huge thanks go to our team of volunteers made up of our Court who have phoned every member of our Company during these difficult times. Our Clerk has been sending out newsletters and reports to keep us all up to date with the recent news. Court members have all acquired the new skill of Zooming so that our meetings can continue and the good work of the Company can carry on. Members have been most generous with financial sponsorship, we thank them most sincerely. We need to look ahead with hope and optimism.

To proceed into the future, we face many challenges. The consequences of Covid 19 has led to an above average number of members not renewing their membership, in common with most other City Livery Companies, Guilds and Clubs. We need to introduce new members, we look forward to welcoming more ladies into the Company. The Worshipful Company of Basketmakers is your Livery Company – let us work together to encourage family and friends to join us, to ensure our company prospers for many years to come.

Finally, the thoughts and best wishes of my husband Bob and I go to Lewis and Andrea Bloch. They will be excellent ambassadors for our Company but they need all our support in the changing times we find ourselves in.

Basketmakers Events 2019-2020



The Prime Warden and her Consort



Installation 2019



Clerk Fiona Fanczur and IPPW Chris Hipkins at the Installation in October 2019



Signing of the Livery book



The Lord Mayor's Show with Gog and Magog outside Guildhall



Family Basketmaking Day at on 24th November 2019



Basketmaking day 24th November 2019



The supper after the Carol Service 2019



January Livery Dinner. The Prime Warden with Master Pattenmaker



January Livery Dinner. New Liveryman Jean Aslet played beautifully for our entertainment

Basketmakers Events 2019-2020 cont'd



Under Warden Roger Harper takes up the challenge at the 2020 Pancake Race

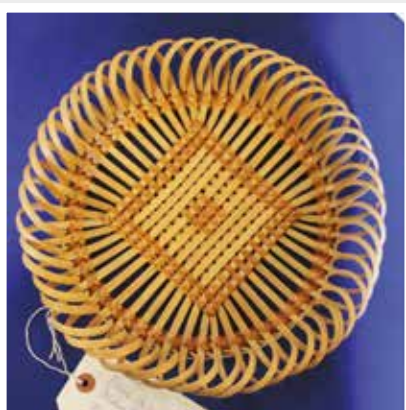


HRH The Duchess of Gloucester came to learn to weave with rush with John Page as the tutor and Prime Warden and Judy Tayler-Smith

Basketry Showcase 2020



Basketry Showcase 2020



On-line



Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress at the on-line Banquet 2020 with their new log basket made by Somerset Willow



Our on-line Banquet 2020



Our on-line Banquet 2020



On-line Summer Dinner 2020

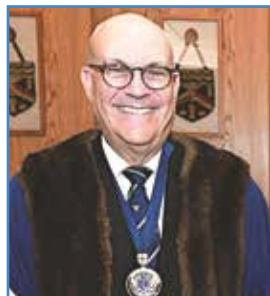
The Court 2019-2020

Mrs Anne Holden
Prime Warden



Chairs the Court and sits on all other Committees

Lewis Bloch
Upper Warden



Chairs the Livery Committee and a member of all other Committees

Roger Harper MBE
Under Warden



Member of all Committees

Christopher Hipkins
Immediate Past Prime Warden



Graham Redcliffe
Past Prime Warden 1988



John d'O Robinson
Past Prime Warden 1992



Jeremy Sorrell
Past Prime Warden 2002



Richard Bundock
Past Prime Warden 2004



Graham Lewinstein
Past Prime Warden 2008



Michael Stemp JP
Past Prime Warden 2009



Peter Yarker
Past Prime Warden 2010



Neil Redcliffe JP
Past Prime Warden 2012



Graham Aslet
Past Prime Warden 2013



Edward Donaldson
Past Prime Warden 2014



Richard Boucher-Giles
Past Prime Warden 2015



Peter Allen
Past Prime Warden 2016



Stephen Gee
Past Prime Warden 2017



Tony Charlwood
Assistant



Simon Langton
Assistant



Philip Miles
Assistant



Jonathan Pyzer
Assistant



Judy Tayler-Smith
Assistant



Julian Adams
Assistant



Dorothy Newlands of Lauriston
Assistant



Mark Cooper
Assistant



Sarah Sinclair
Clerk



Peter Thompson
Beadle



Yeomen Report

One of the most important celebrations in 2019 for our “450” Anniversary of the Establishment of the Company was the Trade Fair held in Old Library Guildhall under the title Basketry: Weaving the Cycle of Life where many of our Yeomen were kept extremely busy in answering enquiries and taking of orders and a number of them had the opportunity of being introduced to Honorary Liveryman H.R.H. The Duchess of Gloucester.

The Yeomen once again did the teaching at our very popular Consort’s Basketmaking Days held at the Dutch Church in the City.

This year the Livery Schools Link days had a two day event at Guildhall and Yeomen Sandra Barker, John Page and John Galloway we’re certainly kept very busy over two days keeping the children and teenagers amused with how cool it is to be a Basketmaker!

Thank you to Past Prime Warden Richard Walduck for once again for sponsoring the marquee at the Herts 2 Day Show where our Yeomen headed by Paul Weir had the opportunity to welcome many visitors to the stand.

Yeomen Karen Lawrence and Maggie Cooper, very bravely in wet weather minded the Company’s Stall on Sheep Drive Day in London and yes the rumours our correct Maggie’s Willow Sheep did cross London Bridge!!!

The work of ten of our Yeomen sponsored by our Company Charity are now beautifully displayed in the Company’s Glass Cabinet at our Guild Church of St Margaret Pattens in addition we have a Makers Page on the Company’s Website. Please do spend some time looking at both these sites.

Thank you to Christiane Gunzi for all her hard work, excellent advice and good guidance that she gave the Company as our Trade Advisor and I would like to take this opportunity to wish her all the very best for the future.

Congratulations to Yeoman Eddie Glew and his wife Natalie on the birth of a beautiful baby daughter.

Unfortunately, the year 2020 turned out totally unexpected with the pandemic which affected the country and the world with great force. I kept in contact with many of our Yeomen at this very difficult time and I found through talking to them that in a number of cases the Yeomen unfortunately could not obtain the materials needed to make products or make deliveries for the orders completed and of course on the Academic side ceased operating completely.



Many of our Yeoman found ingenious ways to continue to drum up business and of course their websites become into they own by customers placing orders for delivery after lockdown.

Due to lockdown the Livery Schools Link Days and the Herts 2 Day Show both had to be cancelled but the Company’s Website and Makers Page we’re both featured in the Herts Visual Show. It was of course very disappointing for the Prime Warden that it was not possible to have our Consort’s Basketmaking Days once again this year.

I am delighted to say Christiane Gunzi our former Trade Advisor was installed as a Yeoman Member at





the January Court Meeting also Alison Dickens has now been appointed the B.A. Representative on the Company's Trade Committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Honorary Member Bunty Ball and Liveryman Rae Gillott for all their tremendous help and excellent advice they have both given the Trade Committee because we have not been able to conduct interviews to appoint a new Trade Advisor at this time.



Congratulations to Yeoman Dr Brian Crossley for being Awarded an M.B.E. in the New Year Honours for the Craft of Chair Caning.

May I take this opportunity to wish good health to all our Yeoman Members and their families.

PPW Stephen Gee Chairman Trade Committee

BASKETRY REPORT 2020

On Tuesday 3rd March due to an initiative of our Prime Warden and financial support of the Charitable Trust and the Company we held an event under the title "Basketry Showcase Day" at the Dutch Church.

14 Stall Holders the majority being Yeoman where present showing a very wide variety from the traditional to the modern including chair seating and in some cases very colourful the Best of British Basketry.

In the morning we had Representatives from 42 Livery Companies and in the afternoon the show was opened to Company and B.A. Members. A number of important sales were made and overall there was a very friendly atmosphere. Thank you to the following people Sarah Sinclair, Mandy Taylor, Bunty Ball, Rae Gillott, John Page and David

Emmett because through their hard work over many months in organising this event it was an all-round great success.

In its 10th year of the Basketry of the Year Competition which is open to both Yeomen and B.A. Members which is fully funded by our Charitable Trust we had over 30 entries. With that number of entries and the quantity of work entered it became extremely difficult for the Judging Committee to decide who should go forward to the final round. The eight finalists were advised and in a new move, due to another lockdown, the final judging would be done via images and Zoom. The winners were:

1st Prize : Pascal Carr, Garden Basket

2nd Prize : Lin Lovekin, Willow Lampshade

3rd Prize : Lorna Singleton, Collecting Basket

Report from the Charitable Trust 2019

This year the Trust has continued its policy of concentrating on fewer charities, mainly London based. It has also developed its support for the basketmaking trade, which now accounts for almost half of the donations made by the Trust in the year.

The Trust concentrates on working with carefully selected charity partners, offering a commitment to support over a longer period, typically three years. This approach offers our partner charities increased financial certainty and the opportunity to plan for sustainable growth. It also allows the Trust to develop closer relationships with the charities and more easily ensure that funds are being used responsibly.

The Trust added three charities to the list of charities it supports on a regular basis: Cockpit Arts, London Youth Choir and the Magical Taxi Tour. Four charities reached the end of their support period and were removed from the list: St Mary le Bow, Tower Hamlets Mission, Tower Hamlets Parents Centre and All Hallows Fern Street. Regular support is offered to a charity for no more than six years, in order to encourage recipients to develop other income streams. The only exceptions are established City charities.

Further details of all the charities which the Trust supports on a regular basis can be found by following the links below.

The Trust supported the Trade Fair organised by the Worshipful Company in February 2019 to celebrate the 450th anniversary of its foundation. Forty basketmakers were able to display their skills in the Guildhall to guests who included HRH The Duchess of Gloucester and Masters and Officers of most of the other City Livery Companies.

Small ad hoc payments are also made twice a year.

The Trust continues to rely on the members of the Company to fund its activities and is most grateful for the support it receives. The following link

www.basketmakers.org/about-charitable-trust accesses the Worshipful Company's website which contains further details of the Trust and its partner charities.

Website links to charities supported on a regular basis: Lord Mayor's Appeal www.thelordmayorsappeal.org Guild Church,

St Margaret Pattens www.stmargaretpattens.org
 Sheriffs and Recorder's Fund www.srfund.org.uk
 Cockpit Arts www.cockpitarts.com
 Spires Centre www.spires.org.uk
 Theatre Royal Stratford East www.stratfordeast.com
 London Youth Choir www.londonyouthchoir.com
 Magical Taxi Tour www.magicaltaxitour.com

Charitable activities

During the year (April 2018 to March 2019) we made the following grants:

	£	£
The Trade of Basketmaking:		
Bursaries	8,638	
Trade Fair	14,500	
Cockpit Arts*	4,000	
Other	18,394	45,532
The City of London:		
Sheriffs' & Recorder's Fund*	5,000	
Lord Mayor's Appeal*	2,000	7,000
The Guild Church, St Margaret Pattens*		4,500
Small charities, mainly in London:		
Spires Centre*	5,000	
Theatre Royal Stratford East*	5,000	
London Youth Choir*	5,000	
Magical Taxi Tour*	4,200	19,200
Ad hoc payments		
Manna Society	2,000	
Sane	1,000	
Hackney Quest	1,000	
Theodora's Children	1,000	
Deptford Methodists	1,000	
Bede House Association	1,000	
Tower Hamlet Friends	1,000	
Stepney Community Trust	1,000	
Attend	1,000	
St Luke's Parochial	1,000	
The Whittington	1,000	
Horse Rangers Association	1,000	
Alexander Rose	1,000	
Sudbury Neighbour	1,000	
Build Up Foundation	500	
Ansary Youth Project	500	16,000
Benevolence	–	
TOTAL		92,232

*Denotes regular commitment (subject to annual review)

Graham Aslet
Chairman

Report from the Charitable Trust 2020

The Trust has maintained the policy of concentrating on fewer mainly London based charities set out in our 2019 report and has continued to support the basketmaking trade. The latter support fell slightly compared to the previous year but we expect it to recover as the Trust makes special grants to charities and individuals suffering hardship as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the year, the Trust continued to support the nine charities on its list of charities supported on a regular basis. The Trust's policy is not to support a charity (apart from established City charities) on a regular basis for more than six years in order to encourage recipients to develop their own income streams. Further details of these charities can be found by following the links below.

The Trust supported the Basketmaking Showcase organised by the Worshipful Company in February 2020. 20 basketmakers were able to display their skills in the Dutch Church to guests who included many Masters and Officers of City Livery Companies.

Small ad hoc payments are also made twice a year.

The Trust continues to rely on the members of the Company to fund its activities and is most grateful for the support it receives.

Website links to charities supported on a regular basis are as follows:

Lord Mayor's Appeal www.thelordmayorsappeal.org
Guild Church,

St Margaret Pattens www.stmargaretpattens.org

Sheriffs and Recorder's Fund www.srfund.org.uk

Cockpit Arts www.cockpitarts.com

London Youth Choir www.londonyouthchoirs.com

Magic Breakfast www.magicbreakfast.com

Magical Taxi Tour www.magicaltaxitour.com

Spires Centre www.spires.org.uk

Theatre Royal
Stratford East www.stratfordeast.com/

Graham Aslet
Chairman



Charitable activities

During the year (April 2019 to March 2020) we made the following grants:

	£	£
The Trade of Basketmaking:		
Bursaries	11,708	
Basketry Showcase	1,880	
Cockpit Arts*	4,000	
Other	19,718	37,306
The City of London:		
Sheriffs' & Recorder's Fund*	5,000	
Lord Mayor's Appeal*	2,000	7,000
The Guild Church, St Margaret Pattens*		4,500
Small charities, mainly in London:		
London Youth Choir*	5,000	
Magic Breakfast*	5,000	
Magical Taxi Tour*	4,200	
Spires Centre*	5,000	
Theatre Royal Stratford East*	5,000	24,200
Ad hoc payments		
Action for ME	1,000	
Asthma Relief	500	
Caspari Foundation	500	
Deptford Action Group for the Elderly	1,000	
Ecumenical Partnership Initiatives	250	
Enfield Carers Centre	1,000	
Hackney Quest	1,260	
Keep Playing	1,000	
MAC – Support	1,000	
Richard House Trust	1,000	
Safer London	1,500	
School Home Support Services	1,000	
St Vincent's Family Project	1,000	
The Children's Literacy Centre	1,000	
The Nehemiah Project	1,500	
The Simon Community	1,500	
The Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation	500	
The Upper Room (St Saviour's)	500	
Theatre Peckham	1,000	
Voyage	1,000	
Winston's Wish	1,000	20,010
Benevolence		823
TOTAL		93,839

*Denotes regular commitment (subject to annual review)

Guild Church of St Margaret Pattens with St Gabriel Fenchurch

St Margaret Pattens is the Guild Church to both the Basketmakers and Pattenmakers, and both Companies nominate a Church Warden each to compliment the two Church Wardens elected from within the congregation.

We are very grateful to the Revd Andrew Keep who continues lead our worship and he is very popular with the congregation which continues to average around fifteen each Thursday.

The Guild Church Council (GCC) continues to work closely with the Friends of St Margaret Pattens to raise finances for the refurbishment of the organ. So far the appeal has raised some £140,000 towards the costs of refurbishment. With this money in hand the church has borrowed £100,000 from a benefactor at zero interest rate repayable over ten years to allow the work to proceed. (This was because at the time it was likely that the Government would not renew the VAT reclaim scheme which would have added about £50,000 to the costs). Thus, work commenced on the refurbishment after the 450th Anniversary service in June and is due to finish at the end of November in time for Advent and Christmas.

The main Company service of the year was the Annual Carol Service held jointly with the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers to celebrate Christmas 2018. The 450th Anniversary Service to celebrate the granting of Livery was held on 6th June 2019 attended by Honorary Liveryman the Duchess of Gloucester. The Annual Installation

Day service was held in church on 10th October 2019 followed by a lunch and Common Hall at Baker's Hall.

As before Anglican Holy Communion services continue to be held on Thursdays at 1.00pm with a choral Eucharist once a month on the first Thursday in the month. We continue to hold special saints day services, the service to commemorate the execution and martyrdom of King Charles I at the end of January, as well as the occasional choral evensong and other special services e.g. Harvest and Remembrance Day.

By licence from the Bishop of London the Salvation Christian Church (a recognised Chinese branch of the Church of England) now use the church on Sundays (and sometimes on Saturday afternoons). They hold two services on Sundays for predominantly Chinese speaking people from around London. They pay the church rent which helps us plan and promote our ministry.

The fabric of the Church continues to involve considerable expenditure through day to day running expenses. Following the production of the Quinquennial report last year the GCC is has updated its Ten Year Plan to accommodate necessary works. It is negotiating with the Deanery on how to raise some of the money necessary for the completion of these works. The capability of the Guild Church Council to meet its financial obligations relies heavily on support from the Basketmakers and Pattenmakers Companies, together with the Friends of St



Margaret Pattens. The new Prime Warden is looking at projects contained within the Plan that the Company might feel able to sponsor. The Church is extremely grateful for the annual grant from the Company.

The coffee vendor on the forecourt continues to be very popular with local office workers and has helped to raise the profile of the church with more visitors coming inside for a period of quiet reflection. The giving in the alms boxes had dropped this year because one of the Alms boxes is hidden by the scaffolding needed for the work on the organ.

Since November 2019 the main Company service of the year was the Annual Carol Service held jointly with the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers to celebrate Christmas 2019.

In the New Year 2020 the usual cycle of services celebrated during the Christian year recommenced after the brief Christmas period close down. Sadly in March the Covid-19 crisis was upon us and, reluctantly on government advice,

we were forced to close the doors and the forecourt coffee seller was forced to close. We are planning to reopen as soon as it is safe to do so.

The closure has put a considerable strain on the finances of the church with the loss of income from lettings and the forecourt coffee seller.

Generously both the Basketmakers and the Pattenmakers have advance

payment of their annual grant aid by a couple of months to help cash flow. The GCC is monitoring the situation closely and think that we have assured resources to see the church through until Christmas 2020, but after that things could become very difficult if we are not able to resume lettings.

The Church's survival from year to year is a constant challenge and can never be taken for granted. The challenge for the foreseeable future is survival of the church and its ministry.

*Tony Charlwood
Assistant & Churchwarden*

Letzi Guild



In May we were very sad to hear of the passing of our wonderful friend in Zurich, Guido Bergmaier who was the Letzi person responsible for liaising with the Worshipful Company. Juerg Vogel who is the present Zunftmeister will be stepping down from that role in the spring and will then take over Guido's role. It will be great to have such continuity as we already have such a good relationship with Juerg and his wife, Cornelia.

A lively contingent of 40 people came over from Zurich for the Annual Banquet at The Mansion House in September. The Prime Warden Chris Hipkins, Michael Horton, Roger and Olga Harper were all invited by the Letzi Guild to join them the night before the Banquet at The Dickens Inn. This was a very enjoyable evening and we were made to feel very welcome.

At the Banquet the Letzi members were magnificently attired. Juerg gave a very good speech and made a presentation of the Letzi Coat of Arms to The Prime Warden. The presence of the Letzi greatly added to the wonderful atmosphere of the evening. Afterwards some members of the Worshipful Company saw the new day in at the bar of the Letzi's hotel. A really lovely evening with excellent fellowship.

The Letzi link is in extremely good heart. A merry band of ten Basketmakers were booked to visit Zurich for Sechselauten in April 2020. However lockdown defeated this visit but it is already re-arranged for April 2021 and the friendships between us are being maintained with good natured emails. Both "sides" look forward to being able to meet up again to enjoy each other's friendship.

Number V (Army Cooperation) Squadron, Royal Air Force



After sterling service coordinating our link with V (AC) Sqn RAF for many years, David Herbert stepped down. I had the honour of being invited to take up the post in 2019. With the deferment of last year's report and its combination into this one, cover in 2018-2020, this is therefore my first report. I am grateful for David's updates for the end of his time I post and I also include subsequent developments, the last of which was unexpected and dramatic.

V (AC) Sqn experienced a further period of high operational demand upon returning to the UK which involved a weekly sortie in support of NATO allies, including with naval task groups. In September 2019, the Squadron started a new deployment in the Middle East where they had been located many times before but which was a new experience for a number of its younger members. The deployment was part of Operation Shader, the UK's contribution against ISIL. This took them overseas for the Christmas and New Year period and many family members were thus supported by members of other Squadrons remaining at their base at RAF Waddington.

Aside from operational duties, the Squadron had a visit to Menin Gate to lay a wreath and while on the visit, members of the Squadron saw the memorial to 2nd Lt Vincent Waterfall and Lt Charles Bayly. Bayly and Waterfall were members of the Squadron and were the Royal Flying Corp's first casualties in active service when their Avro 504 biplane was shot down by members of the



German 12th Grenadier Regiment on 22nd August 1914. The squadron was able to take part in adventure training, museum visits and sports activities and over two thirds of the Squadron was able to participate. They were also able to take part in a training flight to Canada.

Unfortunately, Wg Cdr Holland was unable to attend our Banquet in 2019 and Sqn Ldr Berry who was hoping to attend in his place was unavoidably called away at relatively short notice. The 2020 Banquet was moved to Zoom due to Covid lockdown but operational commitments also meant that the Squadron was not able to participate.

Just as they were returning to the UK, the Squadron learned that the MoD had decided to retire the RAF's Sentinel R1 aircraft after service in which the type has flown around 32,300 hours and roughly 4,870 sorties. Despite demonstrating their worth and effectiveness, this MoD decision means that V (AC) Squadron will be disbanded on 31st March 2021. They had planned a Disbandment Parade on 25th March and a Disbandment Dining-In Night on 31st to which our Prime Warden was invited, but the Parade

has been heavily scaled back and the Dinner postponed due to Covid restrictions – they hope to invite us to a delayed commemoration during 2022. In view of the disbandment, it was agreed to make a double award of the Basketmakers' Airman of the Year Award due to there being two outstanding candidates – SAC Madeline Mchardy-Roberts on the Squadron's HR side and Cpl Andrew Benton on their engineering/training side.

RAF Squadrons often experience periods of suspended animation, it has happened to V Squadron before on a number of occasions, most recently between 2002 and 2004. The Court has agreed to retain the association rather than seek another RAF link and to await V Squadron's resurrection when it is given a new role. We have reminded the Squadron members they are welcome to continue their association with us as Forces Affiliate Members even though they will be dispersed to serve in other RAF units and we look forward to welcoming a reformed V Squadron back in due course.

Philip Miles
Court Assistant



HMS Richmond

2019 was a busy year for HMS Richmond which saw the end of an extensive refit emerging as the UK's most advanced frigate (Type 23). The refit has seen new engines and a full new missile system installed on board (replacing the old Sea Wolf air defence missile system with the new Sea Ceptor system). While the work was predominantly an engineering and software upgrade, large parts of the structure of the vessel have also been replaced. It is hoped that this work will extend the ship's operational life by another 15 years (she is now 25 years old).

The Company was delighted to be able to entertain Cdr Hugh Botterill MBE and Lt Cdr Helen Johnson at our Annual banquet as our guests.

Cdr Botterill has taken command as Captain of HMS Richmond, and the full ships' company of circa 120 have now been together on board since the beginning of August 2019. Lt Cdr Johnson is Hugh's second in command and has been with the ship for over nine months during the latter part of the refit. Our liaison officer, Lt Cdr Beth Griffiths, is HMS RICHMOND's Marine Engineering Officer and was the senior officer for Richmond during the entire refit until Hugh took up command. The full crew have undergone extensive retraining which has included regular fire and flood drills, warfare simulated battles, and even the chefs got stuck into Devonport's 'cook and serve' contest, earning a bronze medal for their efforts.

The ship was due to go to sea in March this year, but the lockdown situation has resulted in plans being changed and the ship's company supporting the Covid-19 fight in Plymouth.



Cdr Botterill writes:

"We finally completed the hand over from Babcock Marine (the contractors) in mid-February, which entailed an 'alongside' safety package, followed by an 'at sea' safety package. Once we had proven we were safe to be at sea, the sea trials could start in earnest – it was grim weather, but we managed to achieve all our Sea Acceptance Trials, proving our new engines to be reliable and powerful. They are now producing cleaner, more efficient power and we have the ability to utilise redundant power as weapon technology starts to demand a higher power requirement - in essence, we have future proofed the Ship!"

"We are currently conducting flying trials before heading off shore to re-commission our sonar equipment, all this is so the Government will have another frigate in her armoury for whatever the requirement might be. There is a paradox really, as the spread of COVID-19 takes a firmer grip on the world, there will no doubt be an ever-greater requirement to keep our sea lines of communication open, but in the short term I have a full Ship's Company of firefighters and first aiders. So, who knows what will be next for my crew and I, but we are ready for whatever the request is".

When the 'new normal' comes after lockdown, Richmond will act as a support ship to the newly built Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier and will accompany her during joint sea trials and missile testing over the coming year. The view is that both ships will be fully functional and deployed on duty at the beginning of 2021.

We hope to be able to visit soon and once social distancing permits!

Mark Cooper
Court Assistant

8th Battalion the Rifles

This year was always going to be an operationally-focussed one, where the 8th Battalion The Rifles began to earn its place in the Order of Battle. As the Army's youngest Infantry unit, our attention has switched from the 'quick-wins' of formation, into maturing our light role capability, collective identity and confidence. Against a backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has not been easy, posing significant new challenges to the way we recruit, train and operate. Demanding a new level of flexibility and creative solutions from our thinking-fighting Riflemen, we have continued to build credible mass, operational output and regional influence throughout the Midlands and the North.

Members from across the battalion were mobilised to support Operation TORAL 10 as part of the 2 RIFLES Battlegroup. All three of our rifle companies provided Riflemen who were split between the Kabul Protection Unit and Kabul Security Force alongside their regular counterparts from 2 RIFLES and 4 SCOTS. They provided critical functions that included Armoured Force Protection, Base Security and support to the Combined Joint Operations Centre. Thankfully, and despite a reduction in NATO force numbers in theatre, all 8 RIFLES soldiers successfully deployed for at least 3 months in theatre without incident and receiving significant praise for their quality and professionalism.

Closer to home, 8 RIFLES has had to adapt to the challenges of training through consecutive lockdowns. Virtual training, online fitness sessions and making the most of relaxed restrictions where possible have all been key to maintaining interest, moral and capability. The learning curve was steep, but making the most of our reservist's experience, some of whom are schoolteachers and mentors, we were soon able to come up with a comprehensive and engaging virtual battle rhythm.

Overall, a positive year for the Battalion in the face of extreme differences and difficulties. Continued growth, operational experience and capacity building have all been possible despite a challenging environment.



The Livery Schools Link (LSL) was originally set up in 2003 to assist the livery with supporting education and schools. Livery companies have had a long tradition of doing this and the Basketmakers are no different. As one of the earliest affiliated livery companies the Basketmakers have an established involvement with LSL.

For new and longer standing members of the livery I thought I would share with you the role of The Livery Schools Link. As the Basketmakers' representative with LSL I have only been involved in the role for about a year, but am in a unique position to be both a liveryman and a senior leader in education.

Firstly, there is the volunteer platform on the LSL website (www.liveryschoolslink.org.uk) which is designed to link schools and volunteers from members of the livery. Speaking from experience, volunteers play a huge role in supporting schools. One of the main ways this is done is by being a member of a school's governing board. Livery company members have a wide range of experiences and skills that schools are crying out for when it comes to the strategic running. Schools are also in need of volunteers to come in and assist with a variety of things. This can range from listening to the youngest children read to delivering inspiring 'TED' style talks or offering work experience to sixth formers and older members of secondary schools.

This year the LSL ran the 6th Livery in Education Conference for Headteachers at Haberdashers Hall in March. The keynote speech being delivered by the Lord Mayor Peter Estlin, titled 'Preparing Young People for Tomorrow's World of Work'.

June also saw the LSL organising a two day Livery Showcase at Guildhall as part of the Corporation's London Careers Festival. The Basketmakers were represented once again and it was the largest of these events organised to date. This was a two-day event for older primary pupils and secondary ones. Careers education having a bigger focus currently in schools, pupils were able to find out about the work of the livery companies and in particular the trades associated with them.

If you are interested in volunteering in schools, please get in touch and visit the LSL website. If you are currently volunteering in a school, please let me know so I keep LSL updated with the valuable work our members do.

Steve Bowsher

Army Cadet Force



The Army Cadet Force can trace its beginnings to 1859 when there was a threat of an invasion by the French. The British Army was still heavily involved abroad after the Indian mutinies and units of the Volunteers were formed to repel the possible invasion. Cadet units were formed alongside of adult volunteer units.

The City of London and NE Sector ACF comprises of about 600 cadets and 120 adults working in detachments bases in the London Boroughs of Hackney, Islington, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Havering, Barking and Dagenham

The organization challenges young people to learn more and try more and hopefully once allowed to introduce them into Basketry and visit the Theatre Royal Stratford East to introduce them into the world of stage performance.

Other activities offers a wide range of challenging, educational and other education designed to help young people to develop and thrive and gives them a chance to gain nationally recognized qualifications and skills to take with them into further education or the workplace.

Company News

The Company was delighted to welcome the following new members to the Company from October 2018 to October 2020.

Liverymen

Jason Frost	Susan King	Ann Scrutton	Nicholas Coletta
Glenise Gillo	James Lord	Gary Freer	Dr Clive Grattan
Julie Cribb	Sasha Keir	Jean Aslet	Maureen Bysouth
Derek Povey	Alan Perry	Susie Paterson	Crescent Giffard

Honorary Liveryman

Fiona Janczur

Freeman

Anthony Emmings
Jenny Hipkins

Yeoman

Sue Kirk	Sally Roach
Karen Lawrence	Christine Gunzi

Very sadly the following Liverymen died in that time.

Aileen Martin-Wells	Gerald Bowden TD
Carol Hawes	Reginald Grey
Richard Swain	PPW Anthony Meeson

From the Clerk



What a roller-coaster it has been over the past eighteen months and who ever heard of Zoom in 2019?! I came into the Company with my eyes wide open and a desire to learn about the Livery, the City its traditions and history. From installation in October 2019 until 23rd March 2020 the diary was full of interesting and exciting events that I was honoured to produce or attend. Apart from my first Livery Dinner and the pleasure of attending other Companies' events I think the highlight of the live events was the Basketry Showcase that was held at the Dutch Church in early March where I met some of our Yeoman members and their fine work. Baskets have always been a 'thing' of mine and I must say that lockdown has not prevented my buying a few and commissioning a few more and I am sure there will be many more purchases to come over the next few years. Since the Basketry Showcase, it has been Zoom all the way and I must say I was very impressed at how it has been adopted and embraced by many of the members and I am sure will be with us for a long-time come.

I received such a warm welcome from the Members and the fellow Clerks, but I so could not have settled into the role without the guidance and kindness of IPPW Anne Holden who I must say has been the best teacher and kindest of counsel. Mandy Taylor was at my side throughout the early months and was an absolute godsend for us all helping to put the Company in good order for the future. Our Beadle has also been a wonderful teacher, keeping the wheels on track and being there whenever needed. We said goodbye to Honor Woods as our Finance Manager of five years and welcomed John Atherton to the position. The Company has a great support team to take it on for the future.

As I write it seems that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and we will meet again before too long. How wonderful that will be and such a treat to get back to some normality and see everyone again.

Sarah Sinclair
Clerk to the Company





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