

The Feltmaker



The Magazine of the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers Winter 2021 Master: Nigel Macdonald Issue No. 45

The Master's Address

Taken from the Address given by our new Master, Nigel Macdonald, at the Autumn Dinner, 1 October 2021.

The Livery last met on Plough Monday, 2020. As this is the first opportunity since then, we would like to acknowledge the leadership of our immediate Past Master, Lady Gilly Yarrow, who overcame what is almost a unique challenge.

Apart from the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London, there has not been such a protracted period during which it was not possible for us to meet together. Gilly led us so well, with regular and encouraging communications, and we thank her sincerely for that.

She also led the demanding process of finding our new Clerk. Thanks to the willingness of our late, and greatly missed, Clerk, Major Jollyon Coombs, to continue serving long after his requested retirement date, this complex process was successfully completed despite our inability to meet in person. But our new gallant Clerk, Brigadier Aidan Smyth, was selected with acclaim. Aidan and Jollyon worked together well and achieved an effective handover. I can assure



you that he will quickly evoke your friendship, respect and affection.

And that brings me to the poignant moment when the Livery ensured that Jollyon was honoured properly at his home last April, to hand over formally his badge of office to Aidan as our new Clerk.

Gilly, your speech of thanks to him was



deeply moving and we know that the book of tributes and gifts will have brought enormous comfort and be a tangible sign of just how much he was loved and respected over his 20 years' of absolute commitment. We subsequently learned that Jollyon retired to his bed after this event and died just nine days later.

We must also remember our Milliners, whose livelihoods depend on the slightly unpredictable pattern of occasions and special events. Tonight, we welcome a number of Milliner Liverymen.

The quite remarkable outpouring of kindness we saw nationwide in those first days of lockdown will not be forgotten. John Donne, Lawyer and MP at the time this Livery received its Letters Patent from King James 1st in 1604, and who became Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, wrote: 'No man is an island'. I suspect that we have all experienced the depth of those words and should keep them in mind.

Sooner or later most people realise that it is not possessions, skills or experiences that matter most, but relationships. Care for others is what our Livery, and all Liveries, hold dearest. Covid has helped us to see that even more clearly.

It is why our new Events Committee, led by Upper Warden, Neil Edwards, has been formed to generate many more creative opportunities to get together. It is why our Charity Committee, led by Past Master, Jeremy Brassington, continues to create opportunities for us to be generous in sharing our own good fortune.

Court Assistant, Graeme Gordon, completed

an exceptional charitable fund-raising row from the source of the Thames in Lechlade to the City, where he was greeted at Tower Bridge by Sir David Wootton and Sheriff Christopher Hayward.

May I ask everyone to note Friday, 8 July



2022 when we will enjoy a very special dinner at and underneath the Cutty Sark at Greenwich with, weather permitting, the chance to go up on deck to enjoy the fine views and the sunset over London. This will be in aid of the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity. Please come ready to enjoy a fantastic evening and to bid for an array of amazing prizes.

May I thank all Liverymen and Guests for being here tonight, helping us to relaunch our activities with such enthusiasm and in such numbers. I am sure we would all like to thank our gallant Clerk for his meticulous planning of tonight's arrangements, this the first, Livery Dinner he has organised.

Master: Nigel Macdonald

Wardens: Neil Edwards, Simon Wilkinson, Jeremy Bedford, Simon Millar

Immediate Past Master: Lady Gillian Yarrow **Clerk:** Aidan Smyth Registered at Stationers' Hall

Editorial Committee: Simon Millar, Rebecca Nelson, Graeme Gordon, Carole Denford, Mark Williams

From the Editor



Early 2021 saw us, once again, confronted with lockdown. With Zoom fatigue still weighing on our post-Christmas spirits, the New Year brought a touch of gloom. But as 2021 draws to a close, we look forward to a vaccinated and “virus-freer”, 2022...

In 2021, we lost our much-loved and long-serving Clerk, Major Jollyon Coombs. As PM, Lady Gilly Yarrow, wrote in his obituary (p.6), it was his earnest wish that the Livery encourages younger people to join and his final initiative was to launch Freedom by Patrimony, open to young relations of all existing members of the Livery. It is our responsibility, therefore, to leverage connections and friendships to find new members and convince them of the merits of contributing to our charitable work and camaraderie. On p.8, is a feature from three of our latest Freemen. Our Company reflects the talent of many of our milliner Liverymen and we must work hard to attract those who will add to the spirit of our community and those who will expand our vision for the future.

While it was reassuring to see familiar faces huddled over keyboards, peering slightly in the wrong direction over webcams, and the sundry domestic noises seeping into Zoom meetings, we yearned for the “real deal”. At last, it came with the Autumn Dinner and the formal reception of our new Master, Nigel Macdonald. We look forward to many more face to face engagements in 2022.

Rebecca/Beckie

In this issue...

In Memorium – we remember our Clerk, Major Jollyon Coombs, RIP

Tackling the Thames – fundraising triumph for Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity

Committee updates and fresh focus on Events

We welcome our new Clerk

Our New Master

I am a seventh-generation member of the Lock family, on my late Mother's side. Our hat business in St James' Street, is the oldest of its kind in the world and one of the oldest businesses in the UK, having served many leading figures in history since it began trading in 1676.

I have been Chairman for nearly four decades, guiding its transition (and survival) from one of literally scores of men's hat sellers in London during the time when hat wearing was *de rigueur* for men. Today, hat wearing in almost all countries is a matter of choice, but Locks has not only been able to survive when so many hat shops have had to close, but it has gained a truly international reputation for standards of service, flair and quality of hats sold, and the sheer pleasure of wearing them. I therefore feel particularly privileged to be invited to serve as Master of the Feltmakers.

Mine was a fairly conventional post-war upbringing. At age nine, I went to boarding school and left a few weeks after my 17th birthday to start training as a Scottish Chartered Accountant.

I became a Partner in Whinney Murray in 1976 and subsequently enjoyed working with a varied portfolio of clients and international responsibilities as that firm grew through merger and organically to become Ernst & Young. I was a member of the Cadbury Committee, which first codified principles of

Corporate Governance, was President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland in 1993/4, a member of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and subsequently of the Competition Commission, and served on the Boards of several national and international concerns. I am an Honorary Commodore of the National Maritime Museum, and I continue to serve as Chairman of the Royal Museums' Greenwich Foundation.

I married Maggie in 1983 and we are both very proud of our daughter who is a hospital doctor, as well as being wife to a chartered accountant and mother of their two small children. We are all committed Christians and our faith is central to us.



Our Fourth Warden – Simon Millar joins the Lineout

Simon Millar was educated at Tiffin School in Kingston upon Thames and Wolverhampton Polytechnic. Having entered the Livery in 2004, he served two years as Steward before joining the Court in 2010, subsequently serving as Chair of the Livery Society. Simon's career has been in real estate insurance, working for a variety of firms across the sector from large organisations such as Great Portland Estates PLC and Lockton Companies LLP, to smaller, more niche companies. He is currently CEO of Albanwise Insurance Services, a property-focused broker that is part of a larger, diversified property, agricultural and renewable energy business. He is also a director of Monopoly Network, a leading property networking organisation in London. Outside of work, Simon is Chair of Trustees for Scotty's Little Soldiers, a Norfolk based charity supporting bereaved children from Armed Forces families. Also, having played his last, but not necessarily final, game of rugby aged 49, he is heavily involved with local rugby. He is a Past President at Huntingdon & District Rugby Club, the current Chair of Huntingdonshire & Peterborough County Rugby Union, and sits on two Committees for the East Midlands Rugby Union. When



time permits, he is also a keen Northampton Saints supporter, particularly enjoying away matches in Europe.

Simon has lived in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire for the past 26 years with his wife Kerry, and has two daughters. Poppy, 25, a Freeman of the Company under the Young Freeman initiative championed by our late Clerk, Major Jollyon Coombs, currently lives and works in Utrecht, and Daisy, 19, is in her second year at Leeds University.

The Autumn Dinner at Haberdashers' Hall

The Autumn Dinner was the first time that the Feltmakers' Company had gathered together since the Plough Monday Dinner on 13 January 2020; a period of 627 days, as we were reminded by the new Master Nigel Macdonald, whose Installation this also honoured.

Our Chaplain, the Reverend Andrew Pritchard-Keens, gave thanks in an elegant Grace for our protection from disaster in this period.

Following the Loyal Toast, was the presentation of the Feltmaker's Award, introduced by Rachel Trevor-Morgan. After congratulating last year's winner, Nora De La Quintana, her successor, Sarah Blackmore, was presented by the Master with a cheque for £1,500 and a Winner's certificate.

In his Toast to the Guests, Third Warden, Jeremy Bedford, noted that our Principal Guest, James Naughtie, FRSE, had the "best voice to wake up to" after *Farming Today* on BBC Radio 4. In a distinguished career, Mr. Naughtie has covered every UK General Election since 1997 and every US Presidential Election since 1988.

In addition, he has presented the Proms and Radio 4 *Bookshop* as well as the *New Elizabethans*. His programmes have been



former Lord Mayor, is now Master Woolman, an appropriate position for someone connected to Bradford. Sir David sits on 25 Trusts and is a Governor of three schools as well as having been Master of five Livery Companies; he can best be described as living a busy life.

In responding on behalf of the Guests, James Naughtie said that both he and the Master were Fellows of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, FRSE. He commented that in this Age of Disruption, when a lot of trust had-

of celebrating in the words sung by Elaine Stritch "Does anyone still wear a hat? I'll drink to that".

The Master thanked Mr. James Naughtie, the Third Warden and Mrs. Rachel Trevor-Morgan for addressing the Livery. He paid tribute to Past Master Lady Yarrow for her leadership of the Livery through what could be considered the most challenging time since the 17th. century. Members of the Livery found at their place-settings a silver spoon with a Feltmaker Hat motif, a gift from immediate PM Lady Yarrow.

During her tenure, our former Clerk for over 20 years, Major Jollyon Coombs, had sadly died. Shortly before he passed, he had successfully handed over to our new Clerk, Brigadier Aidan Smyth. The Master also paid tribute to three members of the Livery who had passed since we last met, Simon Curtis, Ian Thomas and Christopher Reeves.

The outpouring of care and comfort to neighbours during the Pandemic had reminded the Master of the words of John Donne that "No man is an island".

He had recently established an Events Committee which would work alongside the Charity Committee. He announced that there would be a Charity Dinner on 8 July 2022 at the Cutty Sark in aid of the Helen Arkell Charity. Before then we could look forward to the Carol Service due on 1 December 2021.

He thanked the 150 members of the Livery and their Guests for their presence, and it was agreed by all that we had had a most welcome reintroduction to what we hope will be more normal times over a splendid and memorable Autumn Dinner in familiar surroundings of Haberdashers' Hall.

Richard Brumby



characterised throughout by their substance rather than mere form.

We were also joined by three current Livery Masters, including Mr. Daniel Hochberg, Master Haberdasher, who managed to combine a career at the Chancery Bar in Lincoln's Inn, where he is now a Bencher, with a keen musical interest in the harpsichord. Mr. William Makower, who had managed to follow his university studies of Chinese and Japanese with a career in digital transformation, innovation and growth before becoming the Upper Bailiff of the Weavers' Company. Sir David Wootton, a

been broken, the charitable work of the Livery Companies was never more urgently needed. The increase in anger and divisiveness had led to a rise of Absolutism in politics, leading President Putin to observe that "Western democracy is obsolete". The onset of the recent global pandemic, however, had brought out a resilience and community spirit in the UK from which we should learn. The Livery Companies could have a vital role to play in bringing people together and leading political and cultural change, which he felt was embodied in this dinner in Haberdashers' Hall and was worthy

Graeme Gordon's Charity Row

In the early days of the Pandemic when, like World War I, we thought it would all be over by Christmas and the weather was exceptionally kind to us, I was walking my dog on the hills around my house.



It struck me how adversely affected many charities had been and what, if anything, I could do. I wondered if anyone had rowed the entire length of the Thames. Of course, as I thought about it, one cannot row on the Thames for quite a lot of the upper reaches. So, not a 'light-bulb' moment but an idiotic brain dump. "Why don't I do just that?" Run and row from the Source to the City. It should raise enough eyebrows AND money for charity.

It became clear that it's impossible to row from the source before a town called Lechlade. The first 13 miles are basic fields with the Thames a few puddles, then a trickle, a brook and almost a stream. But from Cricklade, some 11 miles before Lechlade, one could paddle a canoe or kayak. So, my big plan was run to Cricklade, paddle to Lechlade then row to the Tower. There are locks in the way. There is the stretch past Richmond which is tidal. One needs permission from the Upper Thames Harbour Master, the Lower Thames Harbour Master, the Environment Agency (EA) and the PLA, to name a few. Plus, I did not own a kayak nor a scull. Neither I did I know how to row a scull.

Fortunately, I was aware that the Para Rowing Squad at Marlow Rowing Club, had to raise funds to make access to the boats and, more importantly, to the water for the squad members. I wanted to raise money for their charity as well as another four which I am close to. This was not only gratefully received but the Para squad coaches volunteered to coach and teach me to row. Additionally, Naomi Riches, who won a Bronze in Beijing and Gold in London 2012, had undertaken a non-stop row from Lechlade to Gravesend. She and her Coach, David

Jackson, had some great data for me and my team to use.

Planning started. Naomi and David gave me some vital info about establishing a small committee to look after the key areas of the event. These were: Chair of the Committee, a Stream, Tide and Passage Planning director, training and support team, athletic welfare and a PR, media and fundraising team.

When I put out a *cri de coeur* for assistance, my kids came running. Sam, a Feltmaker, filled the Chair. The PR/media slots were taken by my son and youngest daughter. My PT said he'd look after welfare and physical training, whilst David & Naomi took on rowing training. (By the way, did I explain that I had, in effect, never rowed before?).

A Past Master Chartered Accountant 'volunteered' her son, who it transpires, is not only the cox of *Gloriana* and runs the family river boat business in Henley, but is also a trained logistics specialist. We were set, so off we started. For me, this meant training six days a week; three on the water and three in the gym. Ready for the off...

But wait! The EA had not cleared trees from the winter of 2019. But we could paddle in a canoe or kayak. And let's plan for 10 June when the Lord Mayor is free to meet me at the Tower.

But wait! The Lord Mayor is now going to the Olympics and won't not be back until the 12th. Next relevant tide sorted; we reschedule to start on the 14th. But wait! Covid is lasting much longer and we won't come out of second lockdown until 21 June. So, whilst I could row, no volunteers could assist fully. OK, we rearrange for 22 - 25 August. But wait! This would clash with my long postponed "Accountants' Master's weekend". No problem. Plan for an overnight flit from the weekend hotel to the start of the Source, (with someone else driving). Done!

But the EA had failed to shift the trees and had done nothing about several more which had fallen since. In short, even the kayak couldn't get through.

I didn't think running over 25 miles on the first morning of this testing event, then rowing at least another 24 was my greatest idea, let alone even possible! So, change gear. Cycle between Cricklade & Lechlade - if possible. It is, but very, very bumpy.

With only five weeks to go, our youngest

daughter came home and contracted Covid. Thus, no training! Out came my (limited) weights in the spare room and we dusted off the static rowing machine...

"D-day" loomed large but then I learned that the other support boat for the tideway had broken down and could not support me. Then its back-up also became unavailable. "Graeme, do not get involved. We will sort it all out. You just concentrate on getting to the start. Running and riding to Lechlade. We will ensure it's all right from there," the support team said. I had complete faith in them and focused on me!

I awoke to a gloriously sunny morning and possibly, for the first time, believed we would succeed to complete that mad idea I had all those months ago.

The RN cutter crew started to arrive, and I thanked them for being there (very conscious they had volunteered). However, they even thanked me for the opportunity to accompany me!

Soaked but delighted, I rowed under Tower



Bridge a fraction after 10:00, whilst the scheduled passage time was 11:14. This was both good news and bad, or more accurately, awkward. It gave us a chance to rest alongside a spare pontoon about 100 metres upstream of HMS President, and allow me to stretch, but to bail too. Awkward, as it meant the reception committee of Lord Mayor Locum Tenens, Sir David Wootton, Sheriff and Commanding Officer of HMS President, were not nearly ready to receive me. They were due to be ready at 11:30, but in fact were able to be ready by 11:00.

I understand they may even have foregone their initial cup of coffee as they hurried to greet me!

Graeme Gordon

Discovering Talent Digitally: The Feltmakers' Design Competition

The Feltmakers' Design Competition was launched 27 years ago to support the roots of the Company and maintain links with colleges. It is open to students and apprentices as well as new start-up businesses.

Entrants must design a hat whose primary component is felt. While there are no particular design rules, the hat or headpiece must work on the head (and be comfortable!), it can be couture or more commercial, well made and able to be reproduced in a workroom. Colleges are encouraged to include the competition in their curriculum so it works as a perfect focus as part of a course. Apprentices and new start-ups also find it a good opportunity to display their skills and design prowess.

As well as the generous financial prizes on offer, the winner gains work experience in Rachel Trevor-Morgan's workroom and an opportunity to work within a more commercial factory setting with Ian Wright in Luton.

The 2021 Design Competition was once again organised a little differently due to the ongoing pandemic. Usually, the hats are judged first-hand, but this year, entrants were requested to send images of their hats, together with the relevant backing information, digitally. All the information was then collated and sent to the judges electronically. Those shortlisted were then asked to send in physical hats and artwork.

The final judging took place on 6 May in St James's. Milliners Rachel Trevor-Morgan, Edwina Ibbotson and Noel Stewart were there in person, along with journalist, Hilary Alexander. Former hat manufacturer, William Horsman, milliner, Eda Rose, and hat journalist, Carole Denford, joined via Zoom. Each hat was discussed and inspected in depth until the final decisions were made. As ever, the quality of entries was extremely high and the winning hats were superb and varied.

Traditionally, all the winning hats are put on display at the annual Livery Banquet at Mansion House but sadly this event was,

once again, unable to take place. However, they were displayed at the Autumn Dinner at Haberdashers' Hall, where the winner was presented with her prize.



1st Prize

Sarah Blackmore, KCC/Morley College HNC graduate (2020)
'Again' inspired by the black shiny plastic tray in a selection box of Christmas biscuits. The Christmas reference anticipates a time when friends and family can once again get together to celebrate.



2nd Prize

Lucy Davies, Student with Justine Bradley-Hill
'Mother of Dragons' – inspired by Game of Thrones. This reflects Daenerys' character: feminine but with a hint of warrior.

3rd Prize

Rebecca Gray, KCC/Morley College
A careful look inside the crown of this beautifully made top hat revealed a scene from Little Red Riding Hood.



Special Category Awards:

Craftsmanship

Fleur Curtis, new starter, Oscar & Willow Millinery
'It's always darkest before the dawn' – a theatrical representation of night and dawn – based on Thomas Fuller's quote.

Commercial Appeal

Lynne Hawkes, new starter, Ellie Millinery
'Metamorphosis' – inspired by glass sculptor, Chihuly, and designed to encapsulate positive change.

Artwork and Presentation

Nike Lachner, Fashion Institute Vienna
'Dorothee' - inspired by the psychological phenomenon of "pareidolia" and the talking flowers from Alice in Wonderland.

Innovative Use of Felt

Nara Taylor, KCC/Morley College
Based on the properties of felt as a filter using acrylic paint, silver leaf, and tufts of merino felt.

Rachel Trevor-Morgan

In Memorium – Major Jollyon Coombs, 1946-2021

This year we lost our beloved Clerk, Major Jollyon Coombs, who died aged 75. He was Clerk to the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers for 20 years and had only sworn in his successor on April 28th 2021, 10 days before his untimely death, his final duty to the Feltmakers completed.

With his military bearing and larger than life personality, Jollyon was a true presence in the Livery world, winning the respect and affection not only of his own Livery but that of his fellow Clerks, as well as staff at the Mansion House, who got to know him well through the many dinners and Hat Presentations he organised.

Jollyon Trevor Hardy Coombs was born on the 25 January, 1946, and attended Hawtreys Prep School before going on to Pangbourne College. On leaving school he was uncertain of the direction he wanted to take but his artistic ability drew him to a course in photography at Bournemouth School of Art



in 1965. However, a year later, he was passing an Army Recruiting office, went in, and signed up for the Welsh Guards and went to Mons Officer Cadet School. By 1976 he had risen to the rank of Major having completed a number of tours of duty in Germany, Northern Ireland, Dubai and Cyprus. A chance meeting with the Commanding Officer of the 16th/5th Lancers, Nick Vivian, was ultimately to lure him away from the Welsh Guards to a “racier” stretch with the Lancers from 1979-1986. Having been assessed for flying at Biggin Hill, he trained to fly helicopters (Gazelles) and thoroughly enjoyed his time with the Lancers. However, in 1986, he left the Army and embarked on the second phase of his career, in the property world. Having completed a re-settlement course at London Polytechnic, David McLean-Watt, a partner at Cluttons, invited him to join the firm, which he did, before being head hunted by Chesterfields run by Brian d’Arcy Clark & David Forbes in 1989, and then Jackson-Stops & Staffs in 1990. By 1992, Jackson-Stops was in difficulty and Jollyon participated in a management buy-out, and took charge of the offices in Chelsea and Fulham. Unfortunately, in 1994 he was extremely ill with pneumonia and decided to sell his share and take up a less stressful role, in a property search business.

It was in 1999, that Jollyon first heard about the possibility of a job as Clerk to the Felt-



makers which was to become the final phase of his career. An old Army chum, Colonel Michael Barneby, was Clerk to the Salters, and knew that the Feltmakers would be looking for a new Clerk to take over from Colonel John Holroyd. After a lengthy interview process, in which Jollyon was the only candidate, he joined the Feltmakers as an “understudy” to John Holroyd in July 2001, taking over in October on the understanding that if the Company didn’t like him, they could sack him after 6 months! Of course, they did like him and the rest is history!

Bill Horsman was his first Master and was very kind and considerate to his new and extremely green Clerk, and Jollyon found that, having served in the Army, he soon “fell in” with the City and its traditions. Court members who were present at his first Court meeting will remember Jollyon’s impressive memory for all the names of both Court members and their partners. His skills did not stop there: he was meticulous in his planning for banquets, revealing a perceptive grasp of the most companionable seating partners and unflappable in the face of “no-shows” or, even more challenging, extra guests to fit in! Nor was he phased by the sight of lady guests in backless dresses, although he drew the line at one Liveryman who arrived in a lounge suit for a banquet! But, as Past Master Burgess, noted in his tribute to Jollyon, there was a percipient, pastoral side to his nature which revealed itself particularly during the lockdown when



he acted almost as an Almoner to those who were bereaved or ailing, and this at a time when his own health was failing.

Jollyon spent his final months compiling his memoirs, chiefly intended for his family, but with Ruthie’s permission, here are his own comments on his time as Clerk.

“My time as Clerk has been blessed, largely because I have enjoyed the whole atmosphere of the Livery, it really is a friendly Company and I like to think that all of you are my friends. As Clerk to the Company and Clerk to the Trustees of the Charity, I have been involved in three Lord Mayors’ Shows, one quatercentenary celebration at the Middle Temple, looked after twenty Masters, organised dinners and lunches for over 10,000 people, attended over 200 meetings, raised £113,000 for Charity, which included rowing down the Thames, rowing across Scotland, walking from Mount Nero to Petra in Jordan, walking across Iceland, walking from Cadiz to Gibraltar and finally rowing an Olympic



course (2000 meters) for every year of my age at the age of 72: all this was largely done to try to encourage other Liverymen to partake in some form of fundraising for the Livery.”

In addition to encouraging fund-raising, it was also Jollyon’s earnest wish that the Livery should focus on encouraging younger people to join and his final initiative was to launch Freedom by Patrimony, open to young relations of all existing members of the Livery.

Jollyon married Sarah Dawnay in 1970 and they had 3 children, Arabella, Daisy and Charlie but later got divorced. In 1990 he met a certain Ruth Owen-Thomas and they married 4 months later on his birthday! Ruthie, as we all know her, has a warm relationship with Jollyon’s children and all the grandchildren too – Rosie, Tilly, Edward, Lily and Kitty. They are supporting her as she faces up to life without Jollyon: at the moment she says it feels almost as though he has just gone on one of the shooting or fishing trips that he so loved. She should take comfort from the knowledge that, not only are the family there to support her, so too are the extended family and friends she can count on in the Feltmakers Livery.

Lady Gilly Yarrow

Major Jollyon Coombs Late Welsh Guards

Shortly after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, Jollyon Coombs, commanding No 2 Company, was warned off with the rest of the Battalion for an emergency UN tour of the island.

A fortnight before the Battalion deployed, Jollyon was asked by a recently married non-commissioned officer if he could remain in the UK on the rear party. Jollyon listened sympathetically before saying in a deadpan voice, 'we're all having to make sacrifices and I, for one, am having to give up what promises to be an exceptional partridge and pheasant shooting season'. It was a measure of the affection in which Jollyon was held by his guardsmen and officers that his response attracted general merriment.

Jollyon wore three different cap badges during his army career but, in his heart, he was always a Welsh Guardsman. It was with the Regiment that he made his life-long friends and, in return, they repaid his friendship with loyalty and great warmth. He was one of the most brightly plumed officers of his generation, a mosaic that saw him as a platoon commander, intelligence officer and company commander in the Welsh Guards, a pilot in the Army Air Corps, a squadron commander in the 16/5th Lancers (now the Queen's Royal Lancers); and, later in civilian life, as an estate agent, never venturing further than Kensington and Chelsea, and Clerk to one of the great livery companies.

Jollyon was educated at Pangbourne Nautical College, a school to which he was temperamentally ill-suited, but where he excelled at sports, particularly shooting, winning the Trafalgar Shooting Cup every year, a record that still stands today. After Pangbourne, Jollyon tried his hand at photography at Bournemouth College of Art, attracted by the racy lives led by the fashionable photographers of the 'swinging sixties', David Bailey, Tony Armstrong-Jones and Terence Donovan. By chance, one day, Jollyon stepped into an army recruiting office where the recruiting sergeant, taking one look at his broad 6ft 2 frame and fine, untroubled presence, remarked to him that he knew a potential Guards officer when he saw one.

An interview was arranged with the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel, Vivian Wallace, whose only question to Jollyon was if he could manage £500 a year extra to keep his head above water.

Jollyon had Welsh blood and a connection to the Regiment through his mother's family, the Lewis's of Llanelli, who owned the popular Felinfoel brewery; his father's family owned a hugely successful sweet firm, Clark, Nichol and Coombs in London. Jollyon's first car, aged 17, a British racing green 3 1/2 litre Bentley was, therefore, well within his grasp. Jollyon was commissioned in 1966, towards the end of the Battalion's tour of Aden. The Regiment, short-sightedly, did not send him to Aden for the last ten weeks of the tour and, instead, he was posted to the Guards Depot. It was a decision that Jollyon much



regretted. An operational tour, albeit a brief one, would have allowed him to understand better the lives of the Welsh Guardsmen he was to command. He spent the next five years no more than an hour from Hyde Park Corner.

The Troubles in Northern Ireland and the Battalion's deployments to Belfast in the tense and perilous days of 1971/2, the worst two years for British Army casualties, gave Jollyon his first proper taste of soldiering. He was made intelligence officer, an appointment he carried out in the full knowledge that any intelligence worth having was under lock and key with Special Branch and MI5. He nevertheless brought his own unique style of soldiering to the task with fifteen pegs outside his office for his 'intelligence gathering hats': flat hat, Trilby, French beret, baseball cap, Fez, Fedora, Homburg, etc. The brigade commander, the peppery and laconic Frank Kitson, and master of subversion in the Mau Mau uprising, was not amused.

The Battalion's deployment to Cyprus in the autumn of 1975 on behalf of the UN was the perfect backdrop for Jollyon's leadership style. Commanding No 2 Company, Jollyon was responsible for 32 kms of the Attila Line, held by the Turks in their standoff with the Greeks. He immediately replaced his standard issue UN Land Rover with a dark blue MGB GT. One of Jollyon's platoon commanders, fresh out of Sandhurst, has never forgotten his first evening with Jollyon. 'I was keen to make a good impression as we had been invited to dinner with the Finnish contingent where a number of Turkish officers were present. The dinner ended with everyone firing their pistols into the ceiling to carve out their names, followed by a sauna onto which Lakka (a liqueur derived from cloudberries) had been thrown. I walked outside into the cool scented air and

immediately passed out'.

Jollyon had the additional role as British Liaison Officer, a task well suited to his natural charm and gift for friendship. There was only one minor setback when he made the Turkish brigade commander cross a river to meet him as he did not want to ruin his bespoke pair of Lobb shoes.

At the age of 30, Jollyon realised that commanding the Battalion was not within his reach, not helped by his tendency to bawl out senior officers with whom he had a disagreement, usually over something which affected the Guardsmen's welfare, with his customary refrain, 'now look here, buster'. Given his love of speed and ability to fly by the seat of his pants, it was only natural that Jollyon should apply to join the Army Air Corps. His final test at Middle Wallop was to fly blindfolded for 20 minutes and then, unmasked, tell the instructor exactly where they were. By sheer chance, he ended up half a kilometre from a friend's house and told the instructor his exact position.

Fortune continued to shine brightly on Jollyon with his first posting to command the 16th /5th Lancers Air Squadron in Germany. It was a happy period of his life. A Welsh Guards friend rang Jollyon one day, only to be told by the Air Squadron Sergeant Major that he was unavailable. 'Ah, he must be flying', remarked the friend to which the response was, 'no sir, Major Coombs is away skiing, he doesn't fly in the winter'. The Commanding Officer, Nick Vivian, was an old friend from Cyprus and eventually persuaded Jollyon to transfer to the Regiment, first commanding a squadron and then the Gunnery School at Lulworth in Dorset. Jollyon was always much in demand for shooting weekends as he remained to the end a very fine shot. His game book made for good reading: '20 partridges with 20 shots on one drive in Northumberland; 25 grouse with 27 shots in Aberdeen; 30 pheasants in 30 shots in Hampshire'.

Jollyon left the army on his 40th birthday. London was on the up, the baby boomers were making money, and flats and houses had to be found for them in the better parts of town. Jollyon joined the upmarket firm of Chesterfields, sold 62 Chester Square three times in three years for £2.5m, £3.25m and £4.5m and the whole of the north side of Edwardes Square to a developer for £16m. When Jollyon received his diagnosis of terminal cancer, the sense of optimism and *sang-froid*, which he had borne throughout his life, did not desert him. Remarking to a friend, 'the day of reckoning is fast approaching but I should get one more shooting season in'.

After Jollyon died, a former platoon commander of his wrote, 'Jollyon was a man of style, elegance, a *bon viveur*, amusing, charming, witty and warm. It was always a pleasure to be around him'.

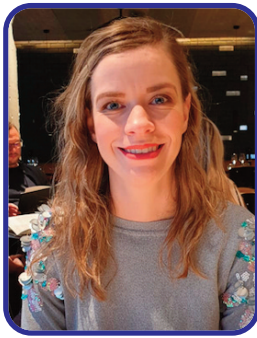
Paul de Zulueta, formerly Welsh Guards

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Summer 2021

Fresh Faces for the Feltmakers

My initial introduction to the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers began in December 2016, when I was invited by cousin, Rebecca (Beckie) Nelson, to attend the Christmas Carol Service at St

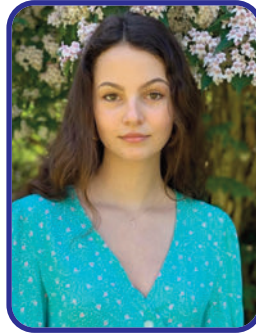


Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield. This was a joyous affair, made even more atmospheric by the flickering candlelight and the choral singers, who delighted us with their traditional Christmas carols. Continuing in the spirit of Christmas, in 2017, I was asked to assist with the Feltmakers' stand at the Red Cross Christmas Market at Guildhall. This was a wonderful and festive experience, and I saw at first-hand the fantastic designs and millinery techniques used to create the hats being sold by the Company. Additionally, I had the opportunity to peruse the many wares of the market, which included Christmas trinkets, exotic smelling candles and ointments, and delicious chutneys! Having attended the Lord Mayor's Show in 2019, I was captivated by the history and traditions of the City of London, being paraded (quite literally!) in front of me, and was thrilled in 2020 when I was encouraged to apply for Admission to the Freedom of the Company. Following my in-person experience with the Company, what attracted me most to the Feltmakers, was the sense of community and belonging amongst Liverymen, as well as the friendliness of every Liveryman and Freeman I had met.

Following a successful Zoom interview with the Wardens and Lady Gilly Yarrow, I was invited, alongside Miss Scarlett Bedford, on 17th September to be sworn in by the Clerk at the Army & Navy Club in St James'. Coincidentally, it also happened to be my birthday, and what a birthday treat this was! I now wish my husband best of luck, next year, in trying to find me a better birthday present than the Freedom of the City of London! Going forward, and as a former educator and someone with an avid passion for history, I hope that I can be of service to the Livery – be this through helping preserve the Company's archival material, furthering the its relationship with schools or by helping organise events with the Events Committee or Charity Committee. Having re-organised my own wedding seven times due to COVID, I now consider myself a dab hand at event planning!

Sarah McGrath

Becoming a part of the Livery was something I had always considered before being sworn in earlier this year. Having grown up with a father and grandfather who are both longstanding Feltmakers, I was always interested in what being a member of the Livery entailed. Additionally, as a second-year undergraduate reading History at Durham



University, I was particularly attracted to the Livery's rich history, in which I have now had the opportunity to be fully immersed. It was a complete honour to become the third generation in my family to be so warmly welcomed into the Livery. Attending the Feltmakers' Dinner in October only made me feel even more at ease with my decision, especially through meeting lots of new people, as well as lots of young people who like me, had only recently joined.

Scarlett Bedford

My first experience of the Feltmakers was being taken as a child on a float in the Lord Mayor's Show on a cold November day by my father, the current Fourth Warden.



Having completed my Modern Languages degree at Bath University in 2017, I subsequently attended both the Carol Service at St Bartholomew's Church and the Banquet at Mansion House, both of which were a lot warmer than my first encounter with the Company!

I was delighted when I heard about the Young Feltmakers initiative, and jumped at the chance to join the Company as a Freeman, being sworn in over Zoom by Past Master Lady Yarrow. Everyone that I have met in the Livery has been so friendly and welcoming, and whilst I am currently living and working in Utrecht in the Netherlands, I hope to attend many functions and be involved fully just as soon as travel becomes a little easier.

Poppy Millar

A Warm Welcome to our New Clerk



Brigadier Aidan Smyth has enjoyed a 30 year career in the search and selection industry, focusing on financial services recruitment within fund management, private equity and hedge funds. He has worked for a number of UK quoted companies and also several young, high growth firms. He was European Head of Financial Services at a large Australian quoted company before starting his own consultancy in 2010, advising clients on the identification, attraction, assessment and retention of talent.

Throughout his career, Aidan served with the Army Reserve, commissioning into the Royal Engineers in 1989, qualifying as a bomb disposal officer in 1990 and serving at regimental duty before commanding his squadron. He was mobilised to serve in Iraq in 2003 where he was responsible for providing infrastructure support to all British forces in Northern & Southern Iraq. In 2008, he took command of 101 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), a hybrid regiment with three Regular Army & two Army Reserve squadrons which delivered EOD, search and specialist resilience operational capabilities in UK, Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan. As a Colonel, he was a Brigade Deputy Commander and a Staff Officer in the Ministry of Defence. As a Brigadier, he has served as Deputy Commander Army Recruiting and Training Division, Deputy Director Land Warfare and Deputy Military Secretary (Reserves). Aidan is a graduate of the Canadian Forces Advanced Command & Staff Course, a graduate of the Royal College of Defence Studies and he holds a Masters from Cranfield University. He is married to Susan and they have one daughter, Eleanor, who is currently studying medicine at Exeter University. He is a trustee of several regimental and service charities including the Army Central Fund.

Catch up with our Committees

The Charity Committee

The last year and a half has been relatively quiet for our chosen charity, the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity, with no real ability to stage live events. However, despite that setback, the Charity has weathered lockdown pretty well, and once restrictions



started to ease, it got back to normal very quickly. Remote assessments were initially banned by the Specific Learning Difference (SpLD) Standards Committee but fortunately they relented and the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity was eventually able to assess remotely.

A team of four golfers, Nick Lee and guest, Jeremy Brassington and Graham Peart, took part in the Helen Arkell golf day at Worplesdon Golf Club on 14 October. Our team won no prizes, but the day was well attended by 40 golfers and raised over £10,000 for the Charity.

In early November, the Master attended a reception and lunch event at West Dean College to mark its 50th Anniversary. Andy Cook, CEO of the Helen Arkell Charity, gave a powerful speech on where the Charity currently stands and its future plans, and he was joined by a beneficiary who told their own moving story. Andy Cook and Hazel Radnor, Fundraising and Communications Officer, shared this report on how the Feltmakers have made a difference to the Charity and to the people who benefit from our support:

“So far, a total of 25 people have received the dyslexia support they need, thanks to the generosity of the Feltmakers. People like Rachael who wants to make her children proud of her.

During the pandemic, we have moved as many of our charitable activities as possible online and to video call, so we are still able to help people with specialist one to one support whether they are at home, school or work. Many are in financial difficulties due to furlough, pay cuts and redundancies. We led the way in providing online assessments for adults with dyslexia in the workplace, helping them to gain the reasonable adjustments they required in order to work effectively. Our centre and hubs have been open for face-to-face assessments when possible, and our courses are continuing to run with a mixture of online and face-to-face learning.

Last year, we directly supported 1,028 children, young people and adults, through specialist one-to-one dyslexia assessments, tuition and coaching. A further 1,126 individuals attended dyslexia-related training, courses and workshops.”

Our Charity Committee is looking at ways to encourage greater engagement from the Livery and will be working with the Foundation, the Events Committee and the Master and Wardens to foster a better connection with every member.

Jeremy Brassington

The Feltmakers' Charitable Foundation

On 31 March 2021, John Ray retired as Chairman of Trustees, after many years of successfully managing the activities with thoroughness, foresight and care, and we all owe him a huge debt of gratitude. Fortunately, John has agreed to continue as Treasurer and as a Trustee, which is much appreciated, and I have replaced him as Chairman. Including the Master, our Clerk and myself, there are a total of eight Trustees.

Our former Clerk, Major Jollyon Coombs, retired on 28 April 2021, after serving the Charitable Foundation for 20 years. Sadly he died shortly afterwards. All Trustees, past and present, have recorded their deep gratitude to him for all that he did during his time as Clerk, not least for the sums that he raised by rowing and walking. The Foundation and the charities it has supported have benefitted by well in excess of £100,000 from his efforts over many years.

As with other charities, the Foundation's income from grants and donations fell this year. However, the Trustees would like to express their thanks to all Liverymen who continue to contribute to the St Clement's initiative, which when combined with gift aid, increases the amount available for outgoing grants.

Legacies are also an important source of additional income for the Foundation. This year, the Foundation has been able to make new grants to support the following:

- * The Livery Kitchen Initiative, providing meals to NHS staff during the pandemic
- * Liverymen in the millinery trade who were struggling due to the pandemic
- * Increased funding to Providence Row who provide food and accommodation to homeless people.

As we approach 2022, we look forward to supporting the Master's Charity event on 8 July aboard the Cutty Sark.

The Trustees would also welcome ideas for fundraising activities from Liverymen, and are always receptive to any new suggestions for grant making opportunities made by our Liverymen.

Peter Simeons

Enhancing the Livery Experience

The creation of the Events Committee (EC) was a necessary reaction to the impact the Pandemic was likely to have on Livery Life. The Master and Wardens were keen that all Feltmakers should be offered opportunities to re-engage on terms that suited each individual and the task was to identify and research suitable events beyond those already scheduled in the Livery Calendar. The Committee currently consists of Court Assistants, Sarah McLeod, Simon Wood and Emma Whittaker, plus myself.

Most events will take place under the Livery Society banner but our Events Committee is there to further enhance memorable occasions that we hope will be unique and of interest to all Livery members. We are particularly keen to hear from Freemen and



Apprentices of the Feltmakers Company who may have ideas for Events.

We launched our first event at the Autumn Dinner with a “Meet and Support our Working Milliners” who were invited as our Guests. It's hoped that in Spring 2022 we, can follow this with a lunch event where our Milliners can showcase their latest collections with the opportunity for all attendees to place orders.

Other plans are being hatched including potential LSO “Taster” concert trips, walking tours of “hidden”



London, an evening at Windsor Races, a trip to Henley Royal Regatta and a visit to Twickenham to watch the Varsity match.

But the most important part of this new Livery initiative is engagement with all Livery folk. This is

your Events Committee and your suggestions and involvement are welcomed. Creating memorable occasions is our aim and I look forward to seeing you at one of our events in 2022! So keep checking The Feltmakers' website and alerts from our Clerk in your in-box!

Neil Edwards

Wear a Hat Day 2021



Wear a Hat Day (WAHD) was the culmination of the Brain Tumour Awareness Month Campaign.

The British Hat Guild fully supports this cause and all members posted images of their hats being worn on social media and encouraged friends, family and celebrities to post images of themselves wearing a hat, and of course, to donate to this very important cause. It was particularly pleasing that Stephen Fry supported the event on Twitter. His tweets have a huge following and it certainly helped towards making WAHD trend on Twitter that day. Over 30 members of The Archers cast took part and helped to spread the word. I was interviewed on "Wonderbirds", a YouTube and Facebook chat show which has a huge following, so I was delighted to have the opportunity to encourage a larger audience to support and donate to the wonderful Brain Tumour Research charity. Many badges designed by our celebrity Milliners were sold to raise more money, too.

A huge thank you to all of the Feltmakers who donned hats during the evening Zoom talk! The speaker, Ian Swankie, from the Art Scholars' Livery, also generously donated his fee to Brain Tumour Research.

The next WAHD will be 25 March, 2022 and I encourage everyone to take part again. For more information on future events, visit the site:

<https://www.braintumourresearch.org/fundraise/wear-a-hat-day-events>

Judy Bentinck

The Art of Turning Heads

Past Master Eda Rose-Lawson, was interviewed for a lengthy feature in *Luxure* magazine. Eda studied dress design and sculpture at Goldsmiths College of Art; little wonder then that her millinery is described as "visions of wearable sculpture", imbued with glamour.

Eda is a lively raconteur and peppers her anecdotes with the likes of Lucienne Phillips, doyenne of 1970s London, who initially declined to make a purchase from the young Eda, until an American customer breezed in and was enchanted with the contents of Eda's hat boxes! Her creations have also been worn by Diana, Princess of Wales, a

pivotal influence in the 1980s millinery boom.

The article closes with this quote from Eda: "If my legacy is anything, I would like it to be that I turned heads for my clients. I want them to experience a wonderful transformation and above all to feel elegant and glamorous".

O Holy Night



For the first time since December 2019, the Feltmakers and their guests gathered together in the City of London's oldest church, St Bartholomew the Great, for candlelit Lessons and Carols.

In keeping with tradition, the service commenced with a soprano soloist singing the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City*.

We were given a warm welcome on a cold night by Dr. Evan McWilliams, the Church's Hospitaller, who wore his Canterbury Cap in honour of our Company.

Our Chaplain gave a thought-provoking address whose theme was *Hope for the World*. He reminded us that Jesus Christ, the source of light and hope, gave His life so that we could enjoy the gift of peace and hope in a new life after death. He illustrated this with examples from WW2, which he gleaned as a Chaplain for the British Legion, when, in their darkest hours and depths of despair, servicemen had clung on to light, either literally or figuratively.

To illustrate the Company's support for the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity, the typeface chosen for the Order of Service was one that people with dyslexia find easier to read because the style of certain letters is similar to handwriting.

Afterwards, we enjoyed a hearty and informal repast at Haberdashers' Hall. Past Master, David Bentata, led the thanks to all who had contributed to this special evening. He shared a Jewish greeting and noted that the first Sunday of Advent (28 November) had coincided with Hanukkah, the festival of light! Our Master closed the evening with a toast to our guests. A perfect start to Advent.

Rebecca Nelson

Dyers and Salters Demonstrate Winning Streak in the Tennis



The Inter Livery Tennis Competition took place this year at The Hurlingham, after a one year interregnum, as our normal venue, Queen's Club, is being redeveloped. The 24 teams comprised a broad range of companies, and we were pleased to see our steadfast players, the Tallow Chandlers, the Mercers and the Cordwainers returning, as well as new players from the Dyers, the Architects and the Actuaries. As usual, there is a Main Draw and a Plate competition, with the Dyers overcoming the Fishmongers to win the Plate. The main competition was extremely competitive, with Chris Kurkjian of the Tallow Chandler's Company and his sister, Alex Maxwell-Brodie, previous 8 times winners, exiting at the Quarter Final stage. The draw wide open, the Salters beat 2019 Winners, the Drapers, in the Final 12-10 in the tie-break.

We did not field a Feltmakers' team this year, however Assistant, Simon Wood, stepped in to play two matches with the Dyers (winners of the Plate), when a player had to attend hospital to have a dislocated finger fixed.

A very pleasant dinner ensued in The Terrace Room, and the Master spoke engagingly about Feltmaking, as well as presenting prizes. We would also like to thank Liveryman, Bruce Fraser, for his organisation skills in running the tennis competition.

Everyone's a Winner at the 2021 Inter Livery Bridge Competition

On Monday, 6 September, the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards again hosted the annual Inter Livery Bridge competition, with 18 pairs participating online. This year, the Feltmakers were represented by Elaine Howard and her partner, Paul Singer. Despite the light-hearted mood when 'chatting' online during play, the competition was as challenging as ever. First prize went to the Tin Plate Workers and the second and third prizes to the Makers of Playing Cards themselves.

It was therefore surprising that the Feltmaker duo was advised that they too had won a prize as one of three pairs whose score was closest to 50%, the other two Livery Companies being the Gardeners and the Founders. Although delighted to be the



recipients of two splendid engraved crystal tumblers, it was felt that a better score would have been even more welcome!

Elaine Howard

Those We Sadly Lost in 2021



Christopher Reeves



Ian Thomas



Joyce Nash, OBE, CC

***May they rest in peace
and rise in glory***

2022 Events

Jan-2022	Event	Venue
Mon 31 Jan	Livery Society Dinner	Oriental Club
Feb-2022		
Thu 17 Feb	Luton Hoo Lunch	Luton Hoo Hotel
Apr-2022		
Mon 4 Apr	Spring Livery Dinner	Vintners' Hall
Thu 7 Apr	Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch	Guildhall
Mon 25 Apr	Sechseläuten Spring Festival	Zurich (Fri 22 to Tues 26 April)
Jun-2022		
Wed 8 Jun	Feltmakers' Banquet	Mansion House
Fri/Sat 17/18 Jun	Becket Pageant and Livery Crafts Fair	Guildhall Yard
Jul-2022		
Fri 8 Jul	Master Feltmakers' Charity Event	Cutty Sark
Oct-2022		
Fri 7 Oct	Installation Dinner	Haberdashers' Hall

2021 in Pictures

