



The Feltmaker

The Newsletter of the
Worshipful Company of Feltmakers

Summer 2002

Master: William Horsman

Issue No. 25

History in the Making



Plans are now moving forward for the celebration of our Quatercentenary in 2004, being 400 years after James I granted the Feltmakers Letters Patent enabling them to separate from the Haberdashers and form their own company - "The Company of Feltmakers". Needless to say, this will be a great milestone in the history of our Company and it is hoped that all Liverymen will join in the celebrations. Details of the events will be published in good time.

One of the main features of our Quatercentenary will be the production of a new History of the Company. One was published in 1917 but it was not professionally written and was short on research. This time the Publisher, Phillimore's, is well experienced in this field and the researcher / author is Rosemary Weinstein who was previously in charge of the Stuart Period Department at the Museum of London and has a background in history, research and writing.

Past Master John Bowler is the project leader and much assistance has already been supplied by members of the Court. But more help is needed, in particular in the following areas:

1. We are trying to find the earliest menu. The earliest John Bowler has is 1898. Does anyone have an earlier one?
2. Do you have any items, photographs, illustrations, pictures of past Feltmakers which could be considered for inclusion? Do you have any stories, anecdotes or unusual information which may have been passed down by a parent or grandparent? Please go through your attic or talk with elderly relatives. If anything comes up please pass it to us. It may well help to complete our jigsaw of history. Many interesting and exciting points have already come to light. The Feltmakers formed one of the earliest Joint Stock Companies; it did not prosper and the Master was put in the Fleet prison! A Postmaster General, a First Lord of the Admiralty, four Chancellors and a Leader of the Conservative Party in the latter part of the 19th Century were all members. Major Richard Rigg introduced 200 very senior men into the Company in the period 1916-1930. We know little else about him - does anyone know any more about this gentleman or his achievements? At one stage in the last century we had 9 Knights of the Realm on the Court. It is all very exciting.
3. Can you help us with some of your time? As the history unfolds so individual aspects are going to come to light and these can be "ring-fenced" and passed to a volunteer to examine in detail, thus freeing up Rosemary Weinstein and John Bowler to address wider issues. The tasks could be specific investigations, reading, administrative and compilation jobs or following leads in particular areas. If you can spare a day or so, please contact John Bowler and tell him of your skills and how you can help.
4. A full list of all Feltmakers will be included in the book and we will write to you later enquiring as to whether your family has four or more generations of involvement with the Company. The final book will be unique and will, we expect, cost £40. The cost to the company is likely to be in the region of £17,000 and we will need to defray this by seeking patronage, please see the Master's letter on page 2.

Wardens: David Bentata; Patrick Burgess; Derek Bedford; John Curteis.

Immediate Past Master: Jonathan Rowley.

Clerk: Major Jollyon Coombs, The Old Post House, Upton Grey, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 2RL

Registered at Stationers' Hall. Editor: John Curteis.

The Master's Report

On 5th October 2001 it was my privilege to be installed as Master. The sense of occasion which one feels at Mercers' Hall is somewhat overwhelming and leaves you a little bewildered, but nevertheless I was very conscious of the great honour bestowed upon me and felt immensely proud. Many of you had sent your good wishes beforehand and I was very grateful for your support at the Installation Dinner.

I was admitted into the Livery in 1985 and have witnessed considerable changes in that time, all for the good and all thanks to my predecessors.

I am sure that we all look forward to celebrating our 400th anniversary. The Court has commissioned the writing and publishing of the Company's history and, so that it will not be a drain on our finances, members of the Court have already contributed a considerable sum towards the cost. The opportunity to sponsor the history is available to all Liverymen and I urge you please to send donations to the Clerk. Details of amounts donated will be treated with confidence. Every donor will be listed and acknowledged in the book so now is your chance literally to go down in history!

The Master and Wardens' Committee have been concerned that there is a need to improve communications within the Livery, and have, with the approval of the Court, decided to hold a Livery Common Hall in November 2002. This will be for Liverymen of the Company only and will take the form of a presentation by the Master and Chairmen of our various committees. Liverymen will be asked to submit questions in advance for consideration at the meeting.

The date for your diaries is Thursday 18th November at the Cavalry and Guards Club, Piccadilly, and the meeting will be followed by an optional dinner. This is your opportunity to find out more about your Company.

The livery movement encompasses many things, but one of the huge benefits is the opportunity to meet new friends and develop those friendships. I most certainly have - please will you help us to strengthen the Feltmakers by finding new members who are willing to become involved in the Livery. The Clerk has a ready supply of application forms!

I am often asked the question "Are you enjoying your year?" The answer is that I am doing so immensely and I extend my grateful thanks to you all and in particular to the Court for allowing me the privilege and honour of being your Master.

William Horsman

Our new Clerk - Welcome!

Lieutenant Colonel John Holroyd stepped down as Clerk of our Company last Autumn after many years of loyal and efficient service. Fortunately, he accepted an invitation to join the Livery, was duly elected and so we are not saying farewell to him - we will continue to see him at our various events.

At the same time we welcomed Major Jollyon Coombs as our new Clerk. In common with his predecessor, Jollyon was a regular Army officer, serving in the 16th/5th The Queen's Royal Lancers and the Welsh Guards.

After leaving the Army in 1986 he became an Estate Agent and was for several years Managing Director of Jackson Stops & Staff in London. His other business interests include the wine and beer industries, thus again following in the footsteps of his predecessor. Perhaps all Army officers become wine experts as part of their training!

Jollyon is married to Ruthie, has three children (all gainfully employed) and lives near Basingstoke. In such spare time as his duties permit, he enjoys shooting, fishing, sailing and gardening.

We wish Jollyon a long and happy association with the Feltmakers.

Presentation of The Lord Mayor's Hat



The Master, William Horsman, presenting the Ceremonial Hat to the Lord Mayor of London, Alderman Michael Oliver, accompanied by The Lady Mayoress, at the Mansion House on 13th November 2001.



After the ceremony, (left to right): Patrick Burgess (Renter Warden), The Lord Mayor, The Master, David Bentata (Upper Warden), The Lady Mayoress, John Curteis (Fourth Warden) and Major Jollyon Coombs (The Clerk).

The Fourth Warden

Many members of the Livery have become Feltmakers as a result of a family connection with the Company and I am no exception. However, my entry into the Livery was brought about in rather unusual circumstances which might be of interest to members.

My father's working life was spent in the Royal Navy and latterly as an Elder Brother of Trinity House. Whilst there, he established an association with the Feltmakers, partly through his personal contacts with the late Sir Hugh Wontner. In recognition of this, he was in 1958 made an "Honorary Member" of the Feltmakers Company - the first such member, in fact - and I have a splendid illuminated certificate recording his appointment.

Wishing to continue the association, my father arranged for me to become an apprentice of the Company and Sir Hugh Wontner signed the appropriate form. I cannot recall whether I was ever made aware of the apprenticeship and my father died shortly after it was set up.

Meanwhile, in the early 1960s, my sister married an officer in the Royal Green Jackets and John Holroyd was Best Man at the wedding. Thirty years later, as our Clerk, John was sorting out some old files and came across my apprenticeship form. Recognizing the surname, he contacted my sister to ascertain that the form did in fact relate to her brother and pointed out that I must have been one of the longest serving apprentices on record!

After several discussions with John, interviews with senior members of the Court and a delightful meeting with Sir Hugh Wontner in the Savoy, I was duly admitted to the Livery in 1993.

Sadly, Sir Hugh died some two weeks after our meeting. I live in hope that the two events were not connected!

John Curteis

The Welsh Livery Guild



In 1990, a group of London Liverymen resident in Wales decided to form an association on the lines of a London Livery Company for Wales. They found that, under existing legislation, it was not possible to form such a Livery Company but a way forward was found by forming a "Livery Guild" in the style of a Livery Company. This enabled London Liverymen, with different professional and craft skills, resident in Wales, to join together in one guild for Wales with the broad objective of promoting vocational skills in arts, science and technology.

The first Court of the Guild was formed in 1992 and in 1995 the College of Arms granted Letters Patent for full Armorial Bearings and Badge. The crest shows a red kite, a bird now found mainly in Wales, holding a scroll inscribed "Meithrin Dawn" meaning nurturing skills. The motto is "Gwasanaeth er Budd Cymru" meaning Service for the Benefit of Wales.

In May 1995 the Charity Commissioners registered the Charitable Trust of the Guild to facilitate the charitable promotion of the Guild's objectives. This is achieved by granting awards to young

people to enable them to attain high standards of vocational skills through further education and training.

The Guild is managed exactly on the lines of a London Livery Company. An annual meeting of Liverymen (Common Hall) is held each year for the Master, Wardens and Court to make reports and take note of the views of members of the Guild.

In 1991 HRH The Prince of Wales honoured the Guild by accepting appointment as Honorary Royal Freeman of the Welsh Livery Guild.

John Curteis

Court Assistant, Welsh Livery Guild

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London Golden Jubilee Baltic Cruise

The Upper Warden, David Bentata, exchanged his Warden's hat for a silk topper and a stethoscope in August and early September last year when he and his good lady boarded M.V.DANAE with some 80 other members of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London to cruise the Baltic in celebration of 50 years of the Society. He had earlier accepted the role of Dr John H Watson, Holmes' chronicler and confidant, as the members of the Society visited Oslo, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Tallinn, St Petersburg, Helsinki and Kiel.

The trip was the latest in a long series of journeys, usually dubbed "pilgrimages" made by members of the Society to places of Sherlockian interest. This time it was a celebration of the Society's 50th Anniversary. We were met with due ceremony in each Baltic city we visited. At Stockholm, Tallinn and Helsinki we were entertained by their Excellencies the British Ambassadors to Sweden, Estonia and Finland while at St Petersburg we were graciously and enthusiastically received by the English Speaking Union and by Professors of the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences. The works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle are used widely in schools and universities in the teaching of English!

Holmes and Watson had to make formal speeches in each city and, as the linguist of the party, while Holmes spoke in English Watson gave the accompanying speech in the language of the country (with the important exception of Estonian!)

At Copenhagen, in half a gale, the members of the Society boarded an open launch and the members of the Sherlock Holmes Klubben's Danmark re-enacted the chase in steam launches down the Thames in the famous story entitled "The Sign of Four". In Helsinki and in Stockholm we were welcomed by "Scottish" pipers and learned that a Swedish-speaking Finnish piper had beaten the Scottish pipers at the latest piping competitions. At Kiel, the Lord Mayor appeared complete with a highwayman's cloak and a large magnifying glass.

Apart from enjoying the company of other Sherlockian friends from all over the world and indulging in both thespian and literary activities of the Master (Holmes in this context), it brought home to all on the cruise the enduring popularity in country after country of the creation of 115 years ago of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's immortal detective and of his companion and friend Dr John H Watson. For David and Linda and for their 80 friends and fellow Sherlockians it was an unforgettable voyage, made more poignant by the terrible events in New York and Washington only four days after our return.

David Bentata



The Upper Warden (Dr Watson) offers medical assistance to Holmes and the Mayor of Kiel.



A milliner's workshop in Tallinn

The Ladies' Banquet

The splendour of The Mansion House was once again the setting for the annual Ladies' Banquet on Friday 14 June 2002. In the absence of the Lord Mayor, who was abroad on business, Alderman Sir Richard Nichols stood in as Lord Mayor Locum Tenens.

After an excellent dinner, the traditional loving cup ceremony and stirring musical entertainment provided by students of The Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the toast to the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of London was most eloquently proposed by Assistant Mrs Susan Wood. It was recalled that it was on the same occasion four years ago when he was Lord Mayor that the news of Sir Richard's knighthood, in the Birthday Honours List of that year, was first announced.

The Master's connections with the hatting industry were evident in many ways throughout the evening. The annual Feltmaker Award was presented to Miss Tattiana Henderson-Stewart of the Kensington & Chelsea College, a just reward for a very fine creation which was on display before the dinner. The response to the Master's toast to the guests was made by Ms Anne Tyrrell who manages her own design consultancy studio and who spoke about the significance of fashion and design in the modern age.

The Master referred to the example set by the Royal Family in their choice and wearing of hats, particularly by Her Majesty The Queen in this her Golden Jubilee year. It was particularly significant that two of the Queen's milliners were attending the Banquet: Liverymen Mr Freddie Fox LVO and Mr Philip Somerville.

The Master's personal gift to the Ladies was a magnificent book entitled *The Century of Hats*. A whole page of the book (page 129, for those who have not yet got that far) is devoted to the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers and to the contribution made by our Master to the hat industry.

Altogether a most memorable evening!

Editor



The Master and Wardens await the arrival of Liverymen and guests.



The Master greets the Lord Mayor Locum Tenens.



The Master, Wardens and Chaplain with the official guests.

SPORT

Inter-Livery Tennis Tournament - 2001

The Feltmakers Inter-Livery Tennis Tournament was again held at The Queens Club, London, in September 2001 with 15 Livery Companies being represented with four players each. Every year there seems to be some occurrence that challenges the resource of the organisers and the tragedy of September 11th caused the Fishmongers to withdraw from the competition at the last minute. However, this enabled us to welcome another livery company for the first time - the Barber-Surgeons.

The winners of the main competition for the Feltmakers' Trophy and two tickets for finals day at the Stella Artois Tennis at Queens Club in June 2002 were a young brother and sister partnership from the Tallow Chandlers - Christopher and Alexandra Kurkjian. They beat a father/daughter partnership representing the Goldsmiths in the final.

The Plate competition was won by the Curriers who beat the Feltmakers, Geoffrey Farr and his partner Margaret Harris.

The dinner in the evening was attended by almost 80 people. The Master of the Feltmakers presented the prizes and also said a few words in his usual, inimitable style!

The day appeared to have been enjoyed by all and demand is strong for 2002.

Anthony Phillips



The Feltmakers' Trophy being presented to the winners of the main tennis competition.

Golf Day - 2002

The previous two golf days were in Bedfordshire (2000) and in Middlesex (2001). This year, Surrey was the venue for 22 Feltmakers, their ladies and guests to play the wonderful rolling heathland course at Camberley Heath.

Special thanks are due to The Master who joined us for dinner and for providing the prizes, and to Simon Bartley, Nick Heal and John Sylvester for manning the 14th green (nearest the pin) and for providing much appreciated restorative champagne to those in need.

We met at noon for drinks and lunch in the Captain's Bar of the grand and elegant clubhouse from which we overlooked three of the holes and could commence our strategic planning of how to play them! The day was blessed by good weather and good golf and the setting was idyllic. Despite the difficulty of the course (off the fairway meant more than a nodding acquaintance with gorse and heather!), the scores were as good as or maybe even better than in previous years.

The day was pleasantly rounded off with dinner upstairs in the clubhouse overlooking the course. Prizes were presented by the Master to the winners:

Best Gentleman's Score	Gerry Higginson
Best Lady's Score	Catherine Farr
Best Front 9	Geoffrey Farr
Best Back 9	David Carpenter (guest of Gerry Higginson)
Longest Drive (Men)	James Davis (guest of Michael Winfield)
Longest Drive (Ladies)	Daphne Higginson
Nearest the Pin	Geoffrey Vero

There was also a special prize to Peter Keens for the best score by a higher handicapper. Peter had a wonderful round and scored 32 points.

Gerry Higginson

News from HMS LANCASTER

HMS LANCASTER, the Type 23 Frigate affiliated to our Company, has continued with her busy programme under the command of Commander Ben Key.

After a 6 month deployment in the Arabian Gulf in the early part of last year, LANCASTER returned to home waters in time for the International Festival of the Sea at Portsmouth and the International Defence Exhibition in London in September. It was during this visit that the then Master, Jonathan Rowley, hosted a Reception for the Ship's Company at Leathersellers' Hall.

In October the ship took part in the Staff College Sea Days, one of which was attended by Liveryman Louise Waller and our Clerk Jollyon Coombs.

More recently LANCASTER has spent more time in the North Atlantic and the Baltic followed by a visit (from Liverpool) to their affiliated city of Lancaster. At the time of going to press, the ship is preparing for The Queen's Golden Jubilee Review of the Forces.

Other Livery News

The Master's Livery Activities - 2002

1st May	Installation Court Dinner, The Woolmen's Company, with the Clerk
8th May	St Bartholomew's View Day Service followed by Luncheon in the Great Hall with the Clerk
9th May	The Master's Golf Day, Camberley Heath, followed by dinner, with the Clerk
13th May	Swimathon, RAC Club, Epsom, followed by dinner
14th May	Festival of the Sons of the Clergy, St Paul's Cathedral
15th May	Livery Dinner, the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, Painters' Hall, with the Clerk
16th May	Audit Court Dinner, The Fruiterers' Company, Barber-Surgeons' Hall
22nd May	Inter-Livery Clay Pigeon Shoot, Holland & Holland, Northwood, Middlesex, with the Clerk
23rd May	Trustees Meeting, The Charitable Foundation and Charity Committee Meeting
28th May	A Concert for Treloar's, The Mansion House, with Viviane
30th May	Knotty Green Cricket Club, Single Wicket Competition followed by supper, with the Clerk
31st May	Hat judging for Feltmaker Award, Ian Wright's Factory
7-9 June	Livery weekend, Ironbridge, Telford, Shropshire
13th June	Master and Wardens' Meeting, followed by luncheon, Royal Greenjackets' Club
14th June	Ladies' Banquet, The Mansion House
24th June	Common Hall, Election of The Sheriffs' luncheon, Tallow Chandlers' Hall, with the Clerk
26th June	Midsummer Court luncheon, The Poulterers' Company, Armourers' Hall, with the Clerk
27th June	H.M.S. Lancaster, Portsmouth: H.M. The Queen's Jubilee Review, with the Clerk
30th June	Cricket Match against Coleshill C.C., Amersham: Spectator with the Clerk

Forthcoming Events

8th July	Race Evening - Windsor
19th September	Inter-Livery Tennis Competition - Queens Club
20th September	Election of Lord Mayor
4th October	Installation Dinner - Haberdashers' Hall
18th November	Common Hall Dinner - Cavalry and Guards Club

Elections on to the Livery

7th January 2002	Mr J R Warboys
8th April 2002	Mr Patrick Waterfield Mr Dennis Syberg Mr John Vereker CBE DL

Deceased Members of the Livery

Mr J T Livingston Booth