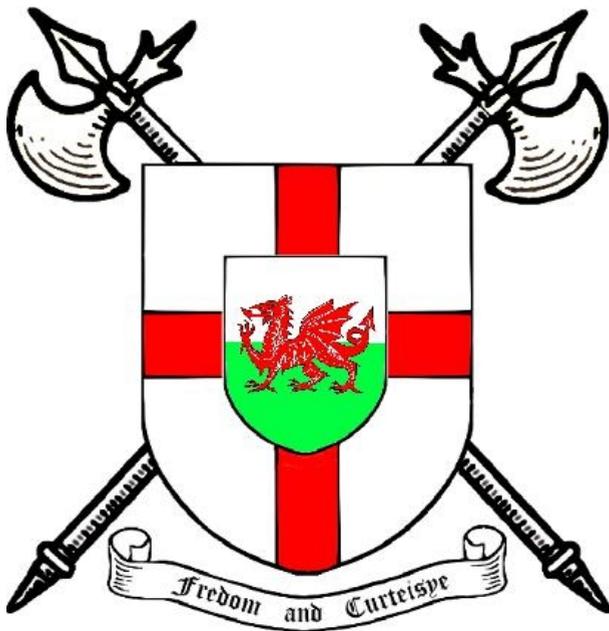


*Freemen of  
England and Wales.*



*Journal, issue no. 161: February  
2010.*

*With Compliments.*

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## *Presidents Message.*

Let me begin, please, by offering to you all a belated 'happy new year' for 2010 with the hope that your desires and wishes will all come to fruition.

This year will see many changes in F.E.W. At our AGM in September, all our Officer posts will be subject to elections. I hope, however, that many of the current post-holders will be re-elected without opposition as they have all served with distinction and conviction.

Notwithstanding this, it is time for each of us to discuss in our Guilds possible nominations for Officers for the year 2010/2011 - nomination forms appear elsewhere in this Journal. A list of nominations will be published in time for mandating meetings to take place in your Guilds so that your delegate can properly cast your votes at the AGM in Berwick-on-Tweed.

This year also sees the end of my Presidency, which I am sure will be welcomed by some, but whatever happens and whoever assumes the mantle, the great Empire that is FEW will, and must, continue. As Nostradamus wrote in his Quatrain 10/32:

"The Great Empire will continue, year by year  
One man will take it from the others  
His reign will be short  
He will last for two years only"

I would, however, counsel prospective Officers with the advice given to me many years ago at promotion interviews that I attended:

"Always be nice to people as you go up a ladder,  
you will meet them as you come down again"

Finally, and I make no apology for yet another quotation, we must all work together to finish the work that FEW stands for, and we must do so with respect for all our separate beliefs and allowing for our many faults. The words of President Lincoln in his second inaugural address of March 4th 1865 were:

"With malice toward none; with charity for all;  
With firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the Right,  
Let us strive on to finish the work we are in".

CH

P

13/01/10

# *News from the Gilds.*

## **Warwick Court Leet**

by Roger Higgins Bailiff Warwick Court Leet.

The Annual Warwick Court Leet meeting was held in the Court House, attended by the Mayor of Warwick, Cllr Peggy Bennet, representing the Lords of the Leet. Opening the Court with due ceremony, she welcomed the distinguished guests, High Bailiffs of the neighbouring Courts Leet of Alcester, Bromsgrove and Henly in Arden, also the Area Warden of the Freemen of England and Wales.

Highlight of the meeting was to congratulate the retiring Court Bailiff Michael Honnoraty and his consort Janet for so vigorously upholding the historic traditions of the Court Leet during his four years in office. He has been a great ambassador, both for the Court Leet and for Warwick, having attended many Warwick civic functions and meetings of many other Courts Leet and Freemen of England and Wales. To mark the occasion, he was presented with cut glass goblets etched with the Warwick Court Leet crest.

The new Bailiff, Roger Higgins, was duly sworn in and acknowledged by the Mayor of Warwick on behalf of the Lords of the Leet.



The origins of the Warwick Court Leet in 1554 were re-affirmed as an ancient Court by the Administration of Justice Act of Parliament 1977. The Court's responsibility today, whilst strictly non-political, is 'The taking of Court and public presentments with respect to matters of local concern'. The most significant area of local concern reported was criticism of the impact which the proposed

Warwick District Core Strategy which, if implemented, will have on the quality of life in Warwick.

The Court Officers, Brook Looker, Pavements Overseer and Property Overseer each reported on their areas of concern. However, during these difficult economic times, the Court Ale Taster, ably supported by the local Courts Leet Ale Tasters, was able to report the quality of ale being served in Warwick's taverns visited during the year remains of a high quality. The Town Crier exclaimed loudly of the Court's highly successful Town Criers Competition this year in which twenty four town Criers from across the country competed.

During the meeting, both the retiring and new elected Bailiffs emphasised their concerns regarding the governance of Warwick, the County Town, during these challenging times, both due to the ongoing effects of the economic climate, also the increasing tendency towards centralising governance. Thus local democracy decision making processes are less and less able to influence the local environment. It was emphasised that the Court Leet remained committed within its powers to support the Lords of the Leet, the Town Council, in what ever way it best can.

## **Bridgnorth Freemen**

by Tony Head

Photograph taken outside Bridgnorth town hall before the start of the remembrance day parade on Sunday 8th November 2009.



Left to right, Eddie Brown Mace bearer, Brian Head, Bill Head jnr, Bill Head snr, Tony Head Town Marshall ( Master of the guild ) John Bowen, Eddie Bowen, Phillip Hughes Mace bearer.

## LEICESTER GILD REPORT

We wish to take this opportunity by starting our first report for 2010 by wishing you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Since our last report in September the Leicester Gild has been involved in the following activities:

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September,** A coach outing to London and a tour of Buckingham Palace. Our coach driver gave us a very informative commentary as we travelled through London, followed by a picnic lunch in the park adjacent to the London Eye. Our tour of Buckingham Palace started at 1 45pm, and we were all given complimentary audio tours which enabled each person to go at their own pace and listen to the descriptions of each room we passed through.

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September.** A party of sixteen Leicester Freemen and their ladies travelled in cars to a games evening at Barnacle Village Hall near Coventry. The event was organised by Coventry Guild. It was an excellent evening enjoyed by all those that attended. Unfortunately neither of the Leicester teams managed to win.

**October 9<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup>.** A party of twelve Leicester Gild members and their partners attended the Chester Freemen's Banquet weekend and once again this was a very well organised weekend. We wish to thank the Chester Freemen for their excellent banquet and for their hospitality over the weekend.

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October.** Four robed Freemen were invited to the Crown Court Service at St Mary de Castro Church, when the Freemen once again had the pleasure of forming the guard of honour to escort the Judge and Civic dignitaries into the church.

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November.** After a fish and chip supper held at Freeman's Holt, Robert Gregory a Leicester Blue Badge guide, gave a very interesting talk on crime and punishment in Leicester. The talk included tales of public executions that had taken place outside the Leicester gaol.

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December.** History was made today in the Council Chamber at Leicester's Town Hall, in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Leicester Councillor Roger Blackmore. The first fifteen daughters of the Freemen of Leicester became eligible to have the honour of the Freedom of Leicester bestowed on them after taking their oath before the Lord Mayor, the Town Clerk, and the Master of the Guild and the Vice-Chairman of the Board of the Leicester Freemen's Deputies.



Henry Hartopp's register of the Freemen of Leicester 1196-1770 records a number of women receiving the Freedom of Leicester, with the last one being Mary Kempston Wood on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 1770. Apprentice to Robert Cloudsley of Leicester, Breeches Maker.

There are no further records of any of the women after they had received their Freedom; it was bestowed on them to allow them to carry on their trade in Leicester.

They had no right for their son or daughter to inherit the right of the Freedom.

Leicester City Council has informed us that they have received well over 100 applications from Daughters of Freemen waiting to take their Freedom and the list is increasing by the day.

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December.** Four Freemen and their ladies travelled by local bus to Coventry for the Coventry Freemen's Guild Christmas dinner. This was a most memorable evening and we thank the Coventry freemen for their hospitality and excellent meal. After an over night stay in a local hotel we returned to Leicester on Saturday morning once again by the local bus service.

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December.** On the invitation of the Lord Mayor of Leicester we were invited to this year's Annual Carol Service, at Leicester Cathedral. The service is broadcast each year throughout the area by BBC radio Leicester. During the service the Lord Mayor always gives his Christmas address to the Citizens of Leicester.

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December.** Our last event of 2009 was our annual visit to the Little Theatre for the Pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk. Tickets for the evening are always sold as soon as they are available, with the Grandparents enjoying the show more than the children.

**Our main attraction for 2010** will be the Leicester Gild Banquet, which we have not held since the early 1990s. The Banquet will be held on **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July** at Devonshire Place London Road, and this will be followed by our church service on **Sunday morning 4<sup>th</sup> July** at 10 30am at St Mary de Castro Church. Tickets for the Banquet are priced at £36 00 each. For further information and tickets for the weekend please contact the Chamberlain to the Gild.

Roger Allen  
8 Dauphine Close  
Coalville  
Leicester LE67 4QQ  
Phone: 01530 831151  
E-mail: [rogerallen8@ntlworld.com](mailto:rogerallen8@ntlworld.com)

## **Coventry Freeman's Guild**

by Derek Austin

In early September the Guild achieved useful publicity in the local newspapers when our Master Jim Parry presented a heart resuscitation machine to Coventry Cathedral, as the initial £1000 payout from his 2009 Charity Appeal. As 500 cardiac arrests occur in Coventry every year, this centrally located defibrillator machine should be a life saver.

On the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> September Heritage Open Days weekend the Guildroom in the north undercroft of St Mary's Guild Hall was open to all. Information about the predecessor Merchant and Trade Guilds, and the current Freeman's Guild were explained to a variety of local, national, and international visitors.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> September Barnacle Village Hall was the venue for

skittles matches, ranging from long alley, table, bar, and quoits. An energetic evening was enjoyed by all 85 Coventry and Leicester Freemen and friends, with a fish & chip or chicken supper. £110 was raised for our Master's Charity Appeal. Our thanks to Charity Warden Sarah Daffern for a splendid event.

On the following day 20 Coventry Freemen and partners visited Northampton at the invitation of their Guild. After coffee and a guided tour of their magnificent Guild Hall, the Coventry and Northampton Freemen met the Mayor and Mayoress, Michael and Margaret Hill at a civic reception. We then walked to Derngate to view the 'art deco' decorated house by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, followed by a cream tea. Our thanks to the Northampton Freemen's Guild and their President Trevor Ward for their efforts, we hope to agree a return visit in due course.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> September a Freeman's Admission Court was held in the Council Chamber, where 35 candidates, ranging from a lady solicitor and hairdresser, with most time served apprentices in various engineering trades, were welcomed by our President Jack Harrison MBE JP as Lord Mayor of Coventry.

The 9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> October Chester Guilds banquet saw two dozen Coventry Guildsmen and partners trekking north to join our colleagues from Leicester at the racecourse Holiday Inn, our base for the weekend events. The informal Friday supper was well supported and an ideal opportunity to meet Freemen from other Guilds. After sightseeing in Chester and north Wales on Saturday, our party enjoyed the formal banquet in the Guild Hall, with Hilarie McNae in her new position as Sheriff of Chester. Sunday saw the usual robed procession to the Guild church of St Peter, with coffee afterwards.

We were back in the Coventry Council House on 15<sup>th</sup> October for the annual Guild Admission Court, where some 21 Freemen and women took the oath and received their badge and booklet from the Guild President and Master, Jack Harrison & Jim Parry respectively. This was also their introduction to the ceremony of the Loving Cup, prior to a buffet afterwards in the Crypt. We hope to welcome the new members at forthcoming events.

On 27<sup>th</sup> October our new Senior Warden Raj Bansal welcomed 38 Freemen and partners to a 'Chafer' style meal in the Crypt, with a

talk on judging dogs at Crufts, and other shows by Keith Savage. On the 7<sup>th</sup> November Coundon Social Club was the venue for 'Charity Race Night', where our Charity Warden Sarah Daffern and Searcher Charlie Platts were busy with dice and odds for an eight race card which raised £445 for our Master's Charity Fund. Special thanks to race and horse sponsors for achieving such good results. The following day the Master and Guild Officers were pleased to join the civic party on Remembrance Sunday, the heavy rain holding off for the actual procession and service in the War Memorial Park, led at the Cenotaph by the Bishop of Coventry the Right Reverend Dr Christopher Cocksworth. Coventry Freemen have given their lives in service for the country since before 1153, the date of the first known charter.

On 7<sup>th</sup> December the Lord Mayor held a special Freemen's Admission Court for 12 Jaguar Cars time served apprentices in the Council House Chamber.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> December the Guild calendar was completed by Christmas Dinner in St Mary's Guild Hall. A record attendance of 108 diners, including a party of eight Leicester Freemen and partners, enjoyed a four course festive meal after aperitifs, and then entertainment by the City of Coventry Male Voice Choir, including the atmospheric 'Coventry Carol' dating from medieval times.

## **HVERFORDWEST GILD OF FREEMEN'S ANNUAL WEEKEND. OCT 3rd & 4th 2009 (extract from)**

**AGM:** The Gild officers and members, led by Master Malcolm Green, were welcomed to County Hall by the chairman of Pembrokeshire County Council, Councillor Ann Hughes, who said she felt the association which existed between the Gild and Council reflected the trust and friendly relationship between the two.

The Master of the Gild responded and said he hoped the excellent relationship, which was greatly appreciated, would continue for many years to come.

Haverfordwest Town Mayor, Councillor James Campbell, then added a brief word of welcome on behalf of the Town and commented that some of the Freemen had travelled many miles to be present.

In Memoriam: The Master of the Gild asked the meeting to stand in silent tribute to those members who had passed away since the last

meeting. They were former Master Colonel John F. Green, Messrs David George, Eric Jenkins, H.C.F. Phillips and Thomas Eaton-Evans.

The Master welcomed members, in particular the Master of the Pembroke Gild, Mr Roy Folland, who was also present in his capacity as Warden for Wales of the Freemen of England and Wales.

**Summer Meeting:**

The Master referred to the summer meeting when County Archivist Claire Orr had addressed the Gild and the four new Burgesses were admitted and sworn in. The Gild agreed they should have another summer meeting next year and the Master said he would like to get Dr Roger Turvey again, who had written another book about the Perrot family since his last talk.

The 900th Anniversary:

The Master said the 900th anniversary committee was instigated at the suggestion of the Town Council and he was asked to chair it.

We have met over the last 12 months and there is quite a good programme of events scheduled, starting with a service at St Mary's Church on January 3rd when the Bishop of St Davids, the Right Revd Wyn Evans will officiate. There are a lot of other things planned too, including a major concert in aid of the Paul Sartori Fund by the Choir of Gentlemen conducted by Christine Shewry, so I would like everyone involved in organisations in the town to ensure that every organisation and individuals get involved. The committee is organising a few things but we don't want to organise everything.

The Golf Club are going to run a special tournament and any proceeds will be put into a fund for teaching young people to become golfers. We need to put more life back into the town and make certain it is a nice place to visit and also to live in and engender a little more pride in Haverfordwest. We are giving some monetary support and hope to have a website up and running by the end of October. We already have about 20 things happening during the year and we hope it will be yet more.

Report of Chairman of Trustees, Freeman Warden Malcolm Thomas:

The Freeman's Estate covers 260 acres rented out to seven tenants, and extends from nearly up to Portfield Gate down to Brooksgrove, so it is quite a sizeable area.

The land is in good general order although it was very wet early on, which did not help the drainage in the lower section. We have had a few complaints about the rabbit population but we can't do much

about that. Up to last month we had about £14,000 per annum in rents. Dispersal money amounted to £4,384 , charitable donations £618 and on the recommendation of the Trustees we made a grant of £300 to Haverfordwest Town Museum towards the cost of a publication celebrating the 900th Anniversary, a further £300 towards external repairs to St Mary's Church and another £300 cheque to Haverfordwest Civic Society.

The Clerk reported that there were 258 hereditary Freemen scattered throughout the world and 47 Burgesses while a little over 100 years ago there were 271 Freemen.

The Master said that bringing in the children of the Freemen's female line would help keep the numbers up on a fairly steady basis. "This is certainly the largest Gild of Freemen in Wales and Haverfordwest is the only town in Wales where some of the Freemen's lands have been kept. Everywhere else they disappeared into the mouth of the local councils and were merged with everything else. We were extremely fortunate in the 1830s after the Local Government Reform Act that we had some local people who came up with the right decision and that's why we still have our estate. Pembroke lost everything." The Master of the Pembroke Gild, Mr Roy Folland, agreed that this was so.

The Banquet:

The annual Banquet was held at the Wolfsastle Country Hotel where the Toast to the Gild was proposed by the chairman of Pembrokeshire County Council, Councillor Mrs Ann Hughes, with response by the Master of the Gild, Mr Malcolm Green. The Toast to The Guests was proposed by Burgess Brian Harries and responded to by the Mayor of Haverfordwest, Councillor James Campbell. The Clerk, Mr Paul Lucas, was Toastmaster and the members were entertained by talented local singer Aaron Lewis (14).

The Founder's Service:

The annual Church Service was held in the spiritual HQ of the Gild in St Martin's Church. Haverfordwest, the oldest church in the town in the shadow of the Norman castle, when the former incumbent, Archdeacon John Harvey, officiated and preached a very thought-provoking sermon on the text "...whose service is perfect freedom."

## ***The Guild of Freemen of the City of York.***

Master of the Guild, Ms Eileen Forth and the Court Assistants, invite you to join us and attend the **55<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL BANQUET** in the company of Distinguished guests at the Merchant Adventurers Hall, Fossgate. York.

**SATURDAY 17<sup>th</sup> April 2010.**

7.00pm for 7.30pm

Black Tie

Tickets £40.00

It is unlikely that any requests made after the **12<sup>th</sup> April** can be honoured

**Closing date for cancellations is 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010.**

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### **55<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL BANQUET**

Please forward.....Tickets at £40.00 each  
I enclose a cheque for £.....payable to **York Guild of Freemen**

Title.....Name.....

Address.....

Postcode.....Tel No.....

My Guests will be.....

Please advise on any special dietary requirements or vegetarian meals

Name of Guest.....

Please return to  
**The Clerk, Mrs J A Smith Parker**  
**Flat C Cherry Tree Court**  
**Dunnington York YO19 5QU**  
**Tel: 01904 481992**  
**Email: juneparker142@hotmail.com**  
**A Photocopy of this form is acceptable.**

# *Guild Profile*

## **Berwick Upon Tweed**

### **Instituted.**

As a result of the many wars with England there is very little documentary evidence of the commencement of Guilds in Scotland. The earliest documentary evidence of Berwick's Guild was in 1117 when Prince David (later David 1) referred to his Royal Burgh of Berwick and its Guild. The Guild was controlled by two sets of Laws, the Leges Quattuor Burgorum (the Law of the Four Burghs) and the Statutae Gildae (Guild Rules). The first set was developed by the Court of Four Burghs and the second within the Berwick Guild in 1235. Both were written in Latin and were adopted by the Scots Parliament and therefore received acceptance in Scot's law. There was also a Northern Hanse covering the northern Guilds.

We have evidence of 21 Royal Charters granted to Berwick Guild. However most of these are now lost as Berwick was captured 27 times and sacked on a number of these occasions. The earliest existing charter is 1356 although this refers to several previous charters, in particular that of Alexander III from which it would appear to have been drafted.

Berwick was originally a Royal Burgh of Scotland. It changed hands many times between Scotland and England. When James VI became James I of England it was not political to return Berwick to Scotland. To solve this problem Berwick was given a unique charter which effectively made it a separate County although still administered under English law. Berwick was officially incorporated into England in 1746.

The Guild is at present administered under an Act of Parliament in 1926 which lays down rules for the Trust and the Guild administration.

### **Offices/Property.**

The Guild has extensive property in Berwick, which included the Town Hall and an estate of some 2,500 acres let as farms. This is administered as a Trust with five Guild and five Councillors as Trustees. Surpluses are split between these two bodies. In addition the Guild itself has a housing Trust with 16 flats.

The Borough Council elected in 1835 had a duty to administer the

Freemen's estate. The estate was allowed to fall into a very poor state and all the surplus money was spent by the Council. Eventually a new Act was passed in 1926 which placed the administration of the Freemen's estate under Trustees appointed by the Freemen and the Council. The costs of this arbitration fell on to the Estate and it was not until the 1960s that the debt was cleared. There were several attempts by the Borough Council to obtain the Estate which were resisted. It is worth noting that if the ownership of the Estate had been lost what had not been spent would have passed to Northumberland County Council in 2009.

### **Berwick Parish Church.**

Berwick Parish Church was built to replace two earlier smaller churches in the 1640s. It was built by public subscription under a Charter to the Guild from King Charles II. All but one of the subscribers were Guild members. It was completed during the Commonwealth and tradition states that Cromwell stabled his horses in the uncompleted building. It was opened as a Presbyterian Church until 1662 when the Minister was thrown out and the Church was rededicated into the Church of England by the Bishop of Durham. The Guild appointed and paid all the Church officers except the Vicar for the next 150 years. The minister thrown out founded a Presbyterian church in Berwick.

### **Town Hall.**

The Town Hall is at least the fifth to stand on that site. The site was gifted to the Guild by a Burgess in the 13th. Century. It is a list A building at the foot of the High Street which dominates the town. The Building is owned by the Berwick-upon-Tweed (Corporation) Freemen's Trust and both the Guild and the Council have free use of the building. The main Floor includes the Guild Hall, anti room and Council Chambers. The ground floor is let out as a café and gift shop. The upper floors are the old prison which now houses a number of museums and the Guild records room. Above there is a 110 ft. spire which houses a full set of eight bells plus a single bell for ringing the hours and curfew. The bells were refurbished for the Millennium and are one of only two non church full set of bells. The base bell weighs 1.25 tons. In 2009 disabled access was installed for the building.

### **Freemen's Court.**

The Guild bought the nurses' home from the Infirmary. It had been out of use for some time and was completely stripped down to the wall and rebuilt as 16 high standard flats. These are now let out by the Guild as social housing.

### **Court Meetings.**

The Guild holds a statutory Head Guild on 14<sup>th</sup>. November which is it's AGM. If required other General Meetings can be called with the rules for this laid down in the 1926 Act. Normal administration of the Guild is by a committee elected by resident freemen at the AGM. This committee meets regularly throughout the year. In addition there are four dates set for the acceptance of new freemen each year.

### **Civic Functions.**

The Guild has traditionally been invited to the Remembrance Day parade and to lay a wreath on the war memorial. The traditional riding of the bounds takes place on 1<sup>st</sup>. May. This used to be a joint ceremony. However the Council cut expenses and the Guild now goes round the bounds in buses and holds it's own lunch. The Guild receives invitation to functions involving the Honorary freedom of various regiments.

The reorganisation of local government has resulted in a Town Council rather than a District Council. As the Guild Trust is now the major funder of the new Town Council, relationships are much closer and further invitations to civic functions are being received.

### **Social Events.**

A function is held in March. The form of this function has varied, but lately has been a pie and pea supper with a speaker.

The Riding of the Bounds takes place on 1<sup>st</sup>. May. The guild and guests go round the bounds by bus and a lunch is held afterwards. This tradition has been going on for 700 years and is the basis for the Border Common Ridings. There were 120 riders this year including representation from other Border Ridings.

The Guild trip is held in June. Sometimes this may be to visit other guilds, go to a show or a bus trip to a place of interest.

A dinner dance is held at the beginning of December each year.

Other social events are held on an ad hoc basis. All social events are subsidised. Guild members from other guilds who are living in the area are invited to attend social functions.

### **Constitution.**

This is laid down in the 1926 Act of Parliament.

### **Guild Committee.**

This is elected each year at the Guild AGM and operates under the 1926 Act. The Committee elects a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer who also carry out these functions for the Guild. There is no time limit upon the length of service for these posts, but they must be elected each year. The posts of Secretary and Treasurer are at present combined and paid.

### **Lady Members.**

Traditionally widows take up the Freedom rights of their husbands.

### **Honorary Members.**

The appointment of Honorary Freemen is a right of the elected Local Authority. Prior to 1835 this was a right of the Guild and Honorary members were full Guild member. Both Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington were honorary members.

### **Total Membership.**

Membership is for life. At present there are approximately 500 Guild members. Of these some 54 live within the ancient Burgh of Berwick, with approximately the same number living within 10 miles of the Burgh. The remainder are scattered throughout the world.

### **Entrants**

Originally the only means of entry to the Guild was by apprenticeship. Very often this was within families. From 1615 the Guild decided to allow sons to take up the Freedom. These rules were progressively altered by the Guild until at present any son or Grandson in the male line can take up their freedom. Entry by apprenticeship is still valid. Freedom by purchase was forbidden in the 1835 Act of Parliament.

### **Burgesses.**

The original freemen of Berwick were burgesses. i.e they let a burgage plot directly from the king. This became part of the Ferme Fue paid by the Guild to the king and freemen who did not hold burgage plots were allowed to become freemen. In Berwick Guild

members are now referred to as Freemen. The term burgess has been taken by Councillors in many towns, but this has no historical validity. A Berwick burgess was sent by the king to St. Andrews to found the Guild there.

### **Attendance.**

The AGM is traditionally not well attended. There are usually about 25 Freemen attending. Social functions are well attended with around 100 attending the Riding of the Bounds and the dinner.

### **Funding.**

The Guild has considerable assets and does not charge a levy on members.

In addition to the Trust the Guild has a number of other funds. These are

**1926 Fund.** A charitable fund for needy and ancient freemen

**Jane Turner Fleming Trust.** A charitable fund for needy daughters of Freemen.

**Berwick Freemen Housing Society.** A housing association providing social housing in Berwick.

**Reserve Fund.** This receives the Guild payments from the Trust.

**General fund.** This is the Guild's own funds.

The Trust, 1926 Fund and Jane Turner Fleming Trust are registered Charities.

### **Guild Projects**

The Reserve Fund is used for various purposes in Berwick. It bought the Town Mace, the Mayoress's chain of office, has preserved various items of historical interest in the town, provides funds for several local items such as Christmas lights and sponsors a number of other items

### **Robes.**

Traditionally robes and a hat were compulsory for attending Head Guild Meetings. A fine was imposed for non attendance or not wearing robes and a hat. The tradition of robes was reintroduced in 1980 when the AGM of the Freemen of England and Wales was held in Berwick. The colour is purple as it the Mayor's robes. This was granted to Berwick as the first Royal Burgh of Scotland.

### **Guild Chain of Office.**

The Chairman's badge was presented to Thomas Evans after completing 25 years as Chairman of the Guild. On his death his widow presented the badge to the Guild for use of the Chairman.

### **Archives.**

The records of the Guild prior to 1835 are held in trust by the local authority. They must be held in Berwick and be available for Freeman. In fact they are available to the public generally within the confines of the Archives office in Berwick. Nearly half these records disappeared between 1835 and 1926 when they were held by the Council. Since that time they have been held in secure facilities.

Records since 1926 are kept in the Freeman's cell in the Town Hall. Beside the minutes of meeting and letters, there is an extensive collection of photographs, books about Berwick and promotional literature regarding Berwick. The committee adds to this collected as items become available.

Jim Evans

Guild of Freeman of Berwick-upon-Tweed.

## *Gazette and Directory updates:*

### **GILD OF FREEMEN OF THE CITY OF LEICESTER**

change of address of representative:

Michael E Ayers

31 Freemans Holt

Old Church Street

AYLESTONE

Leics. LE2 8 NH

tel. 0116 2242353

### **GUILDABLE MANOR OF SOUTHWARK COURT LEET**

change of representative: Ronald Leek

[contact details as under 'The Executive' listing]

### **GILD OF FREEMEN OF SHREWSBURY**

change of representative: Alan Fallows

[contact details as under 'The Executive' listing]

### **GUILD OF FREEMEN OF BRIDGENORTH**

change of representative: Alan Fallows

[contact details as under 'The Executive' listing]

## *Good morning ladies; welcome to the freedom.*

This is the sort of phrase you may soon be using to greet the daughters of freemen sworn in your town, so what does it mean to you.

To explain the detail behind the heading let us recap the process that led us here. In 1994 at Berwick a suggestion was voiced that efforts should be made to enable daughters of freemen to be sworn in the same way as sons. It was agreed to investigate this and report to the next AGM but in the meantime the Hon Counsellor drafted a bill on behalf of Beverley (Yorkshire) which was promoted through the House of Lords. This would have enforced the will of Beverley on all towns and there followed ten years of argument until the bill was finally declared by the government to be unfit for purpose and dropped with a promise to promote a replacement bill acceptable to all. To their credit they did as promised; the only problem being that the parliamentary draftsmen had no understanding of the freedom and if left unaltered the bill could have decimated the freedom.

FEW were able to make representations and the Dept of Communities were receptive to the problems raised accepting a re-draft and putting decision making back in the hands of the freemen – all was well!!!

Sorry, no happy ending. At the last minute Newcastle upon Tyne promoted an additional clause inserting the automatic right of daughters to be sworn across the land into the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill (the vehicle used by the government to promote the changes agreed to local freedoms). That bill is now enacted with two clauses in place as follows:-

1. The original clause giving the freemen the facility to amend their local rules of admission.
2. The new clause imposing upon every town where the freedom exists that daughters of freemen must be admitted under the same rules as applicable to sons of freemen.

Right, so now we know the situation, how does it effect us and what (if anything) can we do to minimise problems?

The first point of relevance is that if your Gild has no funds or “benefits” to issue to freemen or widows of freemen (the usual terminology), you probably have no cause for concern. This category of Gild, as with my own, are usually in need of funds and members so will probably welcome the ladies with open arms.

There is, however, one consideration to note in that the history of the freedom is the history of the “family business”, so continuity of family surname is of primary importance to many members. The admission of a daughter previously married will mean the immediate loss of that continuity of surname. The only way that I can see of preventing this loss (which will be further exacerbated with each successive generation of married daughters or the offspring of second marriages) is to insist upon the retention of the pre 1835 family name within the daughters married surname. Example; Miss Jones marries Mr Rigsby and becomes Mrs Jones-Rigsby, or even better Mrs Rigsby-Jones. Of course if Miss Jones has already become Mrs Rigsby there is probably no chance of her changing her name by deed poll as Mr Rigsby would have to do the same (perhaps future reward may be an incentive). If there are already children of the marriage I suspect the situation would be irreversible and either way a precedent would be set.

The second situation refers to Gilds with funds to distribute. In this case the daughters (and there could be many), when sworn must be entitled to the same benefits as existing “freemen” and thus their widowers must be entitled to the same benefits as existing widows.

There is a possibility that a large influx of “elderly” daughters of freemen eligible to participate in the distribution of Gild funds could deplete individual amounts available and thus cause hardship to those already reliant upon a set level of payments.

The question is how to limit new admissions or payments and here we have two main options.

19. Use the rule change facility of the Act to remove the facility for claimants to bridge missing Generations, ie to only allow admission through a father. This would apply the same restriction upon sons but would limit the influx of new members.

20. Amend the rules governing eligibility to receive Gild funds.  
As an example you may restrict  
eligibility to claim payments to “freemen” with more than  
three (or more) years membership. NB: If your funds are vested in a  
charity check charity commission guidelines first.

I would consider it advisable not to use the enabling facility of  
the new Act repeatedly. If you are to utilize this function combine any  
other changes you may wish to make on one occasion. Example: If  
your town has lost the ability to admit by apprenticeship it can be re-  
introduced by this method at the same time as previous suggestions.  
Full details of the procedure for change are shown in clause 27 of  
The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act  
or for further clarification contact me on [alan.fallows@talktalk.net](mailto:alan.fallows@talktalk.net) or  
phone 01743 358495.

Your rules are for your Gild to decide upon, but a combined  
dialogue between Gilds is likely to highlight any anomalies to be  
addressed and lead to a quicker and safer resolution. Feel free to  
refer to me and I will investigate any queries promptly. We should be  
pro-active on this topic and prepare the ground if possible before  
applications are made.

You may agree with me that the loss of 1000 years of  
tradition by the forced insertion of a prescriptive clause in a bill takes  
an ego of monstrous proportions, but we must live with the  
consequences of that act and protect the freedom to the best of our  
ability.

## **STOP PRESS**

I have just been informed that East Riding of Yorkshire  
Council have just successfully gained the Beverley Freemen Act  
2010.

This Act appears to provide for the expansion of the Beverley  
boundaries from the 1836 Act to allow more freemen to qualify to be  
“Pasture Freemen” and benefit from the payments from the common  
pastures funds. Additionally it provides for payments made to widows  
will now also be paid to widowers.

I see no mention of eligibility of daughters in the Beverley Act  
so I presume Beverley are content to utilise the facility of clause 4 of  
the Local Democracy.....Act.

Alan Fallows (Deputy President / Archivist)

# *Notices from the Hon Secretary*

## **Nominations for Executive Officers 2010-2011**

In accordance with the 2008 AGM directive, nominations for Executive Officers for the year September 2010 to September 2011, are now requested. All offices, including that of the President, who holds office for two years, are open for nomination this time. A nomination form is included in this Journal. The closing date by which I must have received all nominations, again in accordance with the 2008 directive, this year is the 19th June, the date of the Court Meeting immediately preceding the AGM. This is also detailed on the nomination form itself, which may be photocopied if preferred. All nominations, together with their accompanying statements — see the nomination form for details — will then be published in the July edition of the FEW Journal, which should allow sufficient time for full consideration by member guilds prior to the AGM in September. A further nomination form will also appear in the April Journal. 2010 AGM Voting Procedure for Election of Executive Officers This will be by Ballot. Postal votes will be allowable.

## **Disclosure of Voting Figures received in Elections for Executive Officers**

Following representations, it has been decided that the total number of votes cast for any candidate in the AGM elections for Executive Officers, will in future be announced together with the name of the successful candidate. Accordingly, the voting figures from the 2009 AGM in Stafford are as follows:-

Deputy President:

Alan Fallows — 3706 Elected

Prof. Peter Dale — 1549

Vice President:

Gordon Vandell — 2938 Elected

Tony Sharp — 2395

## **Promotion of FEW**

The Executive Officers in promoting FEW more widely, express the hope that all individual members within each FEW Member Guild, are already aware of, or will be notified of its existence as a matter of course.

## **Court Meeting March 2010**

Notice is hereby given to all Guild Representatives, Wardens and the Executive, that the next FEW Court Meeting (kindly being hosted by the Shrewsbury Gild) will be held at 2.00pm on Saturday 13th March 2010 in "C21" a restaurant and bar complex adjacent to the Abbey Church in Shrewsbury. Car parking is readily available opposite the Abbey Church, which itself is well known to many FEW guilds. Gowned and/or badged attendance is preferred.

### **AGENDA:-**

- 1) Attendees to sign register and be seated.
- a) Call to order, and President's Procession into meeting.
- b) Opening of Court, Pronouncement of Prayer, and Welcome.
- 2) Apologies for absence.
- 3) Minutes of the Court Meeting held on Saturday 20th June 2009 in the Guildhall, Berwick-upon-Tweed. These minutes were circulated as part of Journal No 159, Trinity 2009.
- a) Approval of Minutes.
- 4) Matters arising, not forming any other part of this agenda.
- 5) President's Report.
- 6) Deputy President's Report.
- 7) Vice President's Report.
- 8) Wardens' Reports.
- 9) Hon Treasurer's Report.
- 10) Hon Membership Secretary's Report.
- 11) Hon Archivist's Report'
- 12) Hon Editor (pro-Tem)'s Report. Formal co-option of Tom Gibson as Hon Editor until the AGM.
- 13) Officer Without Portfolio's Report.
- 14) Any Other Business.
- 15) Dates and Venues.
- 16) Valedictory Prayer, Closure of Court, and President's Withdrawal Procession.

**Freemen of England and Wales  
Election of Executive Officers to serve for the year  
2010 — 2011**

**NOMINATION FORM**

Any nomination, properly proposed on this form, must be received by the Hon Secretary on or before Saturday 19th June 2010, being the date of the Court Meeting immediately preceding the AGM. This must be accompanied by the following:- 1) A statement from the candidate in not more than 150 words, detailing experience within the Freedom validating the candidate's suitability to fulfil the nominated office. 2) A short prospectus from the candidate in not more than 50 words, detailing his or her aims in furthering the constitutional objectives of FEW. 3) A short statement by the principal proposer in not more than 100 words, supporting the suitability of the candidate to serve FEW in the nominated office.

We the undersigned propose .....

A Freeman of .....

For election to the position of ..... of the  
Association of Freemen of England and Wales for the period 2010 —  
2011

Proposer.....  
(sign)

Secunder.....  
(sign)

I....., declare that if elected, I am willing to  
serve as.....  
of the Association of Freemen of England and Wales for the period  
2010 — 2011

Signed.....  
FEW Hon Secretary, Ronald E.Leek, Richmond House, Beech  
Close,Oversley Green, Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 6PP.

## GILDS RIGHT TO VOTE

You may recall my commitment to ensure that all Gilds have the opportunity to vote on all matters raised within FEW at the Court Meetings.

To fulfil this commitment I contacted all member Gilds representatives by letter or e-mail to ascertain their usual dates of meetings during the course of the year.

My thanks to all those Gilds who have responded and are now guaranteed full involvement, but there are quite a number of member Gilds who have not yet given their details and without their details I cannot guarantee that we schedule matters under discussion to ensure that they have time to respond with their views and votes.

I will write again if necessary but please send me the details of your meeting schedules (preferably by e-mail) as soon as possible so you can all have your say.

My contact details:  
(e-mail) [alan.fallows@talktalk.net](mailto:alan.fallows@talktalk.net)  
(Tel) 01743 358495  
(Mobile) 07870 534772  
Best wishes,  
Alan Fallows

*F. E. W. Merchandise.*

The full range of F.E.W. Merchandise is always available from either The membership secretary, Ms. Eileen Forth or the Vice President, Mr Gordon Varndell.

A full list of available items and current price list is available on request and it is hoped to publish it in the next Journal.

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**Closing date for items for the next issue (No. 162) 13/3/10.**

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