

Presidents Letter.

Dear Members,

The York AGM has just finished and their Gild have been rightly congratulated on a very well organized and executed weekend. My thanks to all who attended and made the events such a pleasure to participate in.

The business of the AGM itself and the special court meeting were carried out in a relaxed but efficient manner as we (as usual) desperately fought to keep to schedule, and despite a hiccup in voting when I was embarrassed to find we were not able to quote current Gild membership numbers, the margins in favour were adequate enough to prevent this being a problem. A lesson learned though, as we should always endeavour, in future, to get all Gilds postal or e-mail votes registered in good time.

The major success of the weekend was that members attending were able to arrive in York knowing that the atmosphere throughout would be relaxed and friendly, just as it was in Berwick and Pembroke, and as it will be in Oxford next year. The acrimonies of the past are well behind us and FEW is back to being the enjoyable meeting place of friends old and new.

I must admit to wondering whether the constraints of such a tight timetable serve to increase the stress factor for organisers and delegates alike, and perhaps we should consider the format of an Open Forum and pm AGM. This would facilitate a later start, more relaxing lunch and early enough finish to allow relaxation before the banquet. Perhaps you could let me know your views and the executive will be pleased to investigate it further.

Best wishes for a successful year and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during my time as President.

Sincerely,

Alan Fallows

Minutes of the Special Court Meeting.

held on Saturday 15th September 2012 in the Merchant Adventurers Hall, York to approve an amendment to Item 10b of the FEW Constitution

The President, Alan Fallows opened the meeting by explaining that an anomaly in the wording of the final sentence of Item 10b of the FEW Constitution (as ratified by the 2011 AGM), had necessitated re-wording of that item, and that a vote was necessary to approve this re-wording in order that it can be ratified without delay at today's AGM.

The Hon Secretary, Ron Leek, then read out the proposed re-wording as follows:-

“Any nominee for the office of President, Deputy President, or Vice President, must have served as an Executive Officer of the Association for a minimum of one year within the preceding four years immediately prior to the nomination; and any nominee for other executive office must have senior officer experience within their own Guild, or if no such guild exists, must satisfactorily demonstrate evidence of administrative experience.”

Voting was then conducted in accordance with Rule 14 of the Constitution.

35 FEW Member Gilds were determined as being eligible to vote, meaning that 23 votes or more in support of the amendment would be necessary for the amendment to receive approval.

Votes in support of the amendment were received from 26 gilds.

1 gild voted against the amendment.

No votes were received from 8 gilds.

The amendment was therefore approved, and will go before today's AGM for ratification.

Open Forum.

held on Saturday 15th September 2012 in the Merchant Adventurers Hall, York

The President, Alan Fallows, opened the forum by reviewing the points raised at the 2011 Open Forum. The following topics were then raised by the gathering:-

- 1) Alan Fallows, President. Alan, noting that he had received a letter from Lincoln criticising the fact that individuals on the FEW Executive were holding more than one office, stated that in his reply he had pointed out that without other nominations from the membership – “how about it Lincoln?” – it was absolutely necessary for those few willing individuals to take on more than one office, in order that the FEW Executive could function satisfactorily.
- 2) Howard Crapper, Oxford. Howard asked whether it was politic for an AGM Host Guild to obtain sponsorship in order to defray the weekend's costs. The meeting agreed that costs were becoming a problem for many potential delegates, and following some discussion, no objection was raised to the idea in principle.

- 3) Howard Crapper, Oxford. Howard queried the apparent usage of different names for Freemen, such as Burgesses. It was noted that the 1835 Act changed the old Burgess Rolls to Electoral Rolls, thus removing one way in which someone might become Free. Capt. Jim Evans explained that a Burgess was the owner of a Burgess Plot, and only became Free after holding this for a year and a day.
- 4) John Heslop, Durham. John explained the difficult partnership situation now affecting such things as land registration, which was becoming critical for the Durham Freemen, the partnership authority having changed from the old Durham City Council to the new unitary Durham County Council. He requested conversations after the forum with any delegate who could offer help or advice. A possible solution to such problems is to register any Freemen's lands as Commons. As this is a situation which affects more than just Durham, Emma Reid-Chalmers volunteered to represent our Honorary Counsellor Patrick Talbot QC., as he is generally unavailable, provided he is in agreement. The President will contact him. The President also reminded delegates that he is trying to get a panel together of suitable gild lawyers to act as further advisors to FEW.

Minutes of the 46th Annual General Meeting

of the Association of Freemen of England and Wales

held on Saturday 15th September 2012 in the Merchant Adventurers Hall, York

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

Attendees: Geoff Anderson – Alnwick, Derek Austin – Coventry, Michael Ayres – Leicester, Jane Bailey – Lincoln, John Barden – London, Stewart Bristow – Lincoln, Tony Chettle – Leicester, Alex Christison – Berwick-upon-Tweed, Jenny Connell – Lincoln, Howard Crapper – Oxford, Eric Critchlow – Leicester, John Edwards – Stafford, M.Eland – York, Capt. Jim Evans – Berwick-upon-Tweed, Alan Fallows – Shrewsbury, Robin Folland – Pembroke, Roy Folland – Pembroke, Carole Ford – York, Eileen Forth – York, Tom Gibson – York, Hazel Hague – York, Mervyn Hall – Alnwick, Colin Hardcastle – York & London, Capt. Stephen Healy – Newcastle upon Tyne, R.Helstrip – York, Michael W.Herriott – Berwick-upon-Tweed, John Heslop – Durham, Nick Johnson – Hale, Graeme Knox – Alnwick, Ron Leek – Alcester & London, Carl Mattison – Alnwick, Jimmy Mattison – Alnwick, Tommy Mattison – Alnwick, J.D.McElwee – Durham, Leslie Morgan – London & Hale, Paul Morgan – London, Howard Pate – Chester, Anthony Piddock – Stafford, Michael Pinches – Chester, John Quallington – Shrewsbury, Emma Reid-Chalmers – London, Eileen Reynolds – Coventry, James Shepherd – Alnwick, Robert Shepherd – Alnwick, A.Stephenson – York, B.M.Stephenson – York, Roger Sutton – Henley in Arden, John Tolton – Leicester, Gordon Varndell – London, Stephen White – Grimsby

With the FEW Mace, together with the York Gild Mace, in position in front of the gathering, the meeting was called to order, and the President, Alan Fallows formally opened the proceedings, warmly welcoming everyone present.

Apologies for non-attendance were received from: Richard Bishop, FEW Past President; Charles Davies, Haverfordwest; Tony Gadd, Lincoln; Alfred Healey, Stafford;

Ray Mason, Newcastle-under-Lyme; Denis Nixon, Alnwick; Alan Shelley, FEW Officer Without Portfolio; Brian Simpson, Newcastle-under-Lyme; Ray Spurway, Stafford; R.P.C. Stone, Oxford; William Straughan, Alnwick; John Tolley, Altrincham; Wayne Warlow, London; Dr Mignonne Williams, London; Dr Wyn Williams, London.

The Hon Membership Secretary, Eileen Forth, read out the names of those FEW members who had passed away during the preceding twelve months. The gathering stood in silent tribute.

Following a proposal from the Deputy President, seconded by the Vice President, the minutes of the previous – 45th – AGM held on Saturday 17th September 2011 in Pembroke, were approved as a correct record, and were signed by the President. The Hon Secretary will add the names of Howard Pate and Joe McElwee to the attendee list, although these were not recorded on the attendance register.

Derek Austin, Warden for the South Midlands, pointed out that AGM ratification of officers' expenses as determined by the June 2011 Court, had not been included in the 2011 AGM proceedings, and requested that it should be approved by the present meeting. The Hon Secretary apologised for having omitted it from last year's agenda, and read the relevant extracts from the Court Minutes as follows:- "With the proviso that claiming for attendance at social events is excluded, officers' expenses, where requested, are agreed at 35p per mile for car journeys, or second class rail fare where appropriate, with a maximum meal allowance of £10 per day." The meeting gave its unanimous approval.

The President, Alan Fallows, presented his annual report. A copy is appended. Capt. Stephen Healy queried whether there had been any FEW representation for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The President replied that congratulations had been sent on behalf of FEW and that an acknowledgement had been received. Capt Jim Evans noted that Berwick-upon-Tweed had rung a bell, and Howard Pate reported that Chester had been involved with the "Chester Giants" festivities. For information, it was noted that June 2013 will be the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Coronation. FEW will send congratulations.

The Deputy President, Gordon Varndell, presented his report. Copy appended.
The Vice President, Stephen White, presented his report. Copy appended.

The Vice President introduced each FEW Warden in turn, who reported as follows:-

Warden for the North, Capt Stephen Healy. Copy appended.

Warden for the North East, Colin Hardcastle. Copy appended.

Warden for the North Midlands, John Edwards. Copy appended.

Warden for the South Midlands, Derek Austin. Copy appended.

Warden for the East, Norman Offield. No report, Norman not being present.

Warden for the West, Howard Crapper. Copy appended.

Warden for Wales, Roy Folland. Copy appended.

Warden for the North West, Leslie Morgan. Copy appended. As this was Leslie's final report, following his resignation after 13 years in office, the Vice President had deliberately left Leslie until last, so that he could express to Leslie the most sincere thanks of FEW for all the effort and hard work that he had dedicated to FEW over the years.

These were fully endorsed by the meeting, which acknowledged Leslie's contributions with a rousing round of applause.

The Hon Treasurer, Stephen White presented his annual report and accounts. Copy appended.

The Hon Membership Secretary, Eileen Forth, presented her report. Copy appended. The loss of such a significant number of members resigning membership over the last twelve months prompted the request from Capt. Stephen Healy for some explanation if possible. The Deputy President responded that it would be necessary to consult with the President and Executive before an answer could be determined and disseminated following the meeting. The Executive will categorise the reasons. Thanks were expressed to Eileen for her good works as FEW Welfare Officer.

The Hon Archivist, Alan Fallows, presented his report. Copy appended.

The Hon Editor, Tom Gibson, circulated copies of his report around the meeting. Copy appended.

In the absence of the Officer Without Portfolio, Alan Shelley, his report was read out by the Hon Secretary, Ron Leek. Copy appended.

Colin Hardcastle announced to the meeting that he was withdrawing his nomination for the office of Hon Membership Secretary. It was therefore not necessary to proceed with the election for this office, and Eileen Forth, the other nominee, was confirmed in office.

Only one nomination having been correctly received for each of the other Executive Officer positions, the following are duly confirmed in office for 2012 – 2013:-

President:	Alan Fallows
Deputy President:	Ron Leek
Vice President:	Stephen White
Hon Secretary:	Ron Leek
Hon Treasurer:	Stephen White
Hon Membership Secretary:	Eileen Forth
Hon Archivist:	Alan Fallows
Hon Editor:	Tom Gibson
Officer Without Portfolio:	Alan Shelley

The President noting that his continuation in office had arisen due to the anomaly in the wording of the FEW Constitution as ratified at last year's AGM, which unintentionally prevents Gordon Varndell from standing as President this year, stated that he would be continuing in office for just twelve months, and would then be resigning at the 2013 AGM, thereby allowing – with the hopeful ratification of the rewording of the Constitution later in this AGM – Gordon to be nominated for President, and thus be expected to be elected at that time.

The Vice President announced that with the exception of Leslie Morgan, he was re-appointing all other Wardens in office. Turning to the now three vacant warden

positions, he stated that a potential volunteer was in the pipeline to replace Leslie in the North West, and that he hoped to confirm this shortly. However, he was very pleased to be able to introduce Nick Johnson of Hale who was amongst today's attendees, who he was appointing as Warden for the South East. Nick was greeted with applause. The post of Warden for the South West still remains vacant.

Wardens for 2012 – 2013 are:-

Warden for the North:	Capt. Stephen Healy
Warden for the North East:	Colin Hardcastle
Warden for the North West:	TBA
Warden for the North Midlands:	John Edwards
Warden for the South Midlands:	Derek Austin
Warden for the East:	Norman Offield
Warden for the West:	Howard Crapper
Warden for Wales:	Roy Folland
Warden for the South East:	Nick Johnson
Warden for the South West:	Vacant

Following the Special Court Meeting of this morning, votes were cast and recorded, and the amended wording of Item 10b of the FEW Constitution was formally ratified. Voting was 4987 in favour of the amendment, and 1000 against, constituting 71% of Gilds in favour.

One item only is recorded under Any Other Business. This is a vote of appreciation proposed by Hazel Hague, Master of the York Gild, for the 12 years service on the FEW Executive by Gordon Varndell, who has had to stand down due to the inadvertent and unfortunate Constitution anomaly. The meeting responded with applause.

There being no further business, the President formally declared the AGM closed.

Presidents Report.

This year has been dominated by two items.

The first has been the pleasurable task of attending the swearing-in ceremonies of the first batches of lady freemen in many towns from Durham to Gloucester and being given the opportunity to present a small talk in each case explaining the legality and custom of the Freedom and how recent changes to statute have enabled their applications.

I must admit to having been baffled by the fact that so many of these newly inducted ladies and their families were so lacking in knowledge and understanding of the basic premise of the Hereditary Freedom to the extent that some, having just sworn the oath, were unaware that the Freedom could be handed down to their descendants.

It is the duty of all our gildsmen and women to provide the basic facts of the customs and operation of the Freedom in their towns and cities to existing and prospective members in order to encourage new members and I would urge you all to up-date or

prepare new literature to publicise those facts.

The second item has been the attempt to find a way to hand over the reigns of Presidency to the current Deputy President as intended, and in this endeavour the collective deliberations of myself and the entire executive have been unsuccessful.

The constitutional review instituted last year at Pembroke was so successfully drafted to ensure the protection of FEW from outside interference that we managed to exclude the Deputy President from qualifying to accede to the Presidency despite his having served some 10 years on the Executive.

We have, however, succeeded in making a slight amendment to the constitution without any detriment to its security which will enable Gordon to be nominated for president next year and this vote which will follow later will, I trust, show our human face in rewarding diligence appropriately. The downside, I am afraid is that you will have to suffer my presence in the chair for another year and for that I apologise to you all; especially my wife.

That time will not be wasted as I want our major project for next year to be the modernisation of apprenticeship as a vehicle to encourage new membership and improve our individual local standing in the community and with both Councils and businesses. I will be corresponding initially with the members of our legal panel and later with all Gilds and we will look to a two-way street of ideas both from FEW and your Gilds.

Deputy Presidents Report

This I am afraid is to be my last report as Deputy President or even as an Executive member. The wording of the new Constitution brought in last September precludes me being on the Executive.

If the new proposed wording goes through at this AGM as I hope it will. I trust that you will forgive me for paraphrasing the words ("I will be back")

I have been on the Executive for the last twelve years and I hope that I have given you the members loyal service.

I thank each and everyone of you for your phone calls, letters and emails of support in the last three months.

I also thank all the members and the Guilds for inviting Eileen and myself to your functions and gatherings, we have always had a good time with old friends and new, we have been well looked after by all.

If invited we will continue to support your functions in the future.

Gordon Varndell

Vice President's Report

My report, as Vice President, is quite short since my duties can be easily be split into two distinct and concise areas.

My prime function is to *coordinate* the activities of the Wardens and in this regard I have exchanged communication, by letter, telephone and email, and, in the case of my local warden, had several meetings during the last year.

Sadly, it has been difficult to organise Warden's Meetings in the last year owing to the number of apologies tendered on one of the usual dates – the March Court Meeting – and a reluctance to travel on the suggested date in June when the Executive met, mainly on the grounds of the ever increasing costs of travel, whether it be by private or public transport. If these issues cannot be resolved then we shall have to look at alternatives such as tele-conferencing, or Skype.

I reported last year that I have received an offer, a volunteer, for the position of Warden for the South East and London from a member who had recently joined, however, that fell through.

I have subsequently had a further expression of interest from a Freeman of Hale, a retired police officer living in Essex, (Nick Johnson), and this looks to be far more promising. We also potentially have a successor for Leslie Morgan lined up, a Freeman of Hale, who has been a FEW member for the last 7 years (at least).

My second role is the continuing development of the website, new material being added as it becomes available. Since last year a section has been set up containing illustrations of the covers of the Journals and Newsletters, apart from a few which we don't have in the archive. The most recent covers have a click-through to the content which was published. Lately I have also added in the material which was collected by Alan Robson, originally intended to have been published as "Harry Ward II", the page being illustrated with Guild insignia kindly provided by Tony Sharp.

I would be grateful to receive contributions of details of forthcoming events, either directly from Guilds or through the Wardens, so that the Diary page on the web can be kept informative and up-to-date.

Wardens Reports:

Warden For The North:

Alnwick :

The Clerk to the Council of the Common Council and Freemen of the Borough of Alnwick reports a very quiet summer in terms of Freemen's activity, noting only that their 'Riding the Bounds' in July was somewhat rain affected.

Berwick-upon-Tweed:

The Freemen of Berwick upon Tweed had, their usual programme of events over recent months, being a mixture of formal and social events.

They too had their 'Riding the Bounds' in May and had two swearing-in ceremonies in July, adding substantially to their number of ladies. Their Annual General Meeting comes up in November.

Their Summer outing in June was to Edinburgh, to a production of the musical 'Oliver' and their Annual Supper Dance comes up in December.

Capt. Evans noted for interest that in Berwick upon Tweed, they currently have a Freeman Mayor, that being Councillor John Robertson.

Durham:

The Chairman of the Freemen Wardens of the City of Durham struck a less upbeat note than I have previously encountered in our regular discussions, noting that the recent transition from Durham City Council to the unitary Durham County Council has

been 'less than smooth' with respect to the position of the City's Freemen. No further detail can be given at this~s age because of a number of ongoing issues.

Newcastle upon Tyne:

The Freemen of Newcastle's Annual Church parade took place in May and a 'Summer Spectacular' event took place in August. Swearing-in ceremonies continue on a regular basis and the Michaelmas Guild comes up at the beginning of October.

Warden For The North East:

City Of York Gild

At the annual general meeting of the York Gild, held at Bedern Hall on 29 June, Mrs Karen Colbeck was appointed as Clerk (her details will appear in the next Gazette) in succession to Mr Stephen Hornby who has retired but will be remaining on the Gild Court as archivist.

The outgoing President, Cllr. David Horton (made MBE in the 2012 Birthday Honours List) thanked the Gild for its support of him and his charities during his year as Lord Mayor. He handed over the Presidency to Cllr. Keith Hyman, a former Sheriff of York, who indicated that he hoped to continue his association with the Gild which started during his term as Sheriff. The new Master is Mrs Hazel Hague who takes over from Richard Helstrip.

The following day, in monsoon-like conditions, the new Master held a garden party at her home to greet and meet Freemen from both York and Leicester — her consort is to be Tony Chettle, a Freeman of Leicester — the party was well attended and the food and drink made up for the appalling weather conditions, the garage bar was a stroke of genius!

Freemen In The City Of Ripon

By chance recently, I heard in the media that the City of Ripon had 'Freemen', so I saw my duty as Warden to make inquiries in that City. I began on 25 June with a visit to the Civic Hall.

The Town Clerk could only find one Register dating from 1896 until 2004. The first three, one in each of 1902, 03 and 05 were made under the "Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act 1885". The next entry was under the "Local Government Act 1933" - nine grants including the Royal Engineers in 1949, Her Royal Highness the Princess Mary of Tek [as the then Princess Royal] in 1953 and RAF Topcliffe in 1969. The next batch included the Dean and Chapter of Ripon Cathedral in 1990 and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in 2002. All these were, therefore, honorary Freedoms only.

On 10 July, I visited the County Records office in Northallerton where I was told other records may exist. They certainly did. Microfilm records were shown to me dating back to 1607 and indicated that Freedoms by apprenticeship, patrimony and redemption were prevalent and being granted until circa 1835 — a date in infamy for Freemen! Again some notable entries were found. In 1776 one Richard Haworth was admitted by patrimony as "he deserved, his Freedom on terms agreed and tax paid". In 1813 a spate of Freedoms were granted to "dealers in spirituous liquors" including Marmaduke Spooner said to be a friend to all!!

I also saw a letter from the Town Clerk of 1811 to ten traders fining each of them the sum of £5 for trading without being a Freeman; they were subsequently entered as

Freemen on payment of these fines AND a further sum. of £2 - 16s - 7d each.

In 1817, the Town Clerk imposed fines upon a number of traders for "bad trading" ranging from £8 - 16s - 8d to £13 - 16s — 8d and ordered that the Sergeant at Mace and His Constables collect the fines "forthwith". Costs of admission were, in 1811, by birthright £1-16s-8d and by redemption £2-16s-7d.

Warden For The North Midlands:

Bridgnorth Guild reports its activities in the journal, but it is interesting to note that they are now admitting lady freemen to their ranks. Shrewsbury kindly invites me to a number of their gatherings, but sadly they always seem to clash with other commitments. OK, I am involved in too many things! Derby, I hear little about, although I have to admit that I am not constantly asking, because I see my role as being there if guilds want me, not as an intruder if they don't. Newcastle comes to life in March when there is a pay-out, but the number of active members is quite small. I would like to be able to invite guilds to joint events, but so far even that has been a fraught subject.

That leaves me with my own guild at Stafford, where there has been quite a lot of activity, some good and some bad. Our major claim to fame recently has been our ability to close venues booked for our annual dinner. As prices have risen at hotels and restaurants, so the attendance has declined, so we thought that if we selected a pub with a good reputation for food that would be satisfactory. "Let's go to the Hand & Cleaver" — "It has just shut down." — "OK, we will go to the Nesbit" — "it has just shut down." - "The Front Room looks good we will go there" — "The chef has left and they are not doing dinners" - "The Hand and Cleaver has re-opened and they have given us menus and dates" — When we get there to discuss details, the place is boarded up! And so it goes on. The latest idea is a village hall with caterers and 'bring your own drinks'. Watch this space!

On a more positive note the informal lunches and pub skittles nights have proved popular, but the barbecue, which lots of people wanted, was only actually supported by four members. Quite a few attended the visit to a Catholic training college at Oscott, where one of our members has installed the impressive woodwork of their new library. It was very interesting, but we should have checked how long the service would take at the end!

Sadly, there were insufficient applicants to make a Freeman's Court viable this year, but we hear that more have applied recently. This takes me on to the proposed changes to our rules of admission.

We have at last got an appointment with the borough council legal people, (only a year since we asked)! The inclusion of ladies by heredity is no problem, but the servitude rules certainly are. Things change so rapidly: 'NVQ levels', 'City & Guilds', 'modern apprenticeships', 'NESS qualifications, etc. How do you compare a plumber or mechanic to a programmer or even a beauty therapist? It's a minefield. So we are proposing not define them absolutely, but agree to assess the qualification and the 'practising of the skills within the borough' on an on-going basis. Between the guild and the council we will try to maintain the spirit, if not the letter of the old servitude traditions. As for getting approval of all the freemen !

Our major headache has been with our allotment lands, our only real asset. As trustees, you think that a monthly meeting should be no problem, but when you are faced with: anonymous letters, people burying asbestos on their plots, gardeners threatening

each other physically or with legal actions, even complaints that someone flew a 'skull and crossbones' on the jubilee day; you wonder why you bother. I do not know what happens if all the trustees resign and ! hope I do not have to find out, but being a Freeman of Stafford is proving more complex than I imagined.

On a different sad/happy note; it was good to be able to visit, in his hospital bed, one of our seriously ill freemen, who has done yeoman service for many years. I went to present him with the first of our 'recognition certificates' and to pin one of our new 'gold' badges to his pyjamas. A minor gesture, but that way of simply saying "thank you" from his fellow freemen gave a major boost to his morale, (and indeed mine!)

Warden for the South Midlands:

Coventry Freeman's Guild opened their medieval Guild Room to the public last weekend as part of the national Heritage Open Days initiative. I do recommend other Guilds and Court Leets consider this annual initiative, as a means of promoting our heritage and values to the local community and visitors from farther afield. Also last week the annual Skittles and Supper event at Barnacle village hall saw over 70 entries, and whilst a Coventry team was victorious, Leicester took the individuals highest score trophy. This is just one of several Freeman's social events in Coventry and Leicester.

Leicester Freeman's Gild have some new faces on their Court after the sad loss of their very active Chamberlain Roger Allen. Record numbers of new lady Freeman are continuing to be admitted at Civic ceremonies. On 7th July their Gild played host to visiting Freeman from Bridgenorth, Gloucester, Oxford and Shrewsbury at their Freeman's Holt complex – another good example of interguild social events.

Northampton Freeman's Guild have seen 17 ladies admitted as Freeman since last October, a significant increase in total numbers. The sixth annual Charity Dinner was held in May, and raised useful sums for the Mayor's charities.

Alcester Court Leet has had a very successful year so far, with their Diamond Jubilee Street Party, and an Olympic themed street party, filling the High Street, and attracting coverage from TV and national newspapers. Alcester is a good example of a progressive Court Leet: besides maintaining traditional heritage functions they organise events for public participation; and also raise good sums for local charities. The High Bailiff Steve Payne has also found time to write a column for the FEW Journal – a first for at least 9 years!

Warwick Court Leets big event this year was supporting the Town Freedom Ceremony for Kineton Army Station, who provide the bomb disposal teams for the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. The Lord of the Leet, in her capacity as Town Mayor presented the Freedom scroll at a Warwick Castle parade, before the fixed bayonet march through the town behind the band of the Parachute Regiment.

Henley-in-Arden Court Leet have marked the Diamond Jubilee by renaming their six year Guildhall garden project as 'Jubilee Garden'. It is hoped that planning permission for a new tenant for the Guildhall ground floor will be achieved soon, to generate income for essential Guildhall maintenance.

Warden For The West:

The area has been relatively quiet since my last report in March. Jubilee celebrations have been prevalent and thoroughly enjoyed. In Oxford, the Lord Lieutenant, Tim Stevenson and the Dean of Christ Church organised a magnificent Cathedral Service of Celebration. People from all walks of life and communities were invited. I was very pleased to represent the Freemen of the City.

It was a hot sunny day in late May. If only the sunshine and warmth could have lasted throughout the Jubilee weekend.

Trumpets signalled the arrival of Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant. The Service began with the wonderful Cathedral Choir in absolute perfection. During the third Hymn, pictures of the Queen's reign were shown on the numerous television monitors. At prayers, the Tom Tower Bell was tolled sixty times to signify the occasion. Before we sang the National Anthem, groups of students released red white and blue helium filled balloons along the length of the Nave.

At the close of the Service the Lord Lieutenant led Three Cheers for Her Majesty. It's at times like this when I wish all Freemen had a hat - which I could throw in the air!

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. The land was originally given by King Athelstan to the Freemen of Malmesbury. I do hope you will be able to meet members of the Malmesbury Guild at next year's AGM in Oxford.

The Freemen of Gloucester, Bridgenorth and Oxford all met in Leicester at Freemen's Holt in July. We are all indebted to the Freemen of Leicester for a special visit and tour of this modern iconic and relaxing Freemen's property. The hospitality was just outstanding. Our admiration extends to John Tolland for allowing us to look inside his personal Freemen's Holt home.

I have attended two events this week. A dawn round up of cattle on Oxford Port Meadow with the Sheriff of the City, concluded with 250 head of livestock impounded until the legal graziers reclaimed them. Freemen have grazing rights on the historic meadow and were pleased to help out with this task.

Freemen of Oxford also attended a memorial ceremony to mark one hundred years since an air crash killed two airman as they attempted to land at the temporary flying school established on Port Meadow. This was one of the earliest military air crashes in this country and shocked the population of Oxford at the time. Over 2000 residents contributed to the plaque erected in the following year. The Lord Mayor, accompanied by Air Marshall Stonor and the Royal Air Force Association, laid a wreath on Airmans Bridge.

Warden for Wales Report:

The Gild of Freemen of Pembroke:

The Gild was invited to attend the Remembrance Service at Fresh Water West and was represented by members of the Gild; the Master laid a wreath on their behalf.

On Saturday the 19th of May, the Master represented the Gild at the Mayor Making Ceremony which was held in the Chamber of Pembroke Town Council and was followed

by the Mayoral luncheon. The Master also attended the Mayoral Civic Service the following day which was held at St. Michael's Church, Pembroke. The Master was invited to and attended the Mayoral Reception and Civic Awards Ceremony which held at Pembroke Town Hall on the 25th May.

The passing of Mr. Malcolm Green MBE and Mr. L. C. Thomas is mentioned in the Haverfordwest report, both were FEW members. In both cases the funerals were attended by the Warden for Wales, representing the FEW.

A Freeman's Court was held on the 26th July in the Chamber of Pembroke Town Council at which the new constitution was discussed and will now be printed in book form and will go before the AGM for acceptance, which takes place on the 25th October. The Annual Service and Luncheon will take place on Sunday 18th November, at the Cleddau Bridge Hotel; the guest preacher will be the Rt. Revd John Saxby, former Bishop of Lincoln.

The Admission of Freeman Ceremony takes place in the Chamber of Pembroke Town Hall on the 21st September, when three Ladies will be enrolled as Freeman of Pembroke.

The setting up of a Gild of Freeman of the City of Swansea:

I have not received an update from Mr. David Rosser-Owen; it would seem that his endeavour to set up a Gild has fallen by the wayside.

The Gild of Freeman of Llantrisant

The Annual Court Leet was held on Friday 11th May 2012 where applications for the enrolment unto the Freeman's Roll were considered. There were 22 new Freeman enrolled at the Court Lee, of which two Australian, One Canadian and one American were enrolled. As is usual the Annual Court Leet Dinner was held at the Three Saints Hotel, Llantrisant, which was a great success, enjoyed by all.

Haverfordwest Gild of Freeman

The Haverfordwest Gild of Freeman has suffered a sad double loss by the deaths of their immediate-past Master Mr. Malcolm Green MBE and the past Deputy Master Mr. Lewis Thomas within three weeks of each other. Mr. Green Master of the Gild for 14 years until his retirement last year, passed away on June 30th and Mr. Thomas on July 25th, their demise being a great loss to the community. They were both Heredity Freeman. Mr. Green, who was 82, was Managing Director of Green's Motors, the long-established motor dealers, repairers and one time bus operators founded over 150 years ago. His death was sudden and unexpected as it followed a routine surgical procedure at Witybush Hospital when he developed an unfortunate infection to which he swiftly succumbed. Mr. Green, an identical twin, whose brother Ralph predeceased him many years ago, had been a leading figure in the life of Pembrokeshire for well over half a century. Having run the firms enterprisers in Haverfordwest and Pembroke, he had been ever ready to give charitable and voluntary organisations the benefit of his skilled leadership. He presided over the successful setting up of the Town Museum and also over Pembrokeshire's Noah's Ark appeal, which broke Welsh records in the amount raised. He also led the successful celebration of the town's 900th Anniversary two years ago, co-ordinating the many events and projects featured during the year. A former High Sheriff of Pembrokeshire, he has been Master of the Haverfordwest Gild since 1997, when he followed his cousin, the late

Colonel John F. Green, into the chair. Left to mourn are his wife Janet, sons Martin and John, their families and a host of friends.

Mr. Lewis Cyril Thomas (known universally as Elsie after his initials) was 89 and a retired classics master at Haverfordwest Grammar School, having shown earlier academic brilliance as a pupil there, returning from Oxford with a first class MA when in his early twenties. He was a Warden of the Gild Court for most of his adult life and was also a distinguished Freemason, respected throughout the province for his teaching among the Brethren. He was also a leading figure, Deputy President and latterly President of the Grammar School Old Boys Association. He leaves to mourn his wife Betty, sons Richard and William and grand children. Robed Freemen and Wardens attended both funerals at St. Martin's and St. David's churches, and also acted as Bearers. Both men will be sorely missed in their home town.(Derek Rees)

Warden For The North West:

In giving my final report as Warden for North West England, a position which I have been proud to hold since I was appointed at the AGM held in Altrincham in 1999, I feel that I must concentrate on the events which took place in Preston when our Association was invited to take place in the Preston Guild, and which will next take place in the year 2032.

I contacted Preston City Council in 2009 explaining our Association and requested that copies of our reports be forwarded by our Editor, and finally on Sunday 2nd September the great day arrived, when at Preston Minster the Guild Mayor (Councillor Carl Crompton) held his Divine Service at which the preacher was His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York, the Most Reverend and Honourable John Sentamu. Amongst those in the procession mention must be made of the High Sheriff, the Bishop of Blackburn; and the Recorder of Preston, His Honour Judge Anthony Russell QC. Afterwards, we processed through Preston, back to the Guildhall where a luncheon was enjoyed. In the afternoon an Ecumenical Service was held inside a marquee in Avenham Park, attended by the Archbishop of York; the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster; along with luminaries from all the differing Christian churches; and was introduced by Aled Jones in the presence of a congregation of some 3000 people.

Monday 3rd September was the major event to be held, namely the Guild Court, at which Freemen Burgesses had their names called out by the Chief Executive of Preston City Council, and who then had to bow to signify that they wished to renew their Right of Freedom, of or within the Borough of Preston. Amongst the first to be called, were Edward Richard William Stanley of Knowsley, 19th Earl of Derby; Ralph John Assheton of Downham Hall, Clitheroe, The Rt Hon Lord Clitheroe, Peer of the Realm; Richard Bernard Cuthbert de Hoghton of Hoghton Tower, Baronet; and Thomas Woodcock of Slaidburn, Garter King of Arms. Chatting to Mr Woodcock during the reception after the Court had been held, he told me that his ancestor had originally been admitted a Freeman at the Guild of 1612, but as far as he was concerned, his connection was modern when compared to the families of Assheton and de Hoghton; indeed Sir Bernard de Hoghton can claim an unbroken link back to the earliest guild roll of 1397, whilst the Earl of Derby's connections date back to 1542.

The Clerk to the Court Guild read a recital of the Royal Charters dating back to the original charter of 1179, when King Henry II granted to the Burgesses of Preston the

Liberties and free customs granted to the Burgesses of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Afterwards a reception was held, following which we all went our separate ways. Paul and I decided to watch the Churches Guild Procession from outside the Harris Museum. Previous Guild processions were usually in each denomination, Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Free Churches, but this year the procession was ecumenically based, and the theme was "The Living Christ", and was divided into various sections, "The Resurrection"; "Christ of the Cosmos"; Jesus of Nazareth, Who was He?"; "What did he do?"; "What did he say?"; "The Holy Spirit"; "The Body of Christ"; The Living Christ in People"; and finally "Christ in the City". The procession which consisted of some 75 churches and several hundred participants on beautifully decorated floats, took over one and a half hours to pass. Light relief was evident from the outset, when in front of the stand in which Sir Bernard de Hoghton was seated, a horse ridden by a superbly turned out mounted police lady, decided to relieve itself of some good garden manure. As a result of this, we all had a laugh to see if anyone did tread in this unwanted manure. Fortunately, no one did, and it was quickly removed.

Needless to say the City dust cart brought up the rear, and one wag was heard to shout "Now don't be late for my rubbish tomorrow". For Paul and I, this was a wonderful end to a unique occasion in our lives, and I am proud of the fact that in my own small way, I got our Association involved with the Preston Guild for the very first time, and this will be my own legacy to the Association of Freemen of England and Wales.

I have passed over to the Association's archives, the programme relating to the Church Service, as well as the Guild Court, and hope that we will once again be represented at the next Guild due to be held on the Monday following upon the Feast of the Decollation of St John the Baptist 2032 — in other words, the Monday following the 29th August.

In conclusion, I must thank each and everyone for giving me much assistance during the tenure of my office. I will not name names, but you all know to whom I refer. It has been a great joy to represent the Association, and I have already mentioned to guilds that I will continue to support them wherever I can. I have made some wonderful friends, and if I can claim to have persuaded our Executive to produce robes for Wardens with burgundy facings, then I am happy that this will continue long after I have joined our friends Harry Ward, John Kenyon, Maurice Pickering, and Philip Bowman, who are now immortalised in that hymn:

"City of God, how broad and far
Outstretched thy walls sublime.
Thy true and chartered Freemen are
Of every age and clime."

My lasting hope is that the Association will now be represented at the future Preston Guilds of 2032, 2052, 2072..... The precedent has now been made, and no doubt copies of our Newsletters can be posted to Preston City Council — "To keep the pot warm!"

Again fellow Freemen and Ladies, my sincere thanks for having the confidence in appointing me Warden in 1999. I trust I have not let you down!

Treasurers Report.

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, 17th September 2005 and 17th September 2011. The Association was registered as a Charity, with Registration Number 293536, on 29th January 1986.

ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – 2011/2012 (TRUSTEES)

President	- Mr A G Fallows
Deputy President	- Mr G A Vardell (also Data Control Manager)
Vice President	- Mr S P White
Immediate Past President	- Mr C Hardcastle
Honorary Archivist	- Mr A G Fallows
Honorary Journal Editor	- Mr T Gibson
Honorary Membership Secretary	- Ms E Forth
Honorary Secretary	- Mr R E Leek
Honorary Treasurer	- Mr S P White
Officer without Portfolio	- Mr A Shelley
Custodian Trustees	- Capt J Evans (Chairman)
	- Mr A Robson
	- Vacant position
	- Mr S P White (as Hon Treasurer)

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
3 Beech Close
Oversley Green
Alcester
Warwick
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 are 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 31st March 2012.

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

During the year the Association has successfully implemented a comprehensive review of its Constitution which was unanimously accepted at the 2011 AGM in Pembroke. This review has provided a basis upon which the Association can now welcome into membership associated organizations and individuals who share its aims and ideals and wish to assist in providing information and education regarding the Freedom to a wider audience amongst both Freemen and the general public.

To the same end the Association has further developed its website to the extent that a wealth of information regarding the history of the Freedom and modern interpretations of its current position in society are available for access to all interested parties.

The installation of equality of admission to the Freedom has been further established with advice and educational talks being provided by the President on the occasions of the admission of new Lady Freemen in various towns and cities. Virtually all towns have now enrolled female descendants of Freemen and the custom is considered to be established to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The Association stands ready to promote the revitalisation of admission through apprenticeship and recognizes that this method, by providing access to the Freedom to new members outside the current freemen families is vital in maintaining contact with modern society and the support of local authorities.

The question of registration of Freemen's Rights under the Land Registration Act has continued and modern legal opinion sought and received. The current thinking precluded the registration of over-riding interests and the Association now advises members regarding the concept of protection of public amenity land under the auspices of Commons Registration.

Officers and Wardens continue to attend functions to assist and advise Gilds and their guests on matters appertaining to the Freedom

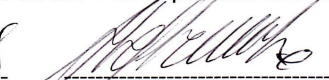
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES AND AFFAIRS

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 14th September 2012 and signed on their behalf by:



Alan G Fallows
FEW President



Stephen P. White
FEW Honorary Treasurer



Capt James Evans
Chairman of Trustees

Notes To The Accounts

1. Subscriptions

Subscriptions are as they are received in the year; arrears may occur one year and made up the next. The increase in subscription rate from £8 to £10 has caught many members out. The Membership Secretary will report further on this subject.

2. Donations to Funds

Any payment received over £10 is applied to the Legal or Regalia Fund as directed.

3. Sales

The total income has reduced, compared to 2010/11, particularly since we sold no robes in the year. Income from other items have varied, as indicated by the figures.

4. Interest Received

Interest on our COIF Account has increased from 0.671 % to 0.841% which is still low, but better than base rate, and may be regarded as a secure investment.

5. Income Tax Recovered

Gift Aid is claimed on all payments received under the Scheme, including the basic subscription. (Transitional Relief was received for the last time last year).

6. Administrative Expenses

This includes postage, stationery, printing and on-going website hosting costs.

7. Purchases

This is in regard to purchases for stock items for sale of which there were none.

8. Journal

Three Journals were produced each period (total 104 pages in 2011, 76 pages in 2012). Economies have been made in terms of number distributed but we have had significant increases in printing and postage.

9. Annual General Meetings

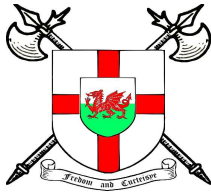
Costs include those directly incurred by FEW and those reimbursed to Hosts. Those shown for previous AGM's are the final costs, total costs for 2012 not yet known, the £500 indicated is the standard advance made to Guilds to assist with deposits.

10. Legal & Regalia Expenses

There were no legal expenses in the year.

11. Court & Officers Meetings

Costs have been broadly in line with those incurred in 2010/11.



Freemen of England & Wales

An Association of Freemen and Guilds in England and Wales

Patron: The Right Honourable, the Earl Bathurst

July to March

INCOME

EXPENDITURE

<u>2010/11</u>	<u>2011/12</u>	<u>2010/11</u>	<u>2011/12</u>
£	£	£	£
Note 1			
<u>SUBSCRIPTIONS</u>			
1,685.00 Individual	1,772.00	99.86 Postage	44.90
<u>1,240.00</u> Guilds	<u>665.00</u>	- Telephone	-
<u>2,925.00</u>	<u>2,437.00</u>	- Insurance (provision only made)	-
Annual Subscriptions are taken at £10.00 for each individual and the set level for Guilds. Any donation above this amount is, in the absence of any other instructions split equally between the Legal and Regalia Funds			
Note 2			
<u>DONATIONS TO:-</u>			
138.00 General Fund	95.00	3.75 Archives	-
350.50 Legal Fund	112.00	135.34 Stationery	133.65
<u>140.50</u> Regalia Fund	<u>103.00</u>	174.95 Printing/photocopying	78.94
<u>629.00</u>	<u>310.00</u>	- Website	240.00
Note 3			
<u>SALES</u>			
- Robes	50.00	- Other	70.00
100.50 Ties	27.60	<u>448.90</u>	<u>567.49</u>
107.50 Members Medallions	68.00	Note 6	
266.00 Robe badges	21.90	<u>ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES</u>	
57.00 Blazer badges	-	Note 7	
66.30 Lapel badges	12.70	<u>PURCHASES</u>	
25.00 Wall plaques	57.00	138.00 Robes	-
14.50 Stickers	5.10	- Ties	-
30.00 Headsquares	26.40	601.89 Members Medallions	-
15.00 Books	-	- Robe Badges	-
28.50 Christmas Cards	8.00	- Blazer badges	-
30.00 Pens	10.50	- Lapel badges	-
15.00 Membership Wallets	-	- Wall Plaques	-
- "The Guilds" - M E Pickering	22.00	- Pens	-
20.00 Aspects of the Freedom	1.75	- Membership Wallets	-
7.50 Membership Certificates	-	<u>739.89</u>	-
<u>782.80</u>	<u>310.95</u>	Note 8	
<u>INTEREST RECEIVED</u>			
216.91 COIF Deposit A/c	290.47	<u>JOURNAL (3 editions in period)</u>	
0.56 NatWest Reserve A/c	0.63	2,089.00 Production	1,675.00
0.14 Gift Aid Tax Refund	0.20	<u>1,106.52</u> Postage/distribution	<u>882.62</u>
<u>200.00</u> Compensation from NatWest	-	<u>3,195.52</u>	<u>2,557.62</u>
<u>417.61</u>	<u>291.30</u>	Note 9	
<u>INCOME TAX RECOVERED</u>			
516.13 Re: Gift Aid Declarations 2010/2011	0.23	<u>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS</u>	
0.00 Re: Gift Aid Declarations 2011/2012	454.11	- 2009 ~ Stafford	-
<u>516.13</u>	<u>454.34</u>	269.04 2010 ~ Berwick	-
Note 4			
<u>LEGAL & REGALIA EXPENSES</u>			
216.91	290.47	- 2011 ~ Pembroke	162.67
0.56	0.63	500.00 2012 ~ York	-
0.14	0.20	<u>769.04</u>	<u>162.67</u>
<u>200.00</u>	-	Note 10	
<u>417.61</u>	<u>291.30</u>	<u>COURT & OFFICERS' MEETINGS</u>	
Note 5			
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>			
<u>5,270.54</u>	<u>3,803.59</u>	- Court Meeting Room Hire	-
Note 6			
<u>LEGAL & REGALIA EXPENSES</u>			
516.13	454.11	124.30 Catering - Nett	85.59
<u>516.13</u>	<u>454.34</u>	5.00 Officers' Meeting Expenses	1.20
Note 7			
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>			
<u>5,270.54</u>	<u>3,803.59</u>	- President's Expenses	-
Note 8			
<u>LEGAL & REGALIA EXPENSES</u>			
1,474.35	290.47	-1,486.46 SURPLUS FOR YEAR	429.02
-	0.63	-320.85 Less transfer to Designated Funds	934.50
0.14	0.20	<u>-1,165.61</u> AVAILABLE SURPLUS	<u>-505.48</u>
<u>200.00</u>	-	Note 9	
<u>417.61</u>	<u>291.30</u>	<u>COURT & OFFICERS' MEETINGS</u>	
Note 10			
<u>LEGAL & REGALIA EXPENSES</u>			
216.91	290.47	- Court Meeting Room Hire	-
0.56	0.63	124.30 Catering - Nett	85.59
0.14	0.20	5.00 Officers' Meeting Expenses	1.20
<u>200.00</u>	-	- President's Expenses	-
<u>417.61</u>	<u>291.30</u>	<u>129.30</u>	<u>86.79</u>
Note 11			
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>			
<u>5,270.54</u>	<u>3,803.59</u>	<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	
Note 12			
<u>LEGAL & REGALIA EXPENSES</u>			
1,474.35	290.47	-1,486.46 SURPLUS FOR YEAR	429.02
-	0.63	-320.85 Less transfer to Designated Funds	934.50
0.14	0.20	<u>-1,165.61</u> AVAILABLE SURPLUS	<u>-505.48</u>
<u>200.00</u>	-	Note 13	
<u>417.61</u>	<u>291.30</u>	<u>COURT & OFFICERS' MEETINGS</u>	

MOVEMENT OF DESIGNATED FUNDS - 2010/11 to 2011/12

	2010/11	2011/12
Legal Fund		
Balance brought forward, 1st July	3,050.54	2,047.44
Donations received	437.00	112.00
Tax recovered	34.25	26.50
Addnl Tax recovered	-	-
LESS: Costs Incurred	- 1,474.35	-
Balance at 31st March	2,047.44	2,185.94
Regalia Fund		
Balance brought forward, 1st July	709.83	971.28
Donations received	233.20	103.00
Tax recovered	28.25	28.00
Addnl Tax recovered	-	-
LESS: Purchases made	-	-
Balance at 31st March	971.28	1,102.28
Regalia Self-Insurance Fund		
Balance brought forward, 1st July	2,128.00	2,728.00
Amount Provided	600.00	665.00
Balance at 31st March	2,728.00	3,393.00
TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS	5,746.72	6,681.22

FREEMEN OF ENGLAND AND WALES

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES AS AT THE FINANCIAL YEAR END

	30.6.2011	31.3.2012
Monetary Assets		
GENERAL PURPOSE FUND		
National Westminster Bank - Current A/C	911.91	67.09
National Westminster Bank - Reserve A/C	0.71	121.34
COIF Charity Deposit Fund	46,000.00	46,000.00
	<u>46,912.62</u>	<u>46,188.43</u>
DESIGNATED FUNDS		
National Westminster Bank - Current A/C	246.72	46.72
National Westminster Bank - Reserve A/C	1,500.00	2,580.00
COIF Charity Deposit Fund	4,000.00	4,000.00
	<u>5,746.72</u>	<u>6,626.72</u>
DEBTORS / CREDITORS		
Amounts owed to FEW at 30th June/31st March	846.73	728.37
LESS: Amounts owed by FEW at 30th June/31st March	-448.18	-56.61
TOTAL	<u>53,057.89</u>	<u>53,486.91</u>
Other Assets		
Stocks of resale items (cost, not realisable value)	1,894.56	1,692.19
Officers' regalia (insured value)	12,020.00	13,300.00
Other Assets	947.00	1,055.00
TOTAL	<u>14,861.56</u>	<u>16,047.19</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>67,919.45</u>	<u>69,534.10</u>

Liabilities

Short Term

At 31st March 2012, the only short term commitments were in connection with usual ongoing transactions such as unrepresented cheques and purchase of Regalia.

Long Term

At 31st March 2012, the Officers of the Association have not made any long term commitments.

Hon. Membership Secretary Report.

Guilds

Currently we have 40 Guilds on the books with five Guilds in Arrears

Individual Membership

The current membership stands at 362. This has dropped considerably since the last report.

Since September 2011

We have had 8 individual new members and 1 Associate member

7 members that we know of have died

28 members have resigned (26 of those since June 2012)

18 Have been deleted for non payment of subscriptions

Current payments

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

The Breakdown

Currently twelve members are in arrears. All these I will say are from April 2012

Hon. Archivists Report

This has been a very quiet year for the archives with little or no call upon them for information but the addition of several items from the wardens especially relating to Kingston-upon-Hull and Preston Guild.

I have taken the opportunity to spend some FEW reserves on the addition of two metal filing cabinets to enable the better organization of Gild material and protection of some text books. This re-organization has yet to be completed; in fact to be truthful it has yet to be started but it will be completed during the year.

I look forward to receipt of any material that Gilds are able to furnish especially in relation to the local customs regarding apprenticeship in line with this years project on modernisation.

Hon. Editors Report.

The past four issues have seen the Journals appearance evolve, at least on the outside. It has also seen both extremes within the number of contributions for them. I had to hold articles over from issue 168 to 169, however the current issue, no.171, was 8 pages thinner than usual due to lack of submissions, though I believe the Hon. Treasurer may well have been relieved at the reduced costs for that edition.

That said I suspect issue 172, which you should be receiving during October, will be full of the business and events of this weekend with space for other items limited. I will do my best to include as much of what is sent to me as possible of course, but some may need to be held over to the next issue. Please note anything submitted should be proof read ready for publication before they are sent, I do use a spell checker as items are added, but as with all these things it is not fool proof.

I am pleased to continue as your editor under the same understanding as the last three years and look forward to receiving articles from you to include in our Journal.

Officer Without Portfolio.

Firstly, I submit my apologies for being unable to attend the meeting. Earlier in the year, I reported that generally matters concerning Freeman's property and status were relatively quiet.

At that time, the government had given assurances that proposed new planning regulations, then pending, would not affect the Green Belt, town commons or registered open spaces.

However, there are further changes afoot again threatening such land areas, jealously guarded, but seen by some authorities as places for development. In the current

climate of a straitened national economy, the developers are lobbying to build in such spaces close by towns. I would urge all gilds and freemen's associations with connections to land, to be especially vigilant.

On the subject of freemen in general and particularly of FEW membership, perhaps as much consideration must be given toward the retention of 'freedom' and the recruitment of member freemen. Perhaps the image of 'Freedom' in the modern age requires some attention in that it can be more inclusive within the present democratic society.

To this end, particularly, I am supporting the President in his drive to promote apprenticeships and to bring a modern approach to 'admission to freedom by servitude'. We have yet to produce suitable criteria and test an updated process that may allow some relaxation of the rigid requirements of outdated regulation.

A Plea For Help From The President.

A complaint was registered this year by a member Gild that some members of the executive are having to cover more than one post each.

This situation may (in some way) have arisen of our own making, but not of our choice.

When times are fraught and arguments arise members with strong feelings will come forward to defend their cause by taking office. Unfortunately, we have eliminated these arguments and are working in harmony, so members may see no need to upset the status quo and thus feel relaxed with our performance.

As explained at the AGM, the executive officers are all busy outside FEW too and it is our wish that the duties should be shared by representatives of as many diverse Gilds as possible.

So my plea is this. Seek a place on the executive. The duties are not onerous and providing you can satisfy the requirements of the constitution by showing a knowledge of the Freedom and previous involvement with your local Gild (if there is one), we would be delighted to welcome your input, ideas and help. We have a good friendly team and you could make it even better.

Hon Secretary's Notices.

Gilds are requested to consider volunteering to act as hosts for future Court and Executive Meetings to be held on a suitable Saturday each year in March. Executive Meetings start at 11.00am and finish at 1.00pm, and Court Meetings are from 2.00pm until 4.00pm. The requirement is not onerous, the principal need being a room capable of seating around 50 to 60 people – attendances rarely exceed these numbers. A light luncheon for the Executive is the only other necessity. Costs will be covered by the Association.

The first need is for a Member Gild to offer to host the Executive and Court Meetings scheduled for March 2013. Please contact me with your offer. I will be happy to answer any queries.

Ronald E. Leek. Hon Secretary.

© The Freemen of England and Wales Journal, Annual Record, Gazette and Guilds Directory (ISSN1749-4095) incorporating the Newsletter (ISSN1465-8755) in continuous series, is distributed four times a year in October, February, April and July and is published by the Freemen of England and Wales (regd Charity 293536) and hereby asserts its copyright. FEWJ 172.

Website: <http://www.freemen-few.org.uk>

Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Hon. Editor, F.E.W. Court or Executive.

Cover picture: Robed AGM Delegates on the steps of Merchant Adventurers Hall, York.
Photograph courtesy of Tony Neal.

Hon. Editor: Tom Gibson, Freeman of York. All correspondence, enquiries as to advertising and circulation (including requests for additional copies) should be addressed to:

Mr. T. Gibson.
Hon. Editor F.E.W Journal.
79 Tang Hall Lane.
York. YO31 0SZ
Email: thomasg624@aol.com
Tel. No. 01904 423153

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Please note the closing date for the editor to receive items for the next issue (No. 173) is the 18/1/13.

Any items submitted for this issue (172) but not included for reasons of space shall be held over to the next issue, unless updated versions are received by the editor.

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