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Front cover: Delegates to the AGM assemble on the steps of the Town Hall Stafford.

A.G.M. Photographs reproduced courtesy of:

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This edition contains the Annual Record.

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President's tribute to the late Philip Bowman

As many of you will know, our Immediate Past President, Philip Bowman, died on 20th August this year following a fall where he fractured his femur and, I am told, following surgery he suffered kidney failure from which he died.

His funeral took place at Bishopthorpe Church in York on September 2nd when many of our Executive Officers and other Guildsmen were present. However, on the unequivocal instructions of Mrs Bowman, neither I nor our Warden for the North East were to attend. FEW was represented at the funeral by our Deputy President and others, and will no doubt be referred to in their reports.

Philip was an ebullient character, and his experience and knowledge of Freedom matters will be sorely missed, as will his presence at our Court and General Meetings. An anonymous Greek philosopher wrote "It is not what is written on tombstones that matters, but what is written on the hearts of men." Let this be his epitaph.

Colin Hardcastle. President.



Immediate Past President Philip Bowman and his Lady, Margaret.
At the York Banquet 2008.

Courtesy Tony Neal / Gild of Freemen of the City of York.

Philip James Bowman. (1935 – 2009):

An Appreciation.

I have known Philip for many years, both as a friend and colleague within the world of the Freemen of England and Wales. Whilst I am by no means unique in this - there are many who have closer links with the family, I have been associated with much of his work within the Association.

Philip was born within the walls of the City of York and has remained true to its ethos and importance throughout his life and career. He joined the family firm of James Bowman & Son and worked successfully for many years. He and Margaret, his wife, have lived in York until very recently when they moved to the small village of Stamford Bridge (no connection to Chelsea !)

Philip served as a City of York Councillor representing Monk Ward and left his mark upon the Council. His great interest in the theatre is exemplified by his being the producer for the Monkgate Players, a role which he added to his interest in and production of several York Mystery Plays. This expertise he utilised for the Guild of Scriveners. Philip became a member of the York Gild of Freemen in 1989 and was subsequently its Master in 1998/99. He was a Freeman of the City of London and a member of The Company of Fellmongers of Richmond, the Wheelwrights Livery of London and an associate member of Coventry and Lincoln.

Within the ranks of FEW, Philip served on the Executive for some years and became its President from 2005 to 2008. He died holding the office of Immediate Past President.

One of Philip's great attributes was that of being able to speak with authority and sonority on almost any topic. His official speeches to the Freemen in a wide variety of locations were invariably to the point, succinct and without compromise. In debate, his points of view were always relevant and worth consideration. His memory was formidable and he could be called upon to speak without notice secure in the knowledge that he would not falter.

His untimely death will leave a void on the Executive, but this pales into insignificance compared with the sense of loss on the part of his family and many close friends.

Richard Bishop. Past President.

News From The Guilds.

Coventry.

On 16th June the Guild welcomed our more venerable Freemen to the Senior Freemen's Evening at the Coundon Club, for a social meeting and buffet. A raffle helped start the new Master's Charity Appeal Fund.

On 27th June our Master and Clerk represented the Guild at the Cathedral's Armed Forces Day service, and then joined the Lord Mayor for the march past and salute at the Council House entrance platform.

4th July saw the annual Godiva Procession, which is the modern equivalent of the medieval Mayor's Brethren and trade guilds procession to the Great Fair outside the city walls. Like the medieval procession, our Guild Court walked in full regalia behind the Guild Banner, immediately behind the robed city councillors and Lord Mayor. At the Memorial Park destination the Guild stand was kept busy answering queries about the Freedom during this two day event. As some 60,000 Midlanders attend this free festival, it is a good PR exercise to help raise the Freemen's profile.

On the 24th July the Guild welcomed the new Lord Mayor, councillor Jack Harrison MBE JP to the ceremonial role of Guild President for his term of office at a formal dinner in the Guildhall Crypt. The outgoing Lord Mayor, Councillor Andy Matchet, and Past Master Andy Sanders were presented with plaques in recognition of their services to the Guild.

On the 23rd August the Master's Fun Day charity event was held at the Coventry RAFA HQ. Over £300 was raised from skittles, other tests of skill, and a raffle. The Master Jim Parry treated Guild members to cakes and tea, whilst the Old Boys of the Coventry School of Music and lady cellists entertained us during the afternoon.

On 30th March the Master led a sponsored walk between the Warwickshire villages of Bretford and Ansty to further augment his charity fund for heart defibrillators.

The Coventry Guild was very saddened to hear about the passing of FEW Past President Philip Bowman. Philip had been an associate member of the Guild since 2006, and had attended the Coventry Banquet and church services for many years.

LEICESTER.

In April, the Lord Mayor of Leicester, Councillor Manjula Sood, invited three freemen and their ladies to join her at a ceremony at the De Montfort Hall in Leicester, conferring the **Honorary Freedom of the City** to Alan Birchenall MBE (for his services to football and local charities), Engelbert Humperdinck (for his work for local charities) and to Sue Townsend, better known for her books on Adrian Mole, (for her contribution to the arts).

The Master of the Gild, Brian Mudford, was invited in June by the Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Mayor of Leicester to represent the Gild at the **Armed Forces Day Service** at St Mary de Castro Church. The service was led by Reverend David Cawley, and the Bishop of Leicester gave the address. After the service, standards of the Royal British Legion headed the parade, which included service personnel and veterans.

A busy July began when a party of Gild members attended the Little Theatre in Leicester for a fun packed evening of entertainment with the musical comedy spoof, "Little Shop of Horrors", a good laugh being had by all. Soon after, a dozen hardy souls braved torrential rain to book in to the Gild's guided **tour of Everards Brewery** in Leicester. A splendid buffet lunch with plentiful samples of excellent beers was later enjoyed.

On a very active Sunday 12th July, thirty five freemen and friends enjoyed an excellent day at **Woburn Safari Park and Abbey**. After a drive through the Safari park seeing lions, tigers, elephants and many more animals roaming freely, the party moved on to the splendours of Woburn Abbey and its stately rooms. The same day, six Freemen and their ladies were invited by the Lord Mayor to attend the **Civic Service** at Leicester Cathedral, and a further three Freemen and their ladies represented the Gild at St Mary de Castro Church for a **farewell service** for the Reverend David Cawley, who was leaving the parish after 14 years. Afterwards, Michael Ayres, Deputy Master, presented David with a Gild plaque to thank him for the warm welcome he always gave the freemen, especially during the 900th Anniversary celebrations in 2007.

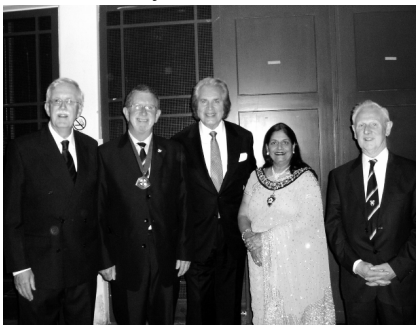
Later in the month, a dozen freemen and their ladies attended the opening ceremony of the **Special Olympics** held at the

Walkers Stadium. After drinks in the Honoured Guests' Reception, guests enjoyed the opening ceremony with a Grand Parade of 2,700 Special Olympians from 19 regions of Great Britain. The evening concluded with the lighting of the Olympic Flame of Hope and a spectacular colourful display by the children of Leicester dressed as various animals, birds and butterflies.

In August, Leicester freemen and their ladies joined the Master of the Coventry Guilds, Jim Parry, at a **charity garden party** held at the Coventry RAF Club. It was a wonderful afternoon of entertainment ending with a prize bottle draw, the top prize being a bottle of whisky which was won by the Past Master of Coventry, Duncan Hall, a Scot (!).

The Leicester Gild respectfully requests that you make due note of a date in your diaries. After fifteen years since the last one, the Leicester Gild is arranging a **Banquet Weekend** on Saturday and Sunday 3rd & 4th July 2010. The Banquet will be held at Devonshire Place, London Road, Leicester, the city's leading banqueting establishment close to the city centre. The following day, a Gild Service will take place at St Mary de Castro Church. We want to make this an annual event and look forward to enjoying the company of as many FEW members as possible. Further details and invitations will be sent to each Gild during November 2009.

The Leicester Gild wishes to close this report by sending our condolences and sympathy to Margaret Bowman and family on their sad loss. The Leicester Gild will always remember Philip for being the perfect gentleman to every one he came in contact with.



Engelbert Humperdinck on receiving the Honorary Freedom of Leicester. Courtesy The Freemen of Leicester.

Stafford:

A report on The F.E.W. A.G.M. Can be read and additional photographs viewed on the Guild's website at;
<http://www.staffordfreemen.org.uk/>

Letter from Alan Fallows, Deputy President:

Dear Member,

The 2009 AGM was held at Stafford on 4th -6th September and was a most enjoyable event blending formality and good humour with ease.

The new procedure for nominations to the executive adopted this year have proved most beneficial in giving all Gilds advance notice of candidates names and “qualifications”, and this led us into a new voting procedure at the AGM which allowed every Gild to vote for each of their members either by post or at the meeting.

As with all new methods we had a few teething problems and delays but all were met with good humour and the standard is set for improvement in the future.

As you may have surmised by the heading I was honoured to be selected for the office of Deputy President. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those Gilds and members who gave me their support and to assure those who were unable to do so on this occasion that I will be working hard during the year to make sure that FEW both hears, and acts upon, their thoughts and ideas.

My first duty is to liaise with Berwick Upon Tweed upon their 2010 AGM arrangements. In this respect I would be grateful if any members who attended the Stafford AGM and have any points of interest or concern would like to contact me and pass these on I will raise them with the Berwick organising committee.

Best wishes,
Alan

PS My e-mail is alan.fallows@talktalk.net

Affiliated Guild Membership of F.E.W.

Cambridgeshire Freemen of Huntingdon <div style="text-align: right;">Warden East</div>	Oxfordshire Freemen of The City of Oxford <div style="text-align: right;">Warden West</div>
Cheshire and Greater Manchester Altrincham Court Leet Freemen And Guilds of The City of Chester <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North-West</div>	Northumberland Freemen's Council of Alnwick Freemen of the Borough of Berwick upon Tweed <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North</div>
Derbyshire Freemen of The City of Derby <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North Midlands</div>	Shropshire Gild of Freemen of Bridgnorth The Gild of Freemen of Shrewsbury <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North Midlands</div>
County Durham Durham City Gild of Freemen <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North</div>	Staffordshire Newcastle under Lyme Burgesses Lands Act Stafford Freemen's Guild <div style="text-align: right;">Warden East</div>
Essex Resident Freemen of Colchester <div style="text-align: right;">Warden East</div>	Suffolk Ipswich Guild of Freemen Sudbury Freemen's Society <div style="text-align: right;">Warden East</div>
Gloucestershire Free Iron Miners Gild of the Royal Forest of Dean The Chartered Freemen of The City of Gloucester <div style="text-align: right;">Warden West</div>	Tyne & Wear Plumbers Company of Newcastle upon Tyne Scriveners Company of Newcastle upon Tyne <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North</div>
City of London Worship Company of Constructors Guildable Manor of Southwark Court Leet <div style="text-align: right;">Warden London & South East</div>	Yorkshire (North, West & South) Beverly Pasture Masters Gild of Freemen of The City of York The Freemen's Stray's Council of The City of York <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North East</div>
Kent Rochester Oyster and Floating Fishery <div style="text-align: right;">Warden London & South East</div>	Wales Gild of Freemen of Haverfordshire Llantrisant Town Trust Freemen of The Town of Montgomery Gild of Freemen of Pembroke <div style="text-align: right;">Warden Wales</div>
Lancashire & North Cheshire Freemen of Hale <div style="text-align: right;">Warden North-West</div>	Warwickshire Alcester Court Leet City of Coventry Freemen's Guild Henley in Arden Court Leet Warwick Court Leet <div style="text-align: right;">Warden South Midlands</div>
Leicestershire Gild of freemen of The City of Leicester <div style="text-align: right;">Warden South Midlands</div>	
Lincolnshire Enrolled Freemen of Grimsby The City of Lincoln Freemen's Gild <div style="text-align: right;">Warden East</div>	
Northamptonshire Gild of Freemen of the Borough of Northampton <div style="text-align: right;">Warden South Midlands</div>	Wiltshire Chippenham Burgesses Guild Warden and Freemen of Malmesbury <div style="text-align: right;">Warden West</div>

Guild contact details are in the Gazette & Guilds Directory Supplement distributed with the Annual Record. If you wish to affiliate your Guild, Livery or Freemen's organisation to FEW please make your enquiry to the FEW Honorary Secretary, Richmond House, Beech Close, Oversley Green, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 6PP

Annual General Meeting 2009. Stafford.

FEW Open Forum Held on Saturday 5th September 2009 prior to the Annual General Meeting

Items Raised

1) Howard Pate - Chester.

Howard requested any information on the appointment of a new FEW Patron. The President, Colin Hardcastle replied, stating that the Executive Committee had been notified by Tony Sharp at its meeting yesterday, that an eminent person had been approached, and that the position was being considered, with the response expected by November.

2) Howard Crapper - Oxford.

Howard, noting that Oxford had recently admitted Lady Freeman for the first time, asked whether the words of the Freemens' Hymn should be amended to recognise "daughters" as well as "sons". He was notified that any changes would need the approval of the Ward family, as it was Harry Ward's wife who had composed the original words, but hi the meantime, he was asked to suggest suitable new wording. The Deputy President, Peter Dale, felt that any proposed changes should not be implemented until after the forthcoming Bill affecting the Freedom had received its assent, as there may be all male guilds which might object until the law is changed.

3) John Edwards - Stafford.

John asked whether constitutional changes had been necessary when Oxford recently introduced Lady Freeman. Howard Crapper replied that having gone to the Privy Council in order to obtain the right to have Lady Freeman, Oxford had accordingly been authorised to modify its Constitution to reflect the new situation.

4) Alfred Eley - Stafford.

Alfred requested clarification on the subject of attaining the Freedom by apprenticeship when NVQs are considered. Capt. Stephen Healy replied by stating that currently the Stewards Committee of Newcastle upon Tyne was carefully considering this matter. He noted that the probable outcome would be that the terminology "apprenticeship" when referring to the Freedom, can only mean an apprentice who is indentured to one individual - the Master, working

in just one premises, and not when he is indentured to a corporate master, or is working on an NVQ. Capt Jim Evans agreed with this reasoning, noting that the Coopers Gild of Berwick-upon-Tweed had indeed changed its rules some 300 years ago, but only to allow necessary occasional working away from the master's premises, when, Berwick-upon-Tweed being a seaport, the work of making or restoring barrels had to be conducted on board a ship.

Annual General Meeting.

Attendance of Delegates and Attendees, *as recorded on the circulated attendance sheets:*

Peter Ainsworth - Chester, WJ.Allen - London (Master Mariner), G.Anderson - Alnwick, Derek Austin - Coventry, Jane Bailey - Lincoln, Stewart Bristow - Lincoln, Alex Christisen - Berwick-upon-Tweed, Jenny Connell - Lincoln, Howard Crapper - Oxford, Peter Dale - London, Norah Anne Edwards - Chester, Rachel Eldridge - Lincoln, Alfred Eley-Stafford, J.Evans - Berwick-upon-Tweed, Alan Fallows - Shrewsbury, Robin Folland - Pembroke, Roy Folland - Pembroke, Eileen Forth - York, Mervyn Hall - Alnwick, Colin Hardcastle - York, Capt. S.C.Healy-Newcastle uponTyne, Richard Helstrip - York, John Heslop - Durham, Roger Higgins — Warwick, Peter Kelly - Hale, Graham Knox - Alnwick, Ron Leek - Alcester, London, Southwark, Ray Mason - Newcastle-under-Lyme, Jimmy Mattison - Alnwick, Tommy Mattison - Alnwick, Joe McElwes - Durham, Leslie Morgan — London, Hale, Denis Nixon - Alnwick, Norman Offield - London, Lincoln, H.B.Pate - Chester, Anthony Piddock - Stafford, Betty Proctor - Lincoln, Michael Pinches - Chester, Emma Reid-Chalmers - London, Eileen Reynolds - Coventry, Michael Rudd - London, Tony Sharp - Southwark, J. Shepherd - Alnwick, R. Shepherd - Alnwick, Brian Simpson - Newcastle-under-Lyme, June Smith-Parker - York, Ray Spurway - Stafford, David Starbuck-Edwards - Chester, Alec Stephenson - York, Beryl Stephenson - York, John Tolley - Altrincham, Gordon Varmdell - London, Stephen White - Great Grimsby, R. J.Williams-Stafford, Wyn Williams – London.

Minutes of the 43rd Annual General Meeting of the Association of Freemen of England and Wales held on Saturday 5th September 2009, in The Council Chamber of the County Council Buildings, Stafford

Although produced as a meaningful record of the proceedings, these minutes in no way constitute a verbatim transcript of the meeting.

Following the Call to Order, the President, Colin Hardcastle, accompanied by the Worshipful Mayor of Stafford, Councillor Jean Tabernor, entered the chamber and took their places.

The FEW Opening Prayer was pronounced by the Hon Archivist, Alan Fallows.

The President introduced and welcomed the Mayor, requesting her to open the meeting. In doing so, she extended a very warm welcome to everyone, hoping that their stay in Stafford would be most enjoyable. Unfortunately, due to another engagement in her busy mayoral schedule, she was unable to stay for the meeting itself, but before she departed, the President was pleased to present her with a FEW plaque.

The President then pronounced a Tribute to Immediate Past President, Philip Bowman, who sadly, had suddenly passed away on 20th August. A copy is appended. Following this, he read out the names of those members who had also died during the previous twelve months. A moment of silent reflection was then observed by everyone present.

Apologies for non-attendance were received from:- Michael Ayres, Leicester; Tony Chettle, Leicester; Eric Critchlow, Leicester; Eddie Errington, London; Sylvia Errington, York; Malcolm Green, Haverfordwest; Janet Honnoraty, Warwick; Michael Honnoraty, Warwick; David Hudson, Hale; Evelyn Hudson, Hale; Moyra Johnson, York; Sam Lee, Newcastle upon Tyne; Colin McNae, Chester; Hilarie McNae, Chester; Joe Petty, Newcastle upon Tyne; Mary Pickering, London; Alan Robson, Newcastle upon Tyne; Ray Stone, Oxford; William Strawn, Alnwick; and Wayne Warlow, Cardiff.

The minutes of the 42nd AGM of FEW, held on 29th August 2008, were approved as a true record of those proceedings, following a proposal from Roy Folland, seconded by Norman Offield, and were signed by the President. There were no matters arising.

The President, Colin Hardcastle then presented his report. A copy is appended.

Deputy President, Peter Dale, reported that as the President has been in good health, there had been no necessity for him to deputise on any occasion. However, he had been consulted by the President on various issues, and his observations had been acted upon. He noted that he had

been pleased to represent FEW at the recent funeral of Philip Bowman.

A copy of the report of the Vice President, Gordon Vardell, is appended.

Each Warden was introduced in turn by the Vice President, and gave their individual reports as follows:-

Warden for the North, Capt. Stephen Healy - copy appended.

Warden for the North East, Emma Reid-Chalmers - copy appended. A point of order was raised by Tony Sharp, that Emma was deviating from her brief of reporting on the activities of the guilds within her area, and was airing personal opinions concerning FEW policies. Emma explained that these had been necessitated by comments received from her area guilds.

Warden for the East, Norman Offield - copy appended.

Warden for Wales, Roy Folland - copy appended.

Warden for the North West, Leslie Morgan - copy appended.

Warden for the West, Howard Crapper - copy appended.

Warden for the South Midlands, Derek Austin - copy appended.

Warden for London and the South East, Tony Sharp — copy appended.

Stephen White presented his Hon Treasurer's Report. A copy is appended. Derek Austin queried the connection between the FEW website and Grimsby. Emma Reid-Chalmers, who together with Capt. Stephen Healy, had been appointed to oversee the production of the website, explained the situation, and reported on progress to date. The meeting then fully approved the accounts following a proposition from Tony Sharp, who also expressed sincere thanks on behalf of FEW for the way that Stephen as co-opted Hon Treasurer, together with the assistance of John Tolley, had brought matters back onto a meaningful footing, following the debacle caused by the inactivity of, and lack of co-operation by, Stan Brown, the previous Hon Treasurer, who had been appointed at the 2008 AGM.

Eileen Forth presented her report as Hon Membership Secretary. A copy is appended.

Tony Sharp presented his Hon Editor's report. A copy is appended. He explained how the overall costs of producing the FEW Journals, were split between those of the Hon Editor for the editorial content - articles, photos etc., and those of the Hon Secretary for the constitutional content - AGM/Court minutes, agendas, notices etc.

Alan Fallows presented his Hon Archivist's report. A copy is appended.

In the absence of Hilarie McNae, no Officer Without Portfolio Report was presented.

Tony Sharp updated the meeting on the progress to date of the Government's Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill. A copy of his notes is appended.

The meeting was informed of the Executive decision to discontinue the idea of producing a new book updating and replacing Harry Ward's original book "Freemen in England", in favour of the considerably cheaper method of putting all the currently held information on to compact disk. At the same time, Charles Sparrow's series of addresses to FEW AGMs, together with Maurice Pickering's essay on the history of the Freedom, could also be available on disk. The probability is that such CD(s) will be distributed free of charge to all members, by being included in with a future issue of the FEW Journal. To avoid any future confusion, the meeting agreed that the title "Harry Ward 2" will now be dropped.

Elections for the 2009 - 2010 FEW Executive Officers then took place, following the President's reading out of a detailed statement of the way that these would be correctly conducted in order to be completely transparent and accurate, thereby avoiding the possibility of any subsequent disagreement or argument. Two offices were the subject of election:-1) Deputy President, contested by Prof. Peter Dale and Alan Fallows; and 2) Vice President, contested by Tony Sharp and Gordon Varmdell. Before the ballot itself was commenced, the Hon Secretary, Ron Leek, read out the following nominations for offices which were not being contested:- Hon Secretary - Ron Leek; Hon Treasurer - Stephen White; Hon Membership Secretary -Eileen Forth; Hon Archivist - Alan Fallows; Hon Editor - Tony Sharp; and Officer Without Portfolio - Hilarie McNae. The meeting agreed that these uncontested persons were deemed elected. Following the subsequent lengthy ballot for the offices of Deputy President and Vice President, and then the considerable time required for the results to be determined by the impartial tellers provided by the Stafford Guild, the results were handed to the President who announced that the following persons were duly elected:- Deputy President - Alan Fallows; and Vice President - Gordon Varmdell. The President, congratulating Alan and

Gordon, presented them with their medallions of office; following which, he presented his Consort, Emma Reid-Chalmers, with the newly introduced President's Consort's Jewel, which he had presented to the Association as a personal gift at its June Court Meeting in Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Gordon Vardell announced that he was proposing no changes to the current Wardens or their areas.

Any Other Business:

1) Costs for establishing the new website were reviewed by Stephen White, and following discussion and a proposal by Colin Hardcastle seconded by Gordon Vardell, the meeting agreed that up to £1000 should be apportioned to setting up the best site possible.

2) In order to expedite proceedings, the meeting approved the suggestion that Wardens' reports should be kept as short as possible, and submitted in writing to the Vice President in advance of the appropriate Court or Annual General Meeting.

3) The question was raised as to whether FEW should hold Public Liability Insurance. This will be investigated by the Hon Treasurer.

The 2010 AGM will be held from Friday 10th September to Sunday 12th September in Berwick-upon-Tweed. The 2011 AGM is scheduled to be held in Pembroke.

Following the Closing Prayer, the President formally declared the AGM closed, and led by the FEW Mace carried by the Stafford Mace Bearer, proceeded from the chamber.

In Memoriam

It is with Sadness that we report the death of the following members since the 2008 A.G.M. H.A. Atkinson Freeman of Durham, J. Ridley-Brown Freeman of Durham, W. Dixon Freeman of Lancaster, C.O.T. Evans Freeman of Cardiff, P. Fenwick-Smith Freeman of Newcastle upon Tyne, R. Kirkbride Freeman of London, D. C. Morgan Freeman of London, J. E. Morgan Freeman of London, M. L. Smith (Mrs) Freeman of London, F. Cooper Freeman of Gillingham, Col Green Freeman of Haverfordwest, H. Lewis Freeman of London, D.W. Fraser Freeman of London. P. Bowman Freeman of York

Reports:

Presidents Report:

The Presidency of F.E.W. Is like a football match- a game of two halves. So as we reach half time it is an opportunity to reflect on the first half and identify where, if anywhere, we made errors or could have done better. When I took over the Presidency a Hale last year, I knew I did not have universal support- one comment I heard was that my election was “not what we wanted.” And there was discord amongst some of our delegates.

Early on in that first half our treasurer was, sadly, the subject of a vote of no confidence and it has taken me until very recently to achieve a degree of cooperation with him, to the extent that the difficulties we experienced have been fully resolved. However another difficulty that raised it's head at Hale is still the subject of discussions between myself and the Guild in question, and I have had a number of meetings to try to resolve that issue. Progress is slow, but ongoing.

Where invited, I have represented F.E.W. At functions and Dinners throughout the country, doing my best to maintain the Good name of F.E.W. I have been accompanied by my consort, Emma, on many of those occasions. Who knows, she may one day stand for the Presidency herself and maybe one day I will be her consort.

Keeping up the football theme, my two “wingmen,” the Deputy President and Vice President have been on hand when called upon, as have all other members of the team, not least our “coach,” Ron Leek, to whom I pay particular thanks for his guidance and support. He has already been on hand with the “Magic Sponge” to put me right on more than one occasion. Thank you Ron. I must also thank my home town supporters, The Gild Court in York, for their support, especially their Clerk and immediate Past Master, both of whom have shown strong support for F.E.W. And me personally.

But, what of the future? I intend to carry on with the discussions I mentioned earlier and attend wherever I am invited. I remind you all of the words of my predecessor, that the President does not expect, as of right, free tickets to events and will pay his way but, of course it is always nice to receive freebies, if they are offered.

I do not know what the second half will throw at us, maybe we will have two new “wingmen,” But as we move towards 2010 and the A.G.M. At Berwick on Tweed, we must remember that we are an

association of Freeman and that we should respect each other and each others opinions. Reminding ourselves of the phrase that we may not agree with your opinion but, we will defend your right to express it. Nothing is achieved by confrontation, better to use cooperation.

Having now sucked on the Lemons and a team talk, the whistle blows for the second half. Lets go out onto the field and play as a team for the rest of the match, who knows we might stop scoring own goals.

Colin Hardcastle.
President.

Vice President's Report:

As Vice President I have not had a lot to take on since June. As most of you know I was made the York Gild of Freemens' Master's Consort in June of this year and this in its self keeps me busy.

The Wardens have been fairly quiet the last couple of months, with only one interesting idea coming up. This was from Captain Stephen Healy and his suggestion of recruitment awards within the Association. I think the idea could be made to work and should be discussed, but I will let Stephen explain it to the meeting.

On the 2nd September, I along with other members of the Executive and the Association, attended the funeral of our Immediate Past President Philip Bowman, who died suddenly on the 21st August 2009 after an operation following an accident.

Gordon Vamdell,
Vice President.

Wardens Reports.

Warden for the North: Capt. S.C. Healy.

The President has appealed for brevity in the reports and I intend to follow that direction:

In terms of routine activity, it has been a case of business as usual in the boroughs of the North since the last Court meeting, tempered to an extent by the summer break, with little of any particular note being brought to my attention. Certain items relating to future activity and to administration are covered elsewhere in this meeting.

It was pleasing to note that, despite the general distancing of Newcastle upon Tyne Freemen from FEW in the fallout of last year's AGM, the Plumber's Company voted at their recent head meeting to continue their affiliation with the Association.

The Freemen of Stafford did extend a special invitation to the Freemen of Newcastle and to the Stewards Committee in particular to attend this weekend's social and ceremonial activities. I passed this on to the Vice Chairman of the Stewards Committee and he asked me to acknowledge that invitation with thanks in this report. He declared that, with regret, it was felt that attendance would be seen as inappropriate at this stage, although he much appreciated the sentiments behind the invitation.

Warden for the North East: Emma Reid-Chalmers

I start where I left off last time with the City of York Guild of Freemen holding their AGM where after an undeniably successful year Tom Gibson handed the mantle of Master on to our very own Membership Secretary, Eileen Forth. Our Vice-President, Gordon, is her Consort. The event was gate-crashed by civic dignitaries and a highly successful and enjoyable event kicked started Eileen's year. If the latest newsletter is anything to go by is going to be a busy one with an inter guild quiz night, talk by Veronica Bird OBE, ghost walk and supper and possibly golf. Already Eileen has attended the Mansion House at the invitation of the Lord Mayor to welcome Mrs Elizabeth Brockbank, from Australia after the ceremony making her a Freeman of the City of York. This was on 27th July, and was closely followed by, what is becoming the traditional Yorkshire Day Charity Concert at Queen Margaret's School, Escrick. There has also been a visit to Burnby Hall Gardens, Pocklington and a Boating Regatta at which, I am reliably informed, our President obtained preferential car parking due to astute use of his Freemen credentials. This resulted in the local constabulary supporting the event. York has, again, produced a colourful and professional Annual Year Book, and there are a number of photographs of

our President supporting their events within its covers, and I am aware this is not the only publication in which he appears, apparently Chester has a mug shot as well!

The sad note from York was the passing of Philip Bowmen. In addition to the words already said, I add that this leaves a vacancy on the Strays Council which they are ably working to resolve.

I continue with the heartening and good news from Grimsby, namely that within their market on East March a media centre has been created which has plans to house the first local community television station, with links to local schools as well as the market. I tentatively said that this may be the first "Big Brother" of a market and could prove more effective than any CCTV, and we will be able to view our Treasurer as he does his shopping, possibly at the end of the month when the Freeman Street Market will host an international market! Joking aside, there is funding in place and they are also housing Contract Links who have Government money to assist with worklessness, which in the current climate is very much needed. It should be remembered that this is one of the most deprived areas in the country. To anyone who thinks that Freeman are historical and not relevant in the modern day I say see what is actually being done by people who serve their communities, and do not serve merely their own egos, or for title or personal gain.

I am, again, reporting an indebtedness to both our Stephens, namely our Treasurer and Warden for the North, for sterling work taking our FEW website further of which more will be said elsewhere.

I close with what I hope will be received as good news. As we have all been aware, not least because he put it in the Journal, Tony Sharp has wished to be released from his mantle of editor for some time. When he first expressed this I asked around. After due consideration and having completed his year as Master of the Gild of Freeman of the City of York, Tom Gibson has stepped forward with a suggestion that he becomes Deputy to Tony for a year. It would mean he could learn the ropes, Tony could share his expertise and, God forbid anything should happen, could step in should Tony be incapacitated. Tom already has media and IT. experience so Tony would not be dealing with a novice, and given the electronic age we are in, communication between them should not be a problem. I hope Tom's kind suggestion assists to, in the immediate future, share the load, and in the future maybe take over. In the absence of anyone else having stepped forward it seems something which I respectfully suggest we accept.

Philip's passing has given many of us a chance to reflect that none of us is indestructible. However it was the difficulties with the website due to Maurice Pickering's passing which started my thoughts along the lines that we

should be careful that no individual alone has so much vested in them that their incapacity or passing means the organisation which we should be serving suffers. Tony has difficulties because he is his own Warden, although the Vice President or Officer without Portfolio could step in, but without a sharing of the load and the diversity of people that brings, this organisation, like any other, will suffer. There should, in my opinion, be the opportunity for all to serve and have a chance, not just a happy clique of few. We should not discriminate overtly or covertly and should use our diversity as our strength complying not only with the law but the spirit of it and this includes, of course, the Charity Commission. As if mind reading my thoughts our Archivist, Alan, suggested we should all have access to some background of the Officers who serve our organisation. A great diversity of experience beyond that of FEW and Guilds has been shared and we are fortunate not only in those who have served us in the past but also in those who seek to serve us now. But it is in our very diversity, both geographical, professional and personal that we have our strength and we should guard against having that strength, however well motivated, undermined. I leave you with these, my thoughts.

Warden for the East: Norman Offield.

Colchester Freeman, On 10th Aug. 2009, I again attended the Town Hall in Colchester at the invitation of Mr. Robert Bacon (the senior Conservator) to witness the Freeman's event of 'Giving', when the profits of the income from the Freeman's land are distributed to the current Freeman of Colchester. The Mayor of Colchester Councillor Henry SPYVEE was present to witness the Conservators swearing an oath that they were all fully paid up Freeman and that all was correct, prior to the 'giving'. I was an observer to this ceremony, which lasted about 1 hour. The payout this year was the same as 2008 of £6 per member. This year was slightly different being that the number of freemen had increased because of including those freemen living within the borough boundaries rather than just the city.

Whilst in the Mayor's parlour, after members had received their 'payout', I was speaking to some of the freemen of the advantages of contacting and possible membership of FEW. I handed out some of the spare journals to the members, including one to the Mayor, for information.

Huntingdon Freeman. I have been in contact with the chairman, and will arrange a meeting with him in the few weeks.

Warden for Wales: Roy Folland.

The Gild of Freemen of Haverfordwest

A Freeman's Court was held at the County Hall on Wednesday the 26th of August when a number of Freemen were entered onto the Freeman's Roll, with one applicant from Scotland and four others from various parts of England claiming the historical rights. The AGM will take place on Saturday afternoon 3rd of October at the County Hall, Haverfordwest, in the evening this will be followed by the Banquet at the Wolfscastle Country Hotel, Wolfscastle. The Benefactor's Service will be held at the Church of St. Martin of Tours, Haverfordwest on Sunday the 4th of October following which a wine reception will be held in St. Martin's Church Hall. Mr. Malcolm Green, Master of the Gild of Freemen of Haverfordwest is proud to confirm that the Gild is in a strong position.

The Gild of Freemen of Pembroke

The Freeman's Court was held on the 16th July at the Pembroke Town Council Chamber. The Hosting of the FEW AGM in 2011 was discussed and final arrangements put in place for that weekend. Lanyards had been received from Mr. Phil Thompson, Public Affairs Manager for Chevron Oil Refinery Company, Pembroke, who had donated lanyards for the use of our visitors at that event. Phil who retires this year was congratulated on his recent award of the MBE for his services to the community. The AGM will take place at Pembroke Town Hall on the 22nd of October. The Gild's Annual Service will take place on the 15th of November at the Ancient Parish Church of Saint Michael & All Angels, Pembroke at 11.00am which will be followed by the Annual Luncheon at the Cleddau Bridge Hotel, Pembroke Dock.

Llantrisant Freemen, Llantrisant Town Trust

The Llantrisant Freemen are thriving and are now looking forward to their major event in their calendar, the Beating of the Bounds which occurs every seven years and will be held on the 12th of June 2010. The main report for the Llantrisant Freemen was reported on at the FEW Court meeting at Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Warden for the North West ; Leslie Morgan.

Mr President, Fellow Freemen and friends.

As "multum in parvo" seems to be the order of the day, I have forwarded my report direct to our secretary. Suffice it to say, that I was able to attend the funeral of our former President last Wednesday, and to offer the condolences of Paul and myself to Margaret and family, as well as thanking Eileen and Gordon for services rendered during my short stay.

Leslie's forwarded report:

On Ascension Day May 21st, Paul and myself along with Mr Gordon Vamdell and Ms Eileen Forth, were in Carlisle, where we saw two new Freemen of the Merchants Guild admitted. Subsequently I forwarded a copy of our newsletter along to the Mayor, Councillor Mr Bill Graham, at the same time extending our appreciation to both Miss Martin and Mrs Stewart for the delightful buffet which they had prepared, and a warm letter of appreciation was received from the Mayor.

I did forward details of our Association along to the two new Freemen, Messrs James and Andrew Matthews, but sadly I have had no acknowledgement.

Sadly I did not receive an intimation regarding the Trinity Assize of the Barony of Dunham Massey; and seemingly, the Freemen of the Ancient and Honourable Corporation of Hale were not involved with this year's Hale Carnival. However, I have heard that on 20th October they are holding their Business Meeting, then on 26th November their annual Lancashire Evening, and finally, their Annual Court has been provisionally noted for 28th January 2010.

The next meeting of the Carlisle Freemen will be held on 13th May 2010.

Warden for the West: Howard Crapper.

The Freemen in the West were shocked and saddened to learn of the untimely death of our Immediate Past President - Philip Bowman. He attended many Freemen events in the West and was greatly appreciated by everyone that he met and his enthusiasm for the Freemen of England & Wales was overwhelming. Our thoughts and prayers are with his widow, Margaret and family.

Malmesbury claims to be England's oldest borough and also have the oldest almshouses. The membership is steadily rising with women being admitted since 2000. FEW Members may have seen Terry Soul, robed as Warden of Malmesbury on the BBC One Show last Tuesday 25th August and if you missed it, you can still see it on the BBC iPlayer. Terry talks of the land given by King Aethelstan to Malmesbury.

The Chartered Freemen of Gloucester continue to admit new Freemen and are planning a dinner in November at their new venue with the Freemasons.

Oxford have experienced some problems with cattle escaping from their Port Meadow. The river is now so shallow that the cattle wade to the middle of the river to drink and find no reason to retreat but carry on to the other side. The fact that there are also another farmer's cattle and greener grass in the Spring on the opposite bank is another obvious attraction. The Environment Agency are refusing to dredge the river and Oxford Freemen are concerned that this will be an annual problem.

The Freemen of the City of Oxford sang the Song of the Freemen of England and Wales at a recent Church Service and there were complaints that the song was male dominated with words such as "Brotherhood" and "Sons". This song was written by Elsie Ward, wife of our founder Harry Ward and having met her, I believe she would be the first to admit that in this new era of women Freemen, the odd word could be changed to benefit the FEW and welcome all new Freemen.

Warden for South Midlands: Derek Austin

Activities in the South Midlands Area since the Berwick FEW Court Meeting include: **Coventry Freemen's Guild** Court representatives marched in full regalia as part of the annual Godiva Procession around the city centre, and then onto the Memorial Park Festival. The Freemen's stand was kept busy answering queries on the Freedom and eligibility issues over the July weekend. Several weeks later the Lord Mayor was welcomed into his ceremonial role as Guild President for his year of office, at a dinner in the Guildhall. In August the Master's Fun Day event, and also a sponsored walk, helped raise funds for his charity appeal, which hopefully will see a defibrillator provided later this year for the resuscitation of heart attack victims in the Cathedral precincts.

Leicester Freemen's Gild enjoyed a theatre trip and guided tour of Everards Brewery in the local area, then later in July a coach trip to Woburn Safari Park & Abbey. The Gild was also represented at the Civic Service in the Cathedral, and the Armed Forces Day parade and service. Tomorrow the Leicester coaches

head south for a Buckingham Palace trip.

Northampton Freeman's Guild are expanding their activities by inviting the Coventry Guild next month to tour the Guildhall, and then lunch with the Mayor and local Freeman.

Warwick Court Leet held their Summer Leet meeting on 25th July, and I am pleased that their Herald and Bailiff Elect Roger Higgins now reports on their events in the FEW Journal.

Alcester Court Leet scheduled activities include a parade and service at St Nicholas church, and several rounds of Ale tasting within the Manor.

Our latest recruit the **Henley-in-Arden Court Leet & Court Baron** had an excellent write up in the current FEW Journal, courtesy of our Editor, and I look forward to attending their annual meeting in the 15th Century Guildhall in November.

WARDEN FOR LONDON & SOUTHEAST; Tony Sharpe

I have nothing to add which has not been published in the News from the Guilds section of the Journal, concerning Southwark, Rochester and the Constructors of London social events. However, I was approached to advise Medway Council on an attempt by an individual to encroach on the Freemens' rights on the river. A self-employed trawler owner of 56 years of age from outside of the area demanded to be made an 'apprentice' to allow him to fish on the Medway.

There was an initial difficulty because in our era of political correctness, all that someone has to do is cry 'discrimination' and our local authorities immediately respond on the defensive. I advised Medway's officers that it was unlikely that they or the Freemens' guild could be cited as parties by a claimant and even if they could there was no formal offer of employment and training being made by anybody. At the 'Case Management Stage' a preliminary to tribunal hearing in August, the Employment Judge made very short shrift of the claimant's arguments and pointed out that even if he could prove his case then the damages or compensation would be set at Nil. A full Report will appear in the Journal. (*Pro Tem Editor's note: No report on this matter has been received for publication to date.*)

Membership Secretary's report:

Eileen Forth Honorary Membership Secretary.

Gordon Varndell Honorary Assistant Membership Secretary

Guilds

Currently we have 40 Guilds on the books. **Of this total 3 Guilds are in arrears**, not serious as yet. One Guild has joined our ranks. (Henley in Arden).

Individual Membership

The current membership stands at 411. This is has altered somewhat due to the number of deceased members over the past twelve months. Since the Sept AGM 2008

We have had 19 individual new members

Sadly I have to report that since the September meeting 2008

Thirteen members have died

Sixteen members have been deleted from the records in accordance with

rule nine of the constitution.

Two members have resigned due to age and infirmity.

One member has been reinstated

Also three members have notified change of address

(4 members are still on the missing list) no address for these

Current payments

Late payments, again I have to say reminders are being sent out constantly.

The Breakdown

3 members have not paid April 2008 to April 2009

8 members have not paid Sept 2008 to Sept 2009

16 members have not paid April 2009 to April 2010

Editor's Report:

Format and distribution.

The Trinity Journal (159) was distributed to the Membership and Court by the late July 2009. It was a 44 page edition of just over 19,800 words which meant it was the largest ever produced by myself, principally due to the 'Hansard' report on the new Bill and AGM constitutional materials. There were 481 copies distributed at a cost of £334.32 If we add the cost of Journal 156 (Annual Record 2008) of £435.05 Journal 157 at £568.39 and Journal 158 at £462.50

this equals £1,800.26. As the notional Budget allocated by the Treasurer was £2,700 for this purpose, I am most pleased to announce a surplus of £899.74. Both postage and production costs are stable and accounted for.

May I remind delegates that if they want additional copies to be distributed to their guilds then all they need do is contact the Hon Secretary who will make the necessary arrangements, but these must be for named individuals and addressed to them.

I would suggest that there is no need to set a budget for all FEW publications of no more than £2700 per annum for some years yet. I commend my Report to the AGM.

Archivists report.

There have been no calls upon the archives since our last meeting. With reference to the two matters I have been asked to pursue, namely land registration and unitization the situation is as follows:

1. Land Registration:- Papers are still under preparation for submission to chancery chambers but have been held back as I feel that I need more information regarding individual gilds historical adaptation of their pasturage rights. The question that has become prominent is this. If pasturage has been commuted to a money payment in lieu (or other alternative to actual pasturage) does that pasturage right still exist, or just the right to the commutation? This leads us to the secondary question that if such rights are extant in either form, what form of registration is applicable under the act?. I obviously want to make sure that my proposals to Chancery include any aspect which may assist a favourable opinion.

2. Unitization:- This question has further delayed the previous item as it becomes more urgent to complete. I have found in Shropshire that the Unitary Authority have decided to completely ignore Dept of Communities and Local Government guidelines, and maintain control of freemens affairs. This I consider to be totally inappropriate and have now submitted a formal request to the authority that all contact with freemen must be the responsibility of the "local" authority where the freedom is sited, i.e. the town, borough or parish where the freedom arose. This application has been made on behalf of Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury but if we can set a precedent it will be useful if a similar situation arises elsewhere.

FREEMEN OF ENGLAND AND WALES

SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION

The Association was established under a Constitution adopted on 28th September 1985 and amended on 23rd September 1989, 19th September 1992, 21st September 1996 and 17th September 2005. The Association was registered as a Charity, with Registration Number 293536, on 29th January 1986.

TRUSTEES

Association Officers - 2008/2009

President	- Mr C Hardcastle
Deputy President	- Dr P G H Dale
Vice President	- Mr G A Varndell (also Data Control Manager)
Immediate Past President	- Mr P Bowman
Honorary Archivist	- Mr A J Fallows
Honorary Journal Editor	- Mr T Sharp
Honorary Membership Secretary	- Mrs E Forth
Honorary Secretary	- Mr R E Leek
Honorary Treasurer	- Mr S Brown (Elected August 2008 to March 2009)
Honorary Treasurer	- Mr S P White (Co-opted March 2009)
Officer without Portfolio	- Mrs H J McNae

Custodian Trustees - Mr J W N Petty (Chairman)

- Mr G A Varndell

- Mr S P White

BANKERS

- NatWest Bank Plc
39 Grimsby Road
Cleethorpes
North East Lincolnshire
DN35 7GB

AUDITORS- Forrester Boyd Chartered Accountants
26 South Saint Mary's Gate
Great Grimsby
North East Lincolnshire
DN31 1LW

PRINCIPAL OFFICE

The Association does not have a Registered Office. All enquiries should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary:

Mr R E Leek
Richmond House
Beech Close
Oversley Green
Alcester
Warwickshire
B49 6PP

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCOUNTS

Charities law requires the Trustees of the Association to prepare an Account of Receipts and Payments and a Statement of Assets and Liabilities for each financial year. In addition, the Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and to disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the Association. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity, and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The Trustees present their report and the accounts for the year ended 30th June 2009.

OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The objects of the Freemen of England and Wales Association are to advance public education in the freedom and to promote research into the history and legal customs of ancient towns of England and Wales and the legal institution of the freedom, to publish the useful results of such research and, in furtherance of this object, to provide advice and information concerning the legal institution of the freedom within each of those several places in England and Wales, being former boroughs or other places where that institution is to be found.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR

Whilst sadly, but inevitably, the Association loses a number of members each year, the overall trend is upwards. The Hon. Membership Secretary gives details in her report.

The Land Registration Act continues to present some Guilds with difficulties, largely because Ancient Rights are not formalised, but the Association continues to offer what help it can with these matters.

The Association recognises that recent Charities legislation could present some Guilds with difficulties, and continues to engage with the appropriate authority in expressing its views.

The Association is represented at a number of formal and ceremonial functions throughout the Country, and the President particularly welcomes the opportunity to attend those ceremonies where new Freemen are created.

The Association was actively involved with a Parliamentary Bill drafted by the Department of Constitutional Affairs, which, if enacted, would enable Guilds to change their local rules of admission, thus allowing women into the Freedom where, currently, they are denied. Work is also progressing on a new book about the Freedom in England and Wales, to replace that produced many years ago by the Founder President, the late Harry Ward.

The Wardens of the Association continue to reach out to Guilds within their Warden Areas, and provide a valuable social link between member Guilds seeking outside contact.

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES AND AFFAIRS

The attached accounts show the transactions for the year and state of affairs, which the Trustees consider to be sound.

Approved by the Trustees on the 4th September 2009 and signed on their behalf by:

SP White
FEW Honorary Treasurer

C Hardcastle
FEW President

FREEMEN OF ENGLAND AND WALES

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES AS AT THE FINANCIAL YEAR END

	2007/08	2008/09
Monetary Assets		
GENERAL PURPOSE FUND		
National Westminster Bank - Current A/C	2,332.52	2,868.34
COIF Charity Deposit Fund	45,000.00	46,000.00
	<u>47,332.52</u>	<u>48,868.34</u>
DESIGNATED FUNDS		
National Westminster Bank - Current A/C	576.52	701.42
COIF Charity Deposit Fund	5,000.00	4,000.00
	<u>5,576.52</u>	<u>4,701.42</u>
DEBTORS / CREDITORS		
Amounts owed to FEW at 30/6	659.56	622.39
LESS: Amounts owed by FEW at 30/6	0.00	-75.00
TOTAL	<u>53,568.60</u>	<u>54,117.15</u>
Other Assets		
Stocks of resale items (cost not realisable value)	1,770.28	1,659.82
Officers' regalia (insured value)	7,319.00	9,142.00
Other Assets	895.00	895.00
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>63,552.88</u>	<u>65,813.97</u>

Liabilities

Short Term

At 30 June 2009, the only short term commitments were in connection with usual ongoing transactions such as printing of Newsletter and purchase of Regalia.

Long Term

At 30 June 2009, the Officers of the Association have not made any long term commitments.

Movement of designated funds – 2007/8 to 2008/9.

	2008/09		2007/08
Legal Fund			
Balance at 30 June	2,389.21		2717.05
Donations received	292.50		290.00
Tax recovered	35.34		44.38
LESS:costs incurred	-		323.80
Balance at 30 June	<u>2,717.05</u>		<u>2,727.63</u>
Regalia Fund			
Balance at 30 June	1,419.35		1,566.47
Donations received	297.50		248.00
Tax recovered	35.94		37.88
LESS: Purchases made	186.32		1,536.56
Balance at 30 June	<u>1566.47</u>		<u>315.79</u>
Regalia self-insurance Fund			
Balance at 30 June	946.00		1,293.00
Amount Provided	347.00		365.00
Balance at 30 June	<u>1,293.00</u>		<u>1,658.00</u>
TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS	<u>5,576.52</u>		<u>4,701.42</u>

REPORT ON THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY BILL

In the last Journal I added a gloss to the Hansard report that the Bill was to pass to the 'Report Stage' and 'Third Reading' of the Commons and that Jim Cousins amendment had not been tabled for that part. I was informed of this by Lord Graham who fully expected that it would get Royal Assent, unchanged, in very late July/ early August. That was all true at the time of going to press.

However, the Government sent Parliament into Summer Recess earlier than expected and so the Bill did not get to its Report Stage. That will now take place at the beginning of the next Session from the 12th October.

To explain what this means practically: The Bill was passed from the Lords to the Commons and it had not been amended at the Commons Committee Stage which lasted some weeks, although

guillotined. The Report Stage will be guillotined at just one day and then will pass directly to its Third Reading. There is no indication of whether Jim Cousins' amendment will be tabled for the Report Stage, but as the Bill was not changed at Committee Stage it will be unlikely to be accepted even if debated, or rather discussed.

The Bill will then return to the Lords as the originating House and as it has not been changed by the Commons it shall pass through the Lords, 'on the nod', and go to Royal Assent. As to Lord Graham clause; The only Amendment accepted by the Government was his Clauses and the only Clauses 'welcomed' by the Opposition in the Commons, who opposed the Bill in all parts, was those same Clauses.

An Appreciation.

In view of the sudden and unexpected resignation of Tony Sharpe as Editor, the executive are grateful to Tom Gibson, Freeman of York, for stepping into the breach and compiling this edition at very short notice. Thank you Tom.

Colin Hardcastle.

President.

October 2009.

Next issue (161) due February 2010, contributions to the Editor (contact details below) by 16th January at the latest please.

Mr. T. Gibson.

Editor (Pro Tem) F.E.W Journal.

79 Tang Hall Lane.

York.

YO31 0SZ

Email: thomasg624@aol.com

Tel no. 01904 423153

I can accept text either electronically (email or on disk) or hard copy to Scan. Hard copy preferred in the Ariel font size 10 though not essential. I can also cope with images (I can convert to Black and white if necessary) either as hard copy to scan, electronically by email or on CDR as JPG files please. If you require return of hard copies an SAE is appreciated, please indicate if this is desired.