



# *Freemen of England and Wales.*



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With Compliments.*

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## *Presidents Report.*

Over the last few weeks I have been very busy touring at least part of the Country on FEW business.

On 24 April, Emma and I were guests of the Shrewsbury Freemen at their St. Georges' day dinner at which I was invited to speak and I think, from comments at Morning Service on the Sunday, my speech was well received.

On the 24 March, I met our Warden for the North West and representatives of Preston City Council to look into the possibility of holding our 2012 AGM in that City. Whilst the Council officers seemed enthusiastic, I was not happy that they were wholly supportive of such an event. We were told that it was highly unlikely that any Civic event would be 'available'; the Church building would not be big enough; it was very likely there would be little if any hotel accommodation available and that there would be limited banqueting facilities. I was very disappointed that it may be not viable, and I am sure our Warden will cover this meeting in his report also. Subsequently, a tentative offer to host the 2012 AGM has been made by the freemen of Malmesbury, and our Warden for the West, Howard Crapper, has attended meetings to discuss the possibility, as his report will no doubt cover.

The York Gild banquet was held on 17 April and the principle guest was His Grace the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu. I was pleased to have Emma in attendance with me.

The 1st May saw Emma and me in Coventry for their splendid banquet and Officer "appointing". May I congratulate our Warden Derek Austin who was installed as Master of that Gild for the coming year. The 'curse' of Stafford befell Coventry as

the hotel normally used succumbed to the recession - as it did in Stafford - and ceased trading. The replacement hotel was an excellent alternative. However, as it was so close to their Guildhall, the taxi drivers of Coventry were denied several fares.

I was particularly pleased to attend Carlisle on Ascention Day -13 May - when three "Freewomen" { I hate that description } were admitted, the first in that City. A photograph appears elsewhere in this Journal.

On 27 May, I attended a seminar in Great Grimsby on the regeneration plans for Freeman Street in that town. The plans are extensive, comprehensive and far sighted. The Enrolled Freemen of Great Grimsby are closely involved in the planning, and more information may be forthcoming from Stephen White, our treasurer, who is, of course, a freeman of Great Grimsby.

In the run-up to the AGM, I will be attending the Leicester Guild banquet week- end of 2 July as well as several events in my home City of York [with my other hat on] including the performances of the Mystery Plays on July 11 and 18. Full details of these two play days" may be obtained from the Clerk to the York Gild.

CH

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6/6/10

### *Presidents Report- Addendum.*

On 15 June, I met our warden for the North, Stephen Healey, and together we attended the funeral service for our Chairman of Trustees, Joe Petty, who had died suddenly at his home a

few days previously. I left a card signed on behalf of F.E.W., and expressed our condolences to his family.

The short service was conducted by the Vicar of Gosforth in the East Chapel of the West Road crematorium in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The service was attended by over 100 mourners representing Joe's varied community activities. I was particularly pleased to see Professor Peter Dale and a number of Freemen of various Newcastle Guilds in attendance. It is expected that a memorial service for Joe is to be held in the Autumn, and a short obituary for our Journal has been requested following that service.

## *News From The Guilds.*

### *Coventry:*

March 30<sup>th</sup> was the occasion for the Guild's **Charity Awards Dinner** in St Mary's Guildhall crypt. After a low cost 'chafer' style meal a talk by a representative of the Sir Derek Higgs 'Start a Heart Appeal' advised on the good progress achieved on the defibrillator programme, and how the £2000 from the Master Jim Parry's charity appeal would fund two units for city centre use. Further monies were also distributed to: Coventry Watchmakers Museum; Guild Church Holy Trinity Organ appeal; Coundon Care Centre; Tools for Africa; Enterprise Club for the Disabled; and the Coventry Youth Orchestra.

14<sup>th</sup> April saw the **Guild AGM** in the Council House Chamber. This was the last AGM for Clerk George Wilkinson, with outgoing Master Jim Parry to take on this role. We are grateful for the sterling efforts of George and his wife Barbara over the years, also to retiring PM Mick Rawson who initiated the current successful Apprentice of the Year competition and dinner series.

Two days later a party of Coventry Freemen trekked north for the **York Gilds banquet** weekend. We joined our local colleagues the Leicester Freemen in the Premier Hotel on the Friday, and enjoyed a very large and tasty meal at the 'Black Swan.' Saturday's banquet at the Merchant Adventurers Hall was well attended, and speakers included His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York the Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu. Sunday saw a robed procession to the Gild church of All

Saints Pavement for the annual service. Our thanks to York Gild, and Master Eileen Forth on her notable birthday, and special thanks to John Tolton of Leicester Gild for arranging the accommodation.

On 21<sup>st</sup> April there was a **Special Guild Admission Court** in the Lord Mayor's Parlour at his request for Freeman Tim Aston. The Guild Officers in robes, and the Loving Cup ceremony, made it a memorable occasion for Tim's family members.

27<sup>th</sup> April was a **Lord Mayor's Admission Court** Ceremony. 32 new Freemen and women took the two part oath before the Lord Mayor and Master, and duly received their badge and copy of 'The Guildsman' magazine with details how to claim a free first year's membership.

Three days later was the 'get together' dinner for the **Coventry banquet weekend**. As the usual hotel went bust a few weeks before, we were fortunate that Senior Warden Raj Bansal and PM Rod King were able to use the Britannia Hotel at short notice. 1<sup>st</sup> May was the banquet in St Mary's Greathall. A record attendance for recent years enjoyed a four course menu and included speeches from the London Master Anthony Woodhead CBE and principal guest Alan Fallows as Deputy President of the FEW Association. After installation as Master of the Guild I was pleased to welcome Freemen from York, Chester, Leicester, and Court Leets from Warwick and Henley-in-Arden. Freemen's Sunday saw the robed procession from the Council House to the Guild Church of Holy Trinity, where we were pleased to re-install our Chaplain the Rev David Mayhew for the new Guild year. On the 8<sup>th</sup> May Guild members attended a 'Last night of the Proms' Concert by the Coventry Youth Orchestra with a choir of several primary schools. Their youth belied the excellence of the 64 strong orchestra, which also tours internationally under the director Brian Chappell, now in his 26<sup>th</sup> year as conductor and organiser.  
*Derek Austin*

### *Henley in Arden Court Leet and Court Baron*

On Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> April '10 the Henley Court Leet and Court Baron held its Annual Dinner in the Guild Hall. The High Bailiff's special guest this year was Alan Fallow the Deputy President of the Freemen of England and Wales and his consort Valerie Fallow. Other guests included the Chairman of

Warwickshire County Council, Councillor Peter Barnes and his consort Stella Barnes; the Mayor of Warwick, Councillor Peggy Bennett; the Steward of Warwick, Derek Maudlin; the Mayor of Stratford, Councillor Jenny Fradgley and her consort Councillor Ian Fradgley; the Bailiff of Warwick, Roger Higgins; the Bailiff of Bromsgrove, Simon Cupitt; the Bailiff of Alcester, Mike Clark; the Reeve of Bromsgrove, James Merridith; the Warwickshire Warden of the Freeman of England and Wales, Derek Austin, and Chairman of Tanworth Society for the Apprehension of Felons, John Burman.

In all some sixty eight people sat down to a five course meal prepared by Sue Dalby Catering. The proceedings were opened by the Town Crier, Gordon Trinder, and grace was said by the Chaplain to the Court, the Rev. John Ganjavi. The High Bailiff introduced his guests and called for the wines to be tasted. The wines were tasted by the Court's Ale Tasters, Andrew Garner, and Barry Tulloch and pronounced fit for consumption.

Following a most enjoyable, and mouth watering meal modelled around a main course of lamb shank marinated in red wine, the dinners joined in toasts to the Queen, proposed by the Low Bailiff, John Rutherford; the Lord of the Manor proposed by the Steward, David Lodder; the visitors by Hon. Burgess, Alec Halliwell and the Court Leet by Deputy President of FEW, Alan Fallow. In response the High Bailiff, Roger Sutton, thanked all for attending; Sue and her team for the wonderful food, and went on to added toasts to the Armed Forces, the newly formed Henley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, and a personal toast to the businesses of Henley in Arden.

The evening was concluded with a prize draw in aid of the Guild Hall Trust.

Roger Sutton  
High Bailiff.

Leicester

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March.** Over fifty Freemen with their wives and their partners attended a Cheese and Wine evening at Freemen's Holt. An interesting talk was given by Margaret Hudson on "My life as a Tiller Girl". She also brought photos, scrap books and stage trivia which were of great interest to everyone present.

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March Our annual open morning was held at Freemen's Holt** it was a nice sunny morning when the members of the Gild enjoyed a relaxing cup of coffee, paid their annual subscriptions and booked for future outings.

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April** Twenty five Freemen and ten Associates members attended the Common Hall in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. The Lord Mayor, Roger Blackmore and Lady Mayoress welcomed us on the night. After his opening address the Master of the Gild Brian Mudford presented the Lord Mayor with a cheque for his chosen Charity and a Gild plaque for being our President during his year in office. We were pleased to welcome Colonel Robert Martin at his first Common Hall as our new Patron.

There were no new members proposed as wardens to the Court, therefore all Officers were re-elected un-opposed for another year.

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April** On the invitation of the High Sherriff of Leicestershire, Colonel Robert Martin O.B.E., four Freemen escorted the Judge and the Civic Dignitaries into St Mary de Castro Church for the Court Service. After the service the Judges Procession walked to Leicester Castle for the reading of Letters Patent.

**Friday to Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> April** A party of ten representing the Leicester Gild attended the York Banquet weekend. There was a pre-banquet get together on the Friday evening at the Black Swan where we partook of an enormous meal of meat pie, chips and peas.

The Banquet took place on Saturday evening in the Merchant Adventurers Hall, a magnificent building dating back 650 years, with a splendid meal of a baron of beef was served with a choice of vegetables.

Sunday morning we returned to the Merchants Hall for the Robe procession to All Saints Church for the Freemen's service, after the service returning to the hall for tea and coffee before saying our goodbyes.

The Leicester Gild would like to take this opportunity to thank the Master of the Gild Eileen Forth and members of the court for their hospitality over the weekend.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> April** The Freemen their wives and partners were invited to attend the St George's day service at St Mary de Castro Church. All members of the congregation were presented with a red rose, before joining the procession to the statue of St George for prayers and the blessing.

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April** A third Freedom ceremony was held in the Council Chamber at Leicester Town Hall. When a further fifteen Lady Freemen, took their Oath before the Lord Mayor Councillor Roger Blackmore the Town Clerk the Master of the Gild and the Chairman of the Deputies Wayne Manship.

Since the Democracy, Economic and the Construction Bill being passed in October 2009, forty six daughters of Freemen have now taken their Oath.

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May** The Freemen of Shrewsbury invited the Leicester Gild for an informal visit to their historic and medieval town. On our arrival at the outskirts of the Town, their Chairman Lionel Morris and Alan Fallows boarded our coach to guide the driver to the town centre. To be welcomed by the Town Crier and Blue Badge guide, Martin Wood an enormous man of seven foot two, who gave a most informative and interesting talk on the history of Shrewsbury during our guided walk round the town, despite the continuous rain fall. Our tour complete, we were entertained by Shrewsbury



Freemen for a buffet lunch in the Mail Box, a local hotel in the town centre. After lunch and a welcome address by the Chairman of Shrewsbury Freemen and the thank you reply from the Deputy Master of the Leicester Gild.

We then exchanged gifts; the afternoon remained free to visit the town, before boarding our coach at five for the return journey.

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May** Our second coach outing of the year to Stratford upon Avon, famous for William Shakespeare and the picturesque River Avon. Arriving in the town at 10 30am, a Blue Badge guide boarded our coach to take us around the “historical sites”.

The afternoon remained free to tour the town, before returning home at 5 30pm.

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June** For the second time this year four Freemen were invited to escort the Judge at the Trinity Secession of the opening of the Crown Court Service.

Michael Ayres June 2010

### *Bridgenorth*

It is with regret that we have to inform you that Mr Harry Foxall, Past Master of the Gild of Bridgnorth Freemen passed away on 23rd May 2010. Harry was a founder member in the reforming of the Gild of Bridgnorth Freemen in 1982, his family having been Freemen since the 14th century. His contributions to the Gild will be greatly missed along with his history and passion for Bridgnorth. He had recently accepted the position of Knight of the Court after Mr J.H.C. Bowen had decided to step down. Mr J.B. Head, the past Master of the Gild has now accepted this position.

The Local newsletter report can be found at

<http://http://www.bridgnorthjournal.com/2010/05/28/death-of-town-stalwart/>

A.J. Head. Master

*Minutes of the Court Meeting held on  
Saturday 19th 2010 in the Guildhall, Chester*

1) Attendees: Michael Ayres — Leicester, Howard Crapper — Oxford, Eric Critchlow — Leicester, John Edwards — Stafford, Capt. Jim Evans — Berwick-upon-Tweed, Alan Fallows — Shrewsbury, Roy Folland — Pembroke, Eileen Forth — York, Tom Gibson — York, Colin Hardcastle — York, Capt. Stephen Healy — Newcastle upon Tyne, Roger Higgins — Warwick, Ron Leek — Alcester, London & Southwark, Ray Mason — Newcastle-under-Lyme, Leslie Morgan — London, Hale, Howard Pate — Chester, Brian Simpson — Newcastle-under-Lyme, Gordon Varndell — London, Stephen White — Great Grimsby.

The FEW Mace having been previously placed in front of the gathering, the President, Colin Hardcastle, formally opened the meeting. The Opening Prayer was pronounced by Eileen Forth.

2) Apologies for absence were recorded from:- the Officer Without Portfolio, Hilarie McNae (her husband Colin, is currently recovering from a stroke. A card will be sent by Eileen Forth, FEW Welfare Officer, presenting our wishes for a speedy return to full health); Warden for the North East, Emma Reid-Chalmers; Warden for the South Midlands, Derek Austin; and Warden for the East, Norman Offield.

3) The minutes of the previous Court Meeting held on Saturday 13th March in Shrewsbury, were approved as a correct record, and were signed by the President.

4) Matters Arising:-

1) Item 14b. John Edwards reported that copies of the Stafford DVD of last year's AGM Weekend had now been distributed as appropriate.

2) Item 14c. The Hon Secretary, Ron Leek, stated that in accordance with the current FEW directive, today's deadline date of 19th June having been reached, the time for receipt of nominations for the 2010/2011 FEW Executive is now closed. He then read out the nominations received for each office. These are as follows:-

President:	Alan Fallows.
Deputy President:	Gordon Varndell.
Vice President:	Stephen White.
Hon Secretary:	Ronald Leek.
Hon Treasurer:	Stephen White.
Hon Membership Secretary:	Eileen Forth.
Hon Archivist:	Alan Fallows.
Hon Editor:	Tom Gibson.
Officer Without Portfolio:	No nomination received.

With the exception of Officer Without Portfolio for which no nomination has been received, there being only one nomination for each other office, no election is necessary at the 2010 AGM.

5) Colin Hardcastle presented his President's Report.

6) Alan Fallows presented his Deputy President's Report.

7) Gordon Vandell presented his Vice President's Report.

8) Wardens' Reports were presented as follows.-

a) Warden for the North West, Leslie Morgan.

The Court approved Leslie's suggestion, that he and his son Paul should represent FEW at the Preston events.

b) Warden for the North, Capt Stephen Healy.

c) Warden for the North East, Emma Reid Chalmers. In Emma's absence, her report was read out by the Vice President.

d) Warden for the East, Norman Offield. In Norman's absence, no report was presented.

e) Warden for Wales, Roy Folland. Roy reported in detail his investigations into the possible formation of a Freemens' Guild in Swansea. He will liaise closely with Alan Fallows on this issue.

f) Warden for the West, Howard Crapper.

g) Warden for the North Midlands, John Edwards.

h) Warden for the South Midlands, Derek Austin. In Derek's absence, his report was read out by the Hon Secretary.

9) Stephen White presented his Treasurer's Report and draft accounts to date.

10) Eileen Forth presented her Hon Membership Secretary's Report.

11) Alan Fallows presented his Hon Archivist's Report. In

response to a query raised from Colchester regarding the implementation date of Clause 27 of the Local Democracy Bill, Alan stated that like the majority of guilds and councils, he was of the impression that the whole Bill had been implemented upon receiving Royal Assent. He will check the facts.

12) Tom Gibson presented his Hon Editor's Report. Following an observation, it was agreed that published details of meeting venues should include post codes, together with if possible, whereabouts of nearby car parking facilities. This task was apportioned to the Hon Secretary.

13) In Hilarie's absence, no Officer Without Portfolio's Report was available.

14) In the light of various observations that Preston was not going to be the ideal venue for the 2012 AGM, the meeting agreed that the offer from Malmesbury should be accepted to host this event. Howard Crapper will notify them of our acceptance of their offer, and will liaise regarding details. The date has to be finalised with the Abbey, but will be a weekend mid to end of September.

15) Other than the Colchester query referred to earlier, no further follow up is required on the Local Democracy Bill.

16) Following an apology from the Hon Secretary who had somehow, together with others, been misled into thinking that the incentive idea for recruiting new members, as proposed by Capt Stephen Healy last year in Berwick-upon-Tweed, referred specifically to FEW Wardens, the meeting discussed the idea at length. Stephen noted that at this morning's meeting of the Wardens, the general principle of such incentive awards had been agreed. Following a variety of suggestions for the form of

the awards — plaques, scrolls, certificates, etc. — together with the requirements for achievement of such awards, the meeting agreed that the idea should be further investigated by the Executive, with a firm and detailed proposal being presented to the 2011 March Court for approval. Any prior ideas from the membership, should be forwarded to the Vice President, Gordon Vardell.

17) Stephen White reported that the website, although not completely finalised was now live. He noted that meetings had been held by the website team, viz: himself, Capt Stephen Healy, Emma Reid-Chalmers, and Trevor Ellis the site designer, in progressing matters to today's situation, and although there had been some dissension on the way, the site was now up and running.

18) Any Other Business.

a) Michael Ayres stated that booking forms for the Leicester Banquet were available from himself.

b) Capt Stephen Healy asked what was happening regarding the FEW Trustees now that the Chairman, Joe Petty, had died. The President stated that the matter had been covered at this morning's meeting of the Executive, and that it was proposed to ask Past President Alan Robson, senior member of the current trustees to become Chairman with effect from the AGM, with Gordon Vardell, currently a trustee, continuing in this capacity, and with Colin Hardcastle, who will then have finished his tenure as FEW President, being appointed as the third trustee. As a matter of procedure, these appointments will require formal endorsement by the AGM.

19) The 2010 AGM weekend will be held from Friday 10<sup>th</sup> to

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September at Berwick-upon-Tweed.

20) The Valedictory Prayer was pronounced by the President, who then formally closed the meeting.

### *Deputy Presidents Report*

My only official duty as Deputy President was to liaise with the Freemen of Berwick-Upon-Tweed upon final arrangements for the AGM. Having met with Captain Evans and his team on the occasion of the admission of their first thirteen lady Freemen I am confident that their arrangements will be more than satisfactory and that we will all enjoy a most successful weekend.

Consideration was also in hand for publication of "Harry Ward 2" on CD and I have now been able to access the files previously sent from Alan Robson to Tony Sharp digitally. With the admission of ladies now in force it occurs to me that many Gilds details may require amendment so we will need to contact all Gilds to re-submit their entries.

### *Vice Presidents Report*

As Vice President I have not had a lot to take on since March 2010. I constantly try where possible to promote the Association Freemen of England and Wales.

From what I can see the Wardens have been fairly quiet in their respective areas and their reports will reflect that.

With reference to a letter from Alan our Deputy President outlining the idea of drawing up new guidelines for the Wardens this was done and sent out.

I have got the post codes set up for the new areas of the freedom in obscurity and I have drawn up the letters and sent those out to the relevant Wardens to investigate the new areas. Wardens will I daresay report on the progress so far.

With the Warden positions, the North Midlands post was taken up by John Edwards of Stafford at the last meeting. The South East this post is still vacant. I have approached some members but so far there are no takers but I am confident that this post will be filled. I will send out a letter to all the members in that area to see if there is any interest. The South West however I am afraid that this position will not be filled, the members down there are too few and too widely scattered to be able to do it. Age is also not on their side. If there is anyone out there that would be interested in any of these positions please contact me, my phone number and address is in journal 162 and the Gazette.

This ends the report for the Executive meeting 19th June 2010.

## *Wardens Reports.*

**Warden for the North West**; Leslie Morgan

The past three months since my last report was given at Shrewsbury, have been interesting to say the least.

On Wednesday 24th March, the President and I were in the City of Preston to discuss whether our Association might be involved with the 2012 Preston Guild. We were cordially received by Mrs Alison Young, along with her colleagues, and a full discussion ensued over tea and biscuits. However, it would appear that owing to the large number of expatriate and Guild members who would be attending, we would not have



been able to attend the Services at Preston Minster, as even though it is a large church, it would not be possible to accommodate everyone who was eligible to attend, let alone ourselves to hold our 2012 Annual Meeting there. We were offered a closing Service after the official closing of the Guild, but this would have defeated the object of attendance during the Guild celebrations, and regretfully, I feel that this would be a non-starter insofar as holding our 2012 Annual Meeting in Preston is concerned. However, if the Executive so desire, I should be more than delighted to contact Mrs Young to see whether it would be possible for Paul and myself to represent our Association at one or two events during the Preston Guild festivities, subject to them not clashing with our own AGM at which I will be retiring as Warden for the North West after thirteen years.

On 22nd April, I was in Hale for the St George's Day evening, which, as usual, was well attended and with the usual excellent camaraderie.

Ascension Day, 13th May, saw the President and myself in Carlisle for the admission of three ladies into the Carlisle Hereditary Freeman's Guild. This was held in the Civic Centre, at which each of the ladies was presented with a handsome framed certificate. This was followed by an excellent buffet, and I have written to the ladies concerned regarding details of our Association. I understand that another ceremony will be held on Ascension Day, 2<sup>o</sup>d June 2011.

Our next outing was on 6th June, when Paul and I attended the Trinity Assize of the Barony of Dunham Massey, held there in the presence of the Steward of the Barony, along with the Provost, Aldermen, and Burgesses of Altrincham; whilst last weekend 12th and 13th June, Paul and myself had an enjoyable

weekend in Hale to join in the festivities of the two day carnival held there.

On June 1st I was over in Halifax for a meeting of the Halifax Antiquarian Society, and during the early afternoon I paid a visit to see our old friends, Jill and Stewart McArthur, who many of you will recollect also had their guide dog Alice who paraded with us with her special FEW dog jacket. Stewart is far from well, and Jill is an absolute trump in caring for Stewart. They both asked me to pass on their good wishes and remembrances. Sadly I was told that Alice had passed away earlier this year.

**Warden for the North;** Capt. Stephen Healy,

I begin, with much sadness, by advising Court of the death on June 4th of Joseph William Norman Petty, known to us all as Joe. A great supporter of the Association of Freeman of England and Wales, Joe was my immediate predecessor as Warden for the North and gave me much sound advice and historical background on the Freelage, both in England and Wales and within the City of Newcastle. Joe was also of course the Chairman of the Trustees of the Association. The President, Peter Dale and I all attended Joe's funeral on Tuesday and we are told there will be a Memorial Service later in the year. There will also be a fuller obituary in a forthcoming Journal. To details of the region:

Alnwick:

Alnwick are, at this stage, "still discussing" any changes that would bring about the admission of lady freemen.

Their next event is the customary "Riding of the Bounds", to be carried out by the Freeman's Committee on 4th July.

Berwick-upon-Tweed:

Arrangements continue to fall into place for the upcoming Association AGM. Capt. Jim Evans is here today, so it is not necessary to elaborate within this report. Attention is however drawn to the booking form in this edition of the Journal.

Berwick upon Tweed has in fact had lady freemen (in the form of widows) for two hundred years. Any changes to their rules are achieved through Guild resolution, rather than any act and one such resolution, relating to the admission of lady freemen on an hereditary basis was passed in January this year. This led, in April, to Berwick upon Tweed swearing in their first 11 ladies under the new terms, with a further 16 lined up and waiting in the wings.

Durham:

Durham are in the midst of their ballot, being held under the requirements of the new Act, to confirm opinion on the admission of lady freemen within the rules and criteria applicable to that City.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne:

I am pleased to report that once again, two companies in the City are registered as members of the Association, being the Scriveners and the Plumbers. These in addition to Individual Members.

At Guild, there continues to be much disquiet in certain areas about FEW and I must report that the article by the Deputy President of the Association in the February Journal aroused considerable anger within the Stewards Committee in particular. A subsequent piece in the Newcastle upon Tyne "Freemen" magazine roundly denounced the article, the Deputy President and FEW.

As has been my habit since becoming Warden, I recently approached the Deputy Chairman of the Stewards Committee, informing him of my pending report to this meeting and simply asking if there was anything regarding the Freelage within the City that he would like to be included. I quote from the response: "...I put your request as an item for the June meeting of the Stewards Committee... and it was decided that as the Freemen of Newcastle do not have a corporate relationship (membership) with FEW it was not appropriate for us to provide updates on our affairs to FEW Court."

The office of the Lord Mayor of Newcastle upon Tyne however advised that 28 ladies have thus far been sworn in, with a further 3 sessions, to cover another 120, planned for late June / July, leaving 53 outstanding from the names called at the Easter Guild. Another 80 names are on the list to be called at the Michaelmas Guild.

**Warden for the North East:** Emma Reid Chalmers

Copy not Submitted from Vice President.

Warden for Wales; Roy Folland

**The Gild of Freemen of Pembroke**— Members of the Gild were in attendance at the Service of Remembrance to H.M. Landing Craft Gun (L)s 15 and 16 and H.M.S. Rosemary which was held at Freshwater West on Sunday 25th April. The Master laid the wreath on behalf of the Gild.

On April 14th the FEW AGM Hosting Committee held its meeting at the Cleddau Bridge Hotel with Tomas the general Manager, to tie up some loose ends and any misunderstanding that may have arisen initially with the arrangements involving the hotel and the costs of the AGM weekend, having received the charges which was accepted by the committee. To reserve

that weekend a deposit of £500.00 has been paid to the hotel. A discussion on the two coaches required for the Saturday from 10.00am to 5.30pm have now been booked with Silcox Coaches of Pembroke.

The Master of the Gild received an invitation from the Mayor and Mayoress of Pembroke, Councillor Keith Nicholas and Mrs. Karen Nicholas to attend their Mayoral Luncheon on Saturday 1st May and to their Civic Service which took place at St. Michael's Church, Pembroke on Sunday 2nd May. The Town Clerk and his Staff should be congratulated for the excellent arrangements made on both occasions.

The Warden for Wales received an invitation from the Llantrisant Freemen to represent the FEW at the Beating the Bounds, which was held on Saturday 12th June, this ceremony takes place every seven years and is one of their main functions and they take great pride in this tradition. The Town was closed to all vehicular traffic for the duration of this event, with cars being parked at the Royal Mint car park, with buses laid on for visitors to this celebration.

On Saturday 26th June the Gild will be represented at the Armed Forces Day Thanksgiving Service for the Armed Forces which will be held in the grounds of Pembroke Castle.

At the request of our Vice President, I contacted the Swansea City Council requesting information on the Freemen of the City, with a view to setting up a Gild of Freemen of Swansea, eventually I was given the contact details of Mr. Kim Collis, County Archivist, who advised I call at Archives to inspect the Roll of Freemen myself. This information was passed on to Mr. David Rosser-Owen who had made the initial contact, who I understand will be visiting Swansea in the near future and he has agreed to check the Freeman's Roll himself. When I receive this information I will make contact with the Freemen of the City with a view to setting up a Gild of Freemen of Swansea.

**The Gild of Freemen of Haverfordwest**-Robed Wardens of the of the Court of the Haverfordwest gild of Freemen attended the Induction and Institution on Wednesday May 19th in St. Mary's Church, of the Gild's new Chaplain, Father Paul Mackness. Father Mackness will also be incumbent of the Gild's traditional place of worship, nearby St. Martin of Tours, the oldest church in the town and of St. Thomas and Haroldston St. Issels, in the newly formed Haverfordwest Parish.

This service was conducted by the Bishop of St. David's, the Right Rev. J. Wyn Evans, the Archdeacon, the Venerable Dr. John Holdsworth and Rev. Nicholas Cale, standing in for the area Dean, Canon Geoffrey Gwyther, who was in hospital. It was an impressive service attended by robed civic leaders, former parishioners of the new vicar and friends from other denominations, and the ceremony included the presentation of the church key and the ringing of the bell by the new incumbent.

In July the Gild holds its annual Summer Reception at the Haverfordwest cricket Club when the newly appointed Burgesses will be enrolled and welcomed and the local Historian Simon Hancock, Curator and Manager of the Town Museum, will address the gathering on aspects of the town's 900 years history, the anniversary of which is being celebrated with a variety of events this year.

**The Freemen of Llantrisant**-Beating the Bounds Ceremony which takes place every seven years. The prime organiser of this event is Town Trust Clerk Mr. Howard Thomas and he should be congratulated on the arrangements which went on throughout the day, which was as follows-11.00am Craft Market—11.30am Guild Hall open to exhibit photographs and historic documents. 12.00noon— Musical entertainment featuring choirs of local primary schools— 1.00pm— prize-

giving for schools art competition. 1.45pm— Llantrisant Town Trust march from the Guild Hall to the parish church. 2.00pm — Beating the Bounds thanksgiving service at Llantrisant Parish Church—2.45pm Procession forms up with RAF St. Athan Volunteer Band. 3.00pm— Beating the Bounds March from Llantrisant. 3.30pm— Bouncing of Boy at the Boundary Stone at Cross Inn. 4.00pm— Transfer of Mace and Beating the Bounds, this involves a seven mile walk. 6.30pm— Entertainment provided by RAF St. Athan Volunteer Band, Llantrisant Male Voice Choir and the Llantrisant Ladies Choir. The number attending this ceremony I have been told was **eighteen thousand** visiting the town during the day, **four thousand** marched from the church to Cross Inn, while **one thousand** took part in the **seven mile** walk beating the Bounds. The Llantrisant Town Trust Motto is “A city set on a hill cannot be hid” Having attended this ceremony and visited the churchyard to look at the view of the surrounding countryside, one can understand the meaning of that Motto.

**Warden for the West:** Howard Crapper.

The Chartered Freemen of Gloucester will be visiting the Freemen of the City of Oxford in September. The day will begin with a civic reception in Oxford Town Hall. Meanwhile , Gloucester City Council are moving to new offices and this process is delaying the admission of new Freemen until the new facilities are fully commissioned.

The Warden and Freemen of Malmesbury continue with their admirable quest to refurbish the town properties under their control . This has been an ongoing project over the last twenty years. I am very pleased that the Warden and Capital Burgesses are considering hosting the FEW 2012 AGM in Malmesbury. .

The Freemen of the City of Oxford celebrated St Georges Day

with a special Freemen service at the City Church, attended by the Lord Mayor . A splendid roast lunch followed at the Mite Hotel with a toast to St George.

Last evening, the Freemen of the City of Oxford inspected the Port Meadow with the City Sheriff. Problems encountered have included bottle digging on a known Victorian tip area - bad enough in itself, but the offenders also leave open excavations which are a danger to cattle , horses and walkers. The evening concluded with the traditional game of Aunt Sally, Freemen v Sheriff in the local Plough Inn hostelry.

On Sunday 20th June , a fully booked walking guided tour of Oxford is especially arranged for Freemen. Whereas the 17th of July is a date eagerly anticipated in Oxford when a Freemen, an internationally acclaimed pianist, will perform a Piano Recital in the historic St Michael at the Northgate . The good news is that you are all invited.

At the behest of the FEW Executive, and in order to try to find life in guilds gone by, I have written letters to the newspapers in towns of Bedford, Bristol , Chipping Norton, Evesham , Hythe, St Albans, Tewksbury & Worcester.

Just one letter has been received in reply and that was from the Town Clerk of Chipping Norton Council who was unequivocal in his remark that the freedom had been lost long ago and beyond revival.

Finally I would urge the swift redevelopment of FEW website as most new Freemen and potential members ask that single question - where can I find your website?

**Warden of the North Midlands ;** John Edwards.

Now that the Stafford AGM accounts have been submitted and most of the loose ends tied up I am better placed to get my



brain round the Warden task. I have written a letter of introduction to the guilds listed in my area and when I receive a list of individual members I will also write to them.

The letter, sets out what I see as my role in coordination and communication between the guilds in the area. I have asked to be informed of any suitable events where I may meet them. I propose to use mainly electronic communications as it is cheap, simple and easily disseminated. There can be few guilds with nobody on the internet by now. If so the Royal Mail will doubtless provide the necessary services.

An open copy of the letter is on the newly created North Midlands section of the Stafford Web Site. In due course this will have its own access as [www.fewnorthmidlands.org.uk](http://www.fewnorthmidlands.org.uk) if this name is approved by the executive. Each of the guilds in the area that have no web site will be asked to supply information about their constitution, history and current activities, so they are represented on the internet via an FEW site.

I can only report on activity concerning the Stafford Guild at present. Stafford Guild council meets monthly and has a regular attendance of about eight members. The Guild is the body dealing with communication, social events, civic participation, etc. We have made representations to the Licensing Committee when it seemed likely that the activities of our home church as well as historic aspects of the town centre could become compromised. Our presence was welcomed, not only by the Church, but by the Chairman of the committee and the applicants. Fortunately the matter was settled amicably, but it is nice to know that Stafford freemen still have some influence in the administration of the borough.

Since obtaining our robes we are becoming noticed on Remembrance Parades and Mayor Making ceremonies and have even be moved up from the back of the procession.

The guild had had preliminary discussions with the borough council of the new rules governing the freedom. We have had lively debate on the current definitions relating to Servitude.

There is also a Trust that looks after the interests of the 22 acres of land near the centre of Stafford, which is owned by the Freemen. It is mainly allotment gardens although some development has been undertaken recently to provide a building that can be used for educational and other purposes. Trustees also meet monthly and remain the responsible body, although much of the day to day administration has recently been devolved to an Allotments Management Committee where the expertise of non-freemen gardeners can be utilised.

There have been problems establishing contacts for Bridgnorth, which I hope to resolve soon. If I get some responses from the other groups, we will hopefully be able to put the North Midlands FEW area back on the map.

**Warden for the South Midlands:** Derek Austin

As the Coventry and Leicester Guilds events are well reported in the Journal's 'News from the Guilds' columns, I shall just highlight the return of the Leicester banquet after 15 years absence on 3<sup>rd</sup> July at Devonshire Place on the London Road in Leicester. Tickets for the four course meal are £36 from Roger Allen on 01530-831151. The next morning a service at 10.30am will be held in the Gild Church of St Mary de Castro.

Northampton Freemen's Guild held their forth annual charity dinner on 13<sup>th</sup> May at the usual Riverview Restaurant at Cogenhoe, with their new President Richard Collins and Mayor Michael Hill. Visiting Gild Masters from York and Coventry were also in attendance. Unfortunately my lady's blackout put a temporary dampener on proceedings, but Coventry Deputy Master Raj Bansal kept the auction drama going for the Disneyland tickets before his final successful bid.

Turning now to the Midlands Leets, the Warwick Court Leet Spring meeting was held on 8th April in the Jury Street Court House, with Leet members resplendent in their new maroon and blue robes. Visiting Bailiffs from Alcester, Henley and Bromsgrove, and the FEW Area Warden were also present in full regalia. Potholes, parking and pavements were all topics raised for discussion. Steward Derek Maudlin advised the good news that a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £350K had been secured to refurbish the Court House. A three course supper concluded the evening's event.

Forthcoming events programmed are an Ale tasting on 28th June, with a closed Court Leet meeting the next day.

Alcester Court Leet had a busy Easter, with a Town Crier competition and Ladies coffee morning. The April Ale Tasting went well, and was supported by the local Round Tablers. Annual Assizes were due on 5th June at various High Street locations — all good preparation for the mid June street market. Court Leet Ball this year will be on 10th July.

Henley-in-Arden Court Leet held their annual dinner in the Guildhall on 15th April. This was not only black tie & jewels but robes as well. After a superb meal, FEW Deputy President Alan Fallows briefed the Court and guests, including the Mayors of Warwick and Stratford, on the FEW Association. May saw the Ale Tasting and church service events, and last Saturday was the highlight of the ceremonial year with formal re-enactment of ancient duties at the Assizes.

Bromsgrove Court Leet's High Bailiff Simon Cupitt recently requested FEW information and subscription rates, so I remain hopeful that they may join us.

## *Hon Membership Secretary's Report.*

**Guilds:** Currently we have 40 Guilds on the books. Of these 3 Guilds are in arrears.

**Individual Membership:** The current membership stands at 422. This a drop of two since the last report.

### **Since the March 2010:**

We have had 1 individual new member and 1 Lady Associate member made a full member after being made a Freeman of Carlisle.

Sadly I have to report that since our March meeting:

Four members have died

Two members have resigned due to old age and infirmity

Also four members have notified change of address

**Current payments:** Late payments again I have to say reminders are being sent out constantly.

**The Breakdown:** The actual figures I will report as usual at the annual AGM in September

## *Hon Archivists report.*

There have been a number of queries from Gilds concerning the implications of the admission of lady freemen. To date I have consulted with Colchester, Pembroke, Bridgnorth, Berwick, Chester, Leicester, Durham, Shrewsbury and even Newcastle-upon-Tyne. There will be a need to report in full later when more queries have arisen and been dealt with, and

hopefully we can formulate national guidelines.

In addition, in preparation for submission of queries to Chancery Chambers for the Land Registration Act, I have obtained more details of freemens lands as detailed in the 1840 Select Committee report. The letter of enquiry is now ready for collation and submission for consideration. I apologise for the slow progress but I only want to do the job once and still hope to achieve a result by the AGM this year.

### **STOP PRESS - Lady Freemen**

Confirmation has now been received that the legal team at Colchester were out of date in their response and that section 27 of the Bill is enacted and enforceable.

### *Hon Editors report 19/6/10*

My report this time is short and hopefully sweet. Issue 162 was distributed in March and was well received from the feedback I have received. Our new printers are Focus 4 print at James Street in York who gave us a very favourable quote when the President and I visited. They are a company the York Gild have used for their Year Book, they are a small local company who take a pride in the quality of their work.

I received a few amendments to the distribution list which I have passed on to the Hon Membership Secretary.

I have received some articles for issue 163 and some photographs, I would remind all I can only include items in the Journal if I receive them, I edit with a light hand so generally items will be published as they are received.

I have received a number of comments about the annual

Gazette and Directory, mostly pertaining to the size of the font being too small making it difficult to read and use. This publication is very full and in its current format I cannot increase the size of the font, I think the time may have come to look at it again to see how it could be improved, perhaps increasing it to eight pages from the current four. Thoughts, ideas and suggestions welcome please.

*Freemen of England & Wales Website -*  
*Official*

The official re-launch of the Association website [www.freemen-few.org.uk](http://www.freemen-few.org.uk) occurred on 13th May 2010 at a meeting held with our domain host, Trevor Ellis, in Grimsby.

The content of the site was then discussed, and some decisions taken at the Court Meeting held in Chester in June and fresh content, and links to other bodies of Freemen, is now being added as time permits. There are links to the Stafford Guild who were our AGM Hosts in 2009 and to the Freemen of Berwick who are our hosts this year.

Do take a look and do please send any suggestions for additional material that you would like to see included on the website to Stephen White, using this email address for the time being [stevewhite.grimsby.nel@ntlworld.com](mailto:stevewhite.grimsby.nel@ntlworld.com)

## *Notices from the Hon Secretary*

The final list of nominations for Executive Officer positions for 2010-2011, received by the closing date of 19th June in accordance with the current FEW directive, is as follows:-

<b>President:</b>	Alan Fallows
<b>Deputy President:</b>	Gordon Varndell
<b>Vice President:</b>	Stephen White
<b>Hon Secretary:</b>	Ronald Leek
<b>Hon Treasurer:</b>	Stephen White
<b>Hon Membership Secretary:</b>	Eileen Forth
<b>Hon Archivist:</b>	Alan Fallows
<b>Hon Editor:</b>	Tom Gibson
<b>Officer Without Portfolio:</b>	No nomination received

As no more than one nomination has been received for any particular position, there is therefore no requirement for an election at the 2010 AGM. As previously notified, this will be held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September, during this year's AGM Weekend in Berwick-upon-Tweed. Full details of the weekend, together with the Booking Form, are included with this Journal.

**AGENDA for the 44th AGM  
of  
The Association of Freemen of England and Wales  
Saturday 11th September 2010.**

- 1) Attendees to Sign Register and be seated.
- 2) Call to Order, and President's Procession into the AGM.
- 3) Opening of AGM, Pronouncement of Prayer, and Welcome.
- 4) Apologies for Absence.
- 5) Minutes of 43<sup>d</sup> AGM held on Saturday 5th September 2009 in Stafford, and circulated in the Annual Record and Gazette, Journal No 160, October 2009.
  - a) Approval of Minutes.
  - b) Matters Arising, not forming any other part of this agenda.
- 6) President's Report.
- 7) Deputy President's Report.
- 8) Vice President and Wardens' Reports.
- 9) Hon Treasurer's Report.
- 10) Hon Membership Secretary's Report.
- 11) Hon Archivist's Report.
- 12) Hon Editor's Report.
- 13) Installation of New President.
- 14) Presentation of President's Consort's Jewel.
- 15) Installation of Executive Officers.
- 16) Appointment of Wardens.
- 17) Approval of FEW Trustees.
- 18) Any Other Business.
- 19) Valedictory Prayer.
- 20) Closure of Proceedings, and President's Withdrawal Procession.



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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. Closing date for items for the next issue (No. 164) **12/9/10.**

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The President and Warden for the North West with the new “Freewomen” of Carlisle. Photograph Courtesy Leslie Morgan.



Henley-in-Arden court Leet.  
Photograph Courtesy Roger Sutton.



Master Of the Coventry Guild with Guests.

Photograph Courtesy Derek Austin.

The new Master of the York Gild, Maureen Eland, gives her inaugural



speech in the company of the Rt Hon Lord Mayor of York. Photograph  
Courtesy Tom Gibson.