

# The Feltmaker



The Magazine of the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers Winter 2022 Master: Neil Edwards Issue No. 46

## Our Master's Address

Active Livery participation has always been my "thing". Charity swimming for the Company in my 30s, golfing and Livery Society events in my 40s and being a Warden and now Master in my 50s.

Finlay, thank you for your kind words and memories of our rugby days and for proposing the toast to the Master and Feltmakers' Company. You were an



inspiration and I quote from your Wikipedia page: "Calder's ability to use his drive, determination and innate knowledge of the game helped him become one of the most effective back row operators of the modern era. If he and the other two members of the Grand Slam back row - John Jeffrey and Derek White - could not impose their own game, they certainly would make sure that the opposition could not impose theirs; all within the laws of Rugby Union, of course!"

A well-known International Full Back voted you the person he would least likely want to enter a lift with after a certain tackle you made on him in an international match. So, on his behalf, may I present you the picture he holds in his head every time a lift door opens.



Thank you too, Sir William, for your excellent toast to our guests. Seeing you complete back-to-back terms as Lord Mayor of London whilst being a member of this Company is a unique privilege for all Feltmakers.

I must also offer sincere thanks and appreciation to our immediate Past Master, Nigel Lock Macdonald, and his wife, Maggie. Nigel applied his deep knowledge of hatting, as Chairman of the family business, Locks, with his unbridled energy to put the Feltmakers straight back on the map as we emerged from the hiatus caused by Covid.

I am especially pleased that HMS Lancaster is represented by Commander Paul Irving, Commanding Officer - Port Crew. Lancaster now has two crews, a Port Crew and a Starboard Crew, who deploy six months on and six months off from the Ship which is continually operational. It is now 31 years of close association between HMS Lancaster and our Company and the interest, enthusiasm and friendship your Commanders and representatives have shown to us land lubbers is warmly appreciated. Some Feltmakers visited the

ship in June, prior to it departing in August on a three-year deployment. Given the rotational aspects of two crews, I hope we can find an invitation to further friendships during my year.

My Master and Wardens Team share 115 years of combined livery experience. We seem to find a quick and sensible solution to just about anything that's presented to us and I'm confident with the addition of our new fourth warden, Sarah McLeod, the A in A Team is only going to get bigger and better as our plans come together!

I wish to welcome my family, particularly my parents, Sandy and Barry who put the City into my blood by sending me to the City of London School and for their unconditional support in following my rugby career to every nook and cranny there is on the map. Indeed, on one occasion at Lansdowne Road in Dublin, the Irish forward pack had done their very best to retire me from the match from minute one! When they eventually succeeded in minute 78, I was led from the field by the Scotland doctor holding a bandage to my face that was increasingly changing colour. My mother rushed from her seat in the main stand down towards the team bench as I reached the touch line. As one steward looked awkwardly to the other, the second steward shouted: "Leave it, Seamus, that will be the mother!"

*Continued on next page*

### Inside This Issue

The return of live dining

All aboard the Cutty Sark

Sechseläuten - through the eyes of a British girl

S'Summerbankett - dur d'Auge vo zwei Waag Jungzoifter

**Master:** Neil Edwards

**Wardens:** Simon Wilkinson, Jeremy Bedford, Simon Millar, Sarah McLeod

**Immediate Past Master:** Nigel Macdonald **Clerk:** Aidan Smyth Registered at Stationers' Hall

**Editorial Committee:** Sarah McLeod, Rebecca Nelson, Graeme Gordon, Carole Denford, Mark Williams

## Our Master's Address continued

I wager there have not been many newly installed Masters who have had both parents in attendance.

We will continue our relationship with the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity while we select our new charity following a three year rolling pattern. My Master's Charity Event next spring will be a day at Twickenham with an old-fashioned picnic in the car park at the Oxford and Cambridge Varsity match. So wear your charitable Scrum Cap to get hold of some unique rugby memorabilia.

We are a friendly and unassuming Livery and I'm confident there is not a guest who leaves without a positive feeling or fond memory of the Feltmakers and this is what I wish to build upon in as Master.

We have an Events Committee under the stewardship of myself, Simon Millar, Sarah McLeod, Simon Wood and Emma Whitaker which is tasked with identifying a range of activities to encourage participation and build on our friendly reputation. In November, we will visit Kew Gardens. Next year's activities include a revisit to

Greenwich's Trafalgar Tavern for a Victorian whitebait lunch and also a trip to Henley.

One of the cornerstone events in the Livery year is the Carol Service. This year, it is at St. James' Church, Piccadilly, a Wren Church, with a sumptuous Grinling Gibbons organ case that dominates the west end of the nave.

Master Haberdasher, thank you for allowing the Feltmakers to dine in your Hall this evening and making the Installation Dinner the memorable occasion it has been for me.

Finally, my wife, Nicki, joins me in wishing you all a safe journey home but before we part company, please join me for a Stirrup Cup.

Abridged from the Master's speech on 7th October 2022

## Our New Master



I am the founder and chief executive of Green Parking which provides boutique parking services to the property industry. I have built and run two additional parking businesses, one of which was sold to NCP in 2002.

I qualified and trained as a Chartered Surveyor with Healey and Baker in 1988.

Beyond work and the Livery, I sit on the committee of the East India Club and I am a keen sportsman, having played rugby for Harlequins, the Barbarians and Scotland, earning six caps during my playing career. These days, time is spent following Quins from the stands, as well as enjoying racing over the flat and jumps.

I am married to Nicki with whom I have a son, Jamie, who is an actor and illustrator and a daughter, Jody, who is enjoying a successful sporting life and has recently graduated from Leeds Beckett University.

Having joined the Feltmakers in 1997, I was elected to the Court in 2007 and installed as Master Feltmaker on 7th October, 2022.

## New Fourth Warden Follows Family Tradition

Sarah McLeod was educated at Bedford High School and after completing a Certificate of Management, she worked at John Lewis before joining the family's engineering business for many years. She is now the Business and Events Manager at the Institution of Agricultural Engineers. Sarah was delighted to join the Livery in 1994 (having been refused admission as the first female apprentice several years previously!). She follows her father, Past Master Geoffrey Farr MBE DL, her grandfather and great grandfather as Liverymen and was thrilled when earlier this year, her younger son, Oliver, was admitted to the Company. Her elder son, Jack, is a Freeman.

Sarah joined the Court in 2008 and was Chair of the Livery Society between 2009 and 2012. She is looking forward to her participation as a Warden.

Away from work and the Livery, Sarah enjoys spending time with her husband Rob, walking her dogs, gardening and travel.



# The “Lions’ King” is Guest Speaker at the Installation Dinner

As the warm summer air turns distinctly chilly, leaves turn from vivid green to golden and shocking purple and the Installation Dinner, “Aide Memoire” arrives in the post, one can breathe easily in the knowledge of the strong and repeating “Charlie Watts” drum beat to the Livery Year.



The ritual preparation for the dinner follows the same pattern. By late afternoon the dinner jacket is recovered from the furthest reaches of the wardrobe and the hunt for the Livery badge, commences in some earnest.

Train times checked – tick, absence of rail strikes checked – tick, underground operating – tick, so good to go. Last minute adjustment – pouring rain, so pick up the last umbrella which has not been left on public transport and head towards the local station for a fast train to Farringdon. For some unknown reason this has become the slow train.

Arrive at Farringdon Station, umbrella up, and collar turned to provide a further weather shield. The walk to the Haberdashers’ Hall lies upstream to the flow of City workers fleeing their desks for suburban homes, passed the office workers spilling out on to the pavement outside the oddly named “Bishops Finger” pub where Bob Seger’s “Night Moves” is playing from somewhere inside.

A short chat to our Clerk to confirm arrangements for hosting the guest speaker, Finlay Calder O.B.E., then back to the entrance to await his arrival. Easy to spot with tartan trews, introductions made and back to the drinks reception. Over champagne, a lively discussion covering a range of topics - family, the British Lions tour of Australia in 1989, his post rugby career in grain trading and his experiences of working for global commodity company, Glencore, and, of course, his time working in the whiskey industry. We touched on

the difficulties facing amateur and professional rugby – which Finlay covered in his later talk. Finlay had great empathy with the Feltmakers, the Livery community and the charitable purposes and objectives which lie at their root. A thoroughly engaging conversation and superb guest. The rhythmic clapping, reminiscent of an Icelandic football crowd, announced the entrance into the dining room of the Master’s procession. Fine robes and hats adjourned the party. Grace was said – praying for our late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and followed by the “Selkirk Grace” – “but we have meat and we can eat so let the Lord be thanked.” Apt as the menu featured braised beef.

There followed two presentations – a wonderful, prayer scarf featuring a quality embroidered Feltmakers coat of arms was presented to our Chaplin, and to Finlay Calder, a picture captioned, “the man least likely to get into a lift with.” Perhaps so, when preparing to face the Aussies or embark on a Hong Kong Sevens campaign, but not now.



We are all seated in the wood panelled dining hall, described as, “modern, comfortable, light and easy to access” by my wonderful dinner companion. Over dinner we grazed through smoked salmon, beef, tart tatin and with each course supported by splendid wine. Coffee and a 1994 Port to round-off the journey.

Dual “Liveryman” and past Lord Mayor, Alderman Sir William Russell, proposed a toast to the guests, including Paul Irving Captain of HMS Lancaster type 32 frigate – Port Crew (not the 1994 variety) and a “complicated ship”. The Master of “All Companies” representing our twin Livery in Zurich was in attendance. His CV would have graced the “Court & Social” section of The Daily Telegraph”.

Finlay Calder proposed the toast to “The Worshipful Company of Feltmakers and the Master.” Although Finlay didn’t highlight



that our new Master had a Welsh surname, was brought up in London and played internationally for Scotland – the ultimate “Tricorn” sportsman, he did entertain us with, “How the Rugby Sevens” squad was selected. There were two parts to the selection: lunch at the East India Club and availability at Heathrow at short notice. Although a transfer request was submitted for Serge Blanco, the legendary French full-back for inclusion in the squad it was decided that our Master (with no knowledge of playing Sevens rugby) was rightly preferred. Finlay’s Sevens team went all the way to the semi-finals to face an Australian team featuring Michael Lynagh and David Campese.

Finally, Finlay left us with the immortal quote, “when a man says he got rich through hard work, ask him whose.” A quote I intend to own and quote at the right moment.

The tolling bell for the year ahead lets everyone know that the Master intends the Livery to be active – the Varsity Match at Twickenham in April, car park picnics and “heads or tails”, and rowing at Henley – spectating rather than participating. The next call-out for The Worshipful Company of Feltmakers of London being the December carol service, this year to be held at St James’ Piccadilly – so not too far from the East India Club if anyone wishes to step forward to take part in the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens next spring! Onwards!

**Tim Stocks**

# Sechseläuten 2022- through the eyes of a British girl

How to digest the Sechseläuten weekend? I feel as though my feet have only just touched the ground! From walking through the streets of Zurich wearing a cloak and top hat in front of a marching band at 1.00am to climbing up the bell tower of Europe's largest clock face and drinking white wine, all before 10.00am. How does one even begin to comprehend a wild weekend celebrating Sechseläuten



and the burning of the Böögg? I'm grateful to live in this age of documentation as I feel without proof of the above statements, nobody would believe the weekend we have encountered. I can wholeheartedly confirm that the Swiss know how to party! How lucky I feel to have been not only invited but to be so involved in the events of the weekend. We were welcomed so warmly by everyone; not once did we encounter a complaint or even frown, the positive energy was ripe throughout the celebrations.

The weekend celebrations began on the Saturday when my father, Simon Wilkinson, Nigel and Maggie Macdonald and I flew in from London and were picked up at the airport by Renato Compostella and René Kalt. As they drove us to our hotel, we even received a free tour! It seemed every building we passed had a wonderful and rich history. René very kindly organised a traditional Swiss dress for me known as a 'Tracht,' which I would be required to wear for the young guildsmen's ball known as the Lungzünfterball, and during the parade on the Monday. The evening commenced with aperitifs outside the Fishmongers' Hall. A band played while wine flowed, and young guildsmen and guests arrived dressed in a splendour of 18th century costumes from their Guild Houses. A great photo opportunity to be had! Then the crowds dispersed to their selected Guild Houses where they would be dining that evening. After enjoying a delicious three course meal and copious

amounts of wine, I was then informed that a disco would be held on the floor below, which I found quite hard to believe given the age of the building and the restrictive costumes many young guildsmen were wearing. However, I was, as I continued to be for the rest of the weekend, impressed by the enthusiasm of the Swiss. The dance floor and bar were filled with chatting young guildsmen and guests, roars of laughter could be heard all around the Guild House and just as I started to settle in and get my dancing shoes on, I was informed that we were heading to another Guild House to continue the evening's frivolities. It was at this point I asked, "Are we doing a Guild House crawl, similar to a pub crawl in England?" to which I was met with an enthusiastic "Yes!". We ended up going to two other Guild Houses before I had to throw in the towel and save myself for the rest of the weekend. As I returned to my hotel at 4.00am I realised I'd been awake for 24 hours.

On Sunday, rain fell on what I presumed to be a hungover Zurich, yet again I was surprised to find that everyone was up early and ready for the children's parade. Feeling rather fragile after drinking my weight in wine and dancing till the early hours of the morning, I went to meet my father and the rest of the British guests at the Waag, accompanied by René and Renato, but was caught out by the parade. After spending what felt like an eternity parallel to the unbreakable meander of the parade, I decided there was no way I would be able to cross and get to where I need to be, so I decided to give in and phone my father to alert him of my lateness and ask for directions. When he asked what I was near, I looked over my right shoulder to see two live camels being pulled through the parade and uttered "you wouldn't believe me if I told you". The parade was filled with smiling children waving at the crowds, all dressed in a rainbow of costumes from all over the world. Once I met up with the other British guests, I enjoyed a well-earned bratwurst sausage. We proceeded to a beautifully decorated bar but as beers were passed round, I clung very firmly to my cup of tea, best to avoid alcohol for at least today I thought. The atmosphere was filled with hearty conversation amongst the Swiss and British. Comparisons of previous Sechseläuten were discussed by



seasoned participants, such as David and Linda Bentata, who were very familiar with the weekend's events and the complex history of the city. It was wonderful to indulge in conversation with these newlyweds, there wasn't a question about the guilds they couldn't answer. As the rest of the guests enjoyed a hearty dinner, I headed back to the hotel for an early night.

Monday morning broke with a nutty muesli and strong coffee. Whilst digesting, we walked into the city centre where we were met by an impressively energetic René. As we caught up on the prior evening's antics, he informed me that he had only four hours' sleep, yet another resilient Swiss attitude - but just the first that we would experience that day. After climbing the 187 steps up the St Peter clock tower, we were met with panoramic views of the city. It is easy to imagine hundreds of years ago how vital this view-point would have been for alerting the city of fires and other disasters. As we made our way down, we were greeted by the band which we would encounter several times during the day. We then walked back to the Waag where all the young guildsmen were enjoying their first (or third) wine of the day. Here I was introduced to guild master Philippe for whom I would later carry flowers during the parade. It was a great honour to be invited and to be the first female guest amongst the young guildsmen or the 'Ehrendame' as they are known in Swiss German. Dominik and Robert Kalt, René's sons, had asked me to film their speech at the Butchers' Guild House and although it was in a language I couldn't understand, what was translatable was the laughter and enthusiasm from from the audience.



In response, the Butcher Guild Master gave a short speech back to the boys and rewarded us all with veal sausages complete with the Guild's emblem and wrapped in gold, a carnivorous trophy! Lunch was well needed at this point. As the food arrived, wine and conversation flowed amongst the members, not a single person in the room spoke less than two languages, I was amazed at how articulate and well informed they were of the English language and could rival native English speakers. With lunch ended and espressos drunk, it was parade time!



Handed a large empty basket and introduced to the other flower girls, we set off to join the parade. At this point, there had been several delays which unfortunately meant that we would miss the lighting of the Böögg. Flowing through the streets of Zurich, we were greeted with cheers, photos, smiles, waves and most importantly, flowers! The Guild Master received a huge number! Happy to just be a part of the celebration, I was even included to receive my own rose from one of the lovely young ladies I had danced with on Saturday. The smell of the bonfire grew stronger and the crowds thickened as we reached the Böögg. Laughter and chatter surrounded the fire while guildsmen galloped on horseback around the flames. The anticipation was

palpable in the air as we waited for the head of the snowman to explode; tradition states that the longer the head of the Böögg takes to explode, the worse the summer will be. Finally, the head exploded, the crowd cheered, the horses unphased and the tummies rumbled - time for dinner! We made our way back to the Waag for another meal. Once digested, it was time to light the lanterns, don the top hats and cloak up to listen to the speeches. We were very kindly provided with ear sets and a translator so we could



understand what was being said. The first speech was held just across the river in the Guild House, the next downstream, where René, Dominik and Robert performed a well-rehearsed comical speech. Later, it was time to take the bus; that's right, we all piled onto a bus, cloaks and all and whisked away into the night to the next Guild House for another speech. Once finished we travelled back to the Waag for a final snack. This is when the young guildsmen's night would begin, dancing and drinking lay ahead but alas, I was simply too tired to participate. In the



taxi ride on the way back to the hotel I made a promise to myself that as a representative of Britain, it shall be my

duty to compete with the Swiss's partying at the next Sechseläuten. So to all young guildsmen of Zurich, I make a pledge to you now; next year I will come back stronger and with more British troops to give you all a run for your Swiss Francs! After a couple of hours' sleep we were rudely awakened by the alarm, an unwelcomed signal to head back to reality.



We left with a feeling of sadness that the weekend was over, but this was short-lived as the excitement for Sechseläuten



2023 began! What a wonderful weekend, the traditions surrounding the celebrations were fascinating, the costumes fabulous and the company outstanding. Thank you all for hosting and we will see you all very soon!

A note to any British liverymen planning on attending the Sechseläuten celebrations in the future: wear comfortable shoes, as you will be doing a lot of walking. Try and get lots of rest in between the days as they are jam packed. The food was delicious over the whole weekend and we were fed like kings, so there is no need to bring any food or snacks with you. We were met with quite a lot of rain over the weekend so bring waterproofs. Lastly, I would suggest bring a good camera, as there are plenty of photo opportunities!

**Estelle Wilkinson**

# Via Thames Clipper to Tea Clipper

The sun was not quite over the yardarm on a glorious summer evening at Westminster Pier as our Thames Clipper slipped its moorings and headed downstream towards Greenwich where our

silent auction.

We were then called to our tables for dinner directly under the stunningly beautiful copper-bottomed hull of Cutty



Master, Nigel Macdonald, had invited us to a formal Dinner under Cutty Sark to raise funds for the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity.

After disembarking at Greenwich, we went on board Cutty Sark. Magnificent to behold with her raked back masts, she is one of only three remaining 19th century clippers of “composite” construction (ie a wooden hull on an iron frame). These were the fastest sailing ships of that century thanks partly to their narrow hulls which, being concave, slipped through the water easily.

Cutty Sark originally carried tea from Shanghai to London via the Cape of Good Hope but, in response to economic and technological changes, she then enjoyed a pretty varied range of deployments. Paddy Rogers, Director of Royal Museums Greenwich, recounted her history and what made her so special in a most absorbing presentation during dinner. Now in a prominent dry dock position by the Thames, Cutty Sark is listed as part of the National Historic Fleet (the nautical equivalent of a Grade I Listed Building). During a tour of the upper and the main decks, we viewed many interesting artefacts and displays before descending to the lower deck to enjoy a very welcome and glamorous drinks reception and to peruse some of the attractive and varied lots which we were able to bid for in the

Sark. What a wonderful and imaginative venue! The food we enjoyed over dinner was first class and, in another thought-provoking touch by the Master, was prepared and served, together with delicious wines, by young staff of The Clink



Restaurant at HMP Brixton <https://the-clinkcharity.org/restaurants/brixton>  
During dinner, Andy Cook CEO of Helen Arkell, talked to us compellingly about how the Charity has been able to improve the life prospects of an increasing number of children, young people and adults by helping them to develop coping strategies for their dyslexia. Together with a powerful short film, it was clear to us that this, the Feltmakers’ Company’s chosen charity, was very worthwhile and one where our support could make a radical difference. Our written bids for the lots in the silent auction were then collected; at the last count just over £22,000 had been raised for Helen Arkell.

Towards the end of the evening, we were once again treated to something rather special, this time a taste of 1811 Grande Armée Napoleon Fine Champagne Cognac. It did not disappoint!

A selection of memories of the evening: “To travel to Greenwich on a modern day clipper and then to dine under a copper bottomed clipper from days gone by, plus wonderful food and Feltmakers’ friendship made for a very special evening.”

“We all shared an enthusiasm for purpose of the evening. There was a real sense of companionship, friendship, renewal of friendships and common purpose all with a sunny disposition as the late evening sun set west across the City. If the spirit of 1811 was let out of the bottle that evening then the spirit of 8th July 2022 should be bottled to be reopened again and again when the Livery meets.”

“We were extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to dine underneath the hull of Cutty Sark, the national treasure which dominates the Greenwich waterfront. The evening passed very quickly and all too soon we were getting ready to leave, reflecting over the success of the evening and richer in our knowledge of both the remarkable venue and our chosen charity.”

All in all, the Master’s Charitable Event 2022 was a very special evening, on a very special ship, for a very special charity. We were promised “an evening to remember” and that is what we got - and in spades. The planning, the care and attention to detail were simply amazing. So, many congratulations to the Master and his team including the Clerk, Major General Aidan Smyth and, on their behalf, many thanks to all.



**Edward Hutton  
Past Master 2014-15**

# Liverymen Flock to Annual Sheep Drive



At 11.30am on a late September Sunday, Master Nigel Macdonald, Upper Warden, Renter Warden and Fourth Warden, plus Maggie Macdonald and Estelle Wilkinson, 'checked in,' under the towering shadow of 'Monument', where many other liverymen from across various companies were assembling for the Woolmen Company's annual Sheep Drive event.

A lively and colourful market of livery company stands, festooned with wonderful handmade traditional crafts, greeted us and there was a real buzz in the air as we enjoyed the warm autumn sunshine amidst the laughter, chatter and energy.

The Cadets marshalled us to our allotted starting point on London Bridge and we met the sheep, a healthy looking pen of about six, all looking very well groomed and entirely relaxed. The large number of tourists, especially those from overseas, seemed utterly perplexed at the sight of a small group of obvious Brits, mostly wearing Tribbles - one with a Master's tricorne and gown who was frequently mistaken for the Lord Mayor of London - standing in a sheep pen on London Bridge.

We were duly briefed by our escort from the Guild of Young Freemen, suitably robed, and at the allotted time, the pen opened and we slowly walked a short

distance behind the sheep as we 'drove' them across the bridge, as is our civic right as 'Freemen of the City'.

A short but fun bucket list moment for us all. The Fourth Warden then led the way to a fabulous old, free house - The Boot and Flogger - with private dining and a sumptuous Sunday lunch.



The event is annual and any liveryman can book and participate in this short, but truly historic privilege.

**Simon Wilkinson**

# A Christmas Carol

Our Carol Service moved to St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly; a perfectly-proportioned church, built by Sir Christopher Wren in 1684. It has the most beautiful carvings by Grinling Gibbons, Corinthian columns supporting a gallery and a large stained glass window. It has a very different feel to St Bartholomew's.



Many Feltmakers and their families attended and were in good voice! Our chaplain, Andrew Pritchard-Keens, led the service and The Choir of St James's sang magnificently. The five excellent readers of the Lessons were all female members of the Company, a first for a Feltmaker Carol concert. The sixth Lesson was also well read by Master, Neil Edwards.

Afterwards, we gathered for an informal, yet elegant, reception at the Naval & Military Club, where PM Patrick Burgess raised a toast and invited us to support The Wren Project, to continue the restoration of St James's which offers so much pleasure to worshippers and tourists - as evidenced tonight.

**Judy Bentinck**

# S'Summerbankett - dur d'Auge vo zwei Waag Jungzoifter

“Es isch soo ungläublich schön!” - Those were the first and only words that came to mind as we entered the double doors of the Egyptian Hall at Mansion House. Translated it means: “It is so incredibly beautiful!” And yes, it really was stunning; the white marble walls and columns with their golden Corinthian capitals, the coloured windows through which the evening sun flooded the room with warm light, the neatly laid table, the arched sculptured ceiling. All of it left us fascinated and nearly speechless.

It was to be an eventful 24 hours in London.

to Mansion House, where we were supposed to meet up with some British friends for an apéritif and to make our way to the Hall together. In fact, we were deliberately early to suck in the atmosphere and grab a quiet drink before the storm!

After everyone had arrived, we went over to Mansion House, made a photostop and were guided through the security check (!?!). We went up the stairs with their beautiful and most certainly unaffordable paintings, through the hallway to the Toastmaster, who shouted each of our

importantly, to the Lord Mayor's hat, which is gifted by the Feltmakers every year at the Lord Mayor's installation.

It went on with the speeches of the guests of honour, the Bishop of London and the Lord Mayor, who delighted us with their beautiful choice of words. The Master spoke at last, presenting his gift, a replica of a coin of King James I Crown of 1604, and talked vigorously about the conflicts and difficulties of our time, emphasising especially the opportunity and responsibility we all have to contribute to a solution, to unite instead of drifting apart and to make a difference by helping those less fortunate. To conclude, the toasts were proposed. In Zurich, one would expect the whole community to lift their glasses and break out into a “drüüfach tunnernds Hoch” (a threefold thundering high) to celebrate the guests, the friendship and the city of Zurich. Here, in this marvellous hall, the toasts were more formal, but with the same heart and sincerity. To the Queen, to the Royal Family, the Livery and the guests of the evening. After, your national anthem, “God save the Queen”, sounded. If anyone was surprised that some of the Swiss guests knew the melody by heart, this exact melody, with different German lyrics, was also the melody of the Swiss national anthem between 1950 and 1961.



Back in Switzerland, the alarm rang at 4.30am so we could catch our flight at 7.00 am. We arrived at London City Airport before 8.00am and had a whole day to go. Tired but excited we dropped off our baggage at Vintners' Hall, where we even got a little tour of its treasures. Although not as splendid as Mansion House, Vintners Hall, with its history, its art and its incredible collection of wine labels, was a beautiful sight.

The rest of the day was composed of getting coffee, a haircut, a beer, lunch, new shirts and another beer before going back and getting ready for the Banquet. By request of our friends of London (and because we unfortunately do not have white tie) we all brought our traditional costumes. Peter, the Guildmaster of the Stadtzunft, wore his blue tails, Renato and our Father their Biedermeier vest and top hat, while Gian-Carlo and we wore the traditional working uniform of the weaver-apprentices of the 18. century in Zurich. We definitely did attract a lot of interested gazes on our way to the Ned, a bar close

names, with a fierce and reverent voice, to the Master and Wardens who welcomed us warmly. We were a little bit in a hurry because Robert was to be sworn in as a Freeman before the official start of the night. In a quiet side chamber everything was laid out for the ceremony. Robert was quite nervous but stuck to his well learnt words: “So help me God”.

After a glass of champagne, we took our seats at the table. Next to us our friends from Zurich, plus Rebecca Nelson and Estelle Wilkinson who was our self-proclaimed guide through the evening. The band played the most beautiful compositions for brass and slowly but surely, we grew hungry.

After a splendid meal, good conversation and seemingly self-filling glasses, we waited for the speeches. The sentence Decus et Tutamen inscribed in the code of arms of our dear Livery echoed through the speech of the Upper Warden, which was addressed to the Lord Mayor on the one hand but on the other hand, and, most

The evening drew to a close, as everybody stood up to go for a stirrup-cup. Although nobody really had to stirrup a horse after, we all took a last glass at the Mansion House before making our way back to the Ned where the evening continued. There our merry group of friends whiled away the remainder of the night, although we had to call it quits at some point because we were definitely not ready for the slightly hungover journey back home.

“Es isch soo ungläublich schön gsi” - those were the first and only words that came to mind as we entered through the sliding doors of Zurich airport the next morning. It had been so incredibly beautiful. All the time we are in London we are greeted by friends as friends and we are really looking forward to the next possibility, where we can be with you again. The Feltmakers, the friendship of our two liveries and our beautiful cities: “Si läbed Hoch, Hoch, Hoch”.

**Dominik & Robert Kalt**



# Head Turning Entries for 2022 Design Award

The judging of this year's Design Award took place on 11 April at Haberdashers' Hall. While the competition had taken place during the pandemic, it was the first time in two years that the judging panel had been able to meet in person and judge physical hats – it was so good to be back! The final selection comprised 20 hats, selected by the panel from drawings and sketches of 36 entries. The judges viewed digital images of both the finished hat and accompanying artwork. This method was adopted during the pandemic and it made sense to continue as it gives the judges a much better insight into the workings of each entry.

The spread of entries between colleges, apprenticeships, start-up businesses and European makers has grown wider over the years, as large companies have closed and millinery/craftwork has become more sought after as an individual skill. Entries were received from Morley College, Nottingham Trent, Northampton, Northern School of Art, University of Lincoln, Kelvin College Glasgow and The Fashion Institute of Vienna and JBH Millinery School. We also had several entries from new start-up businesses and an apprentice.

This year's selection was one of the most exciting: the themes and techniques were far-ranging and the standard of work extremely high, with some quite extraordinary, yet wearable, headwear on display.

The Lady Mayoress, Mrs Amanda Keaveny, attended and was overjoyed to try on many of the hats, taking a particular lean toward the colour green to endorse her Irish heritage.

We were delighted to welcome George Lomax, millinery buyer at Fenwick of Bond Street, who had no hesitation in the selection and made a particular stand for the Commercial Appeal award. The other members of the judging panel were: Milliners Rachel Trevor-Morgan, Edwina Ibbotson and Noel Stewart, plus journalist, Carole Denford.

The Master, Mr Nigel Macdonald, attended with his wife Maggie, and gave their full support.

## First – Alison Cooper, Millinery Malarkey.

A beautiful emerald scarab beetle, the inspiration for which was taken from the 1920s when Egyptomania was influencing fashion due to the many archaeological discoveries of the time. Beetle wings were widely used in fashion embroidery and the colour was inspired by the Tutankhamen tomb discoveries of the time.



## Second – Eleonora Tata, Eleonora Millinery.

Inspired by Dante's Inferno. Strips of intertwined felt to represent the souls of the lustful trapped in an eternal whirlpool. The dark colour palette of the design aims to reflect the depths of hell. A huge amount of thought and work can be seen in this hat.



## Third – Nicola Miller, Kelvin College, Glasgow.

Inspired by Marie Antoinette and The Palace of Versailles, this was pretty and detailed. Marie Antoinette always surrounded herself with flowers and floral themes - wallpaper, furniture and fabrics and, of course, the beautiful gardens. A wonderful colour mix was used and each flower and petal was worked in felt.



## Craftsmanship – Lauren Thompson, Lauren Thompson Millinery.

This Garden of Eden hat showed excellent craftsmanship and skill, cleverly blocking a snake relief into the brim and adding beautiful embroidery. There was a tremendous attention to detail and beautifully executed.



## Commercial Appeal – Aliyah Dankwah, Northampton College.

Constructed using laser-cut shapes intertwining around the head. Inspired by fans and their use as a secret form of communication in Victorian times.



## Art & Presentation – Ilektra-Maria Charalampopoulou, Nottingham Trent University.

Artwork included beautiful hand drawings and images.



## Innovative Use of Felt – Jasmine Gibson, Northampton College.

Inspired by the bone structure of the spine. Constructed with laser-cut felt which was then wired and stitched. Once the felt was prepared, it was attached to the felt pillbox and bent into shape.



## Rachel Trevor-Morgan

### Welcome and Farewell

We are proud to have swelled our numbers with the following new Liverymen

Andreas Jaeger  
Oliver McLeod  
Peter Hutton  
Richard Holmes  
Alex Hayward

Alderman & Sheriff Alastair King

...and new Freeman  
Ruth Coombs (Honorary Freeman)  
Robert Kalt  
Gian Jaeger  
Jane Masojada

Sadly, we have also lost dear friends  
Chris Callaghan  
The Very Reverend Colin Semper (Honorary Liveryman)  
Horace Gorham  
Professor Thomas Shannon

# A Warm Welcome at the Oriental Club



On the 31st January 2022, The Livery Society met at the Oriental Club almost two years since my last Feltmaker event; and a similar experience for many. Over convivial pre-dinner drinks, there was much laughter and catching up between friends and a real sense of finally returning to some sense of normality....

Assistant, Simon Wood, had organised a wonderful dinner of spiced cauliflower soup, Boeuf Bourguignon, treacle tart and, so I'm told, some fine wines (we met on the final day of dry January for me). Such was the large uptake of the evening, we were tightly squeezed onto a table in the Club's impressive Library.

The Master started his speech with a rather witty joke about Donald Trump, as well as a brief history of the livery companies and anecdotes on trains and a recent former Shadow Chancellor.

As always, the smaller and more intimate gathering of Feltmakers allowed for meeting newer members of the Livery, and for some, the first in-person meeting of our new Clerk. Carriages and pushbikes were delayed long after dinner as conversation carried on into the atrium: so much to say after so long.

**Adrian Gubby**

# The Luton Fedora



A welcoming aperitif awaited us as we entered The Romanov Suite to view a display on the uses of felt for clothes, hats and gloves, all made by talented students from The University of Bedfordshire, School of Arts and Creative Industries. The "FeltFelt SecondSkin" exhibition was created by developing and showing felt fabrics and crafting a unique fashion collection of clothing and headwear based on Luton's history.

Court Assistant, John Horn, welcomed everyone and reminded us that we last assembled for this event in 2020. A reflective, albeit witty, Grace was proposed by our Chaplain, who, in seeking God's blessings on the hatmakers of Luton, prayed: "Bless wool to hat and wine from vat. Bless felt, Petersham, filigree, Spanish sausage and duck confit. Bless rim, band and crown and tip, this lunch, each mouthful and each sip".

The first speaker, Viv Cherry, from the School of Creative Arts, explained some of the key topics from the students' curriculum, including learning their craft to help them develop their vocational skills. Students are encouraged to explore, make, test and challenge their products. Under the heading of "Creative Thinking", students use their imagination and ask questions of themselves and their peers. They must be persistent, inquisitive, collaborative and disciplined. The College, based in Luton and originally a hat making factory, is perfectly located to allow students to communicate with suppliers

and graduates in their chosen subject. Second speaker, Beverly Bothwell, thanked and acknowledged the Feltmakers, John Horn, Ian Wright and Viviane Vayssieres, who had organised the Lunch. Beverly explained about the Nuno felt from Australia and the craft of creative pattern cutting. The students are also closely involved in using recycled off-cuts and these are used to make fashionable hats. The students then expertly modelled some of their designs and costumes they had created.

The Master presented all the students with a replica King James I Crown of 1604, the year that the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers received its Letters Patent. He explained that the Romanov Suite was once the Chapel of the House and is named after Lady Zia, the wife of Harold Wernher, who inherited the house from his father, Sir Julius Wernher, a South African diamond mine owner. Lady Zia was the daughter of a member of the former Russian Imperial family, hence the naming of the Romanov Suite.

During the 1880s, the play, "Fedora", was written by French dramatist, Victorien Sardou, for Sarah Bernhardt, a noted cross-dresser. The play required the actress to wear a centre-creased, soft brimmed hat, pinched at the front, that became known as a Fedora! The Feltmakers, therefore, have an everlasting connection with the Romanov Suite at Luton Hoo.

**Tim Lambert**

# A Competition of Skill, Courtesy and Good Manners

The Inter Livery Tennis Competition was back at our usual location, Queen's Club, following its redevelopment. We watched the forecast with some trepidation but we had back up of six indoor courts! The event was once again fully subscribed, with the surprise addition of two unregistered

teams from the Vintners, a complication smoothly handled by LM Bruce Fraser.

Our Feltmaker Team was led by new LM Peter Hutton and his able partner, Sasha Sassoon. The standard is definitely rising each year, and we had some high quality

games in the Championship. Spectators watched the redoubtable Tallow Chandlers (Chris Kurkjian and sister, Alex Brodie) beating last year's winners, the Salters (Tom Wordie and sister Ellie Hill) in the final. I discovered that Chris and Alex first won the Plate competition in 1997, and some 15 times since! A victory for the old guys, hope for us all!

The Plate competition was won by our friends from the Zunft zur Waag, represented by Thomas Nabholz and Stefanie Gribi. Our Feltmaker team played well, losing in the semi-final of the Plate to the Waag.

Dinner was excellent and I would like to thank the Master for his attendance and speech, where we learned how royal warrants are awarded and reset, on the change of a monarch. I understand that Locks had a busy week.

Finally, thanks to Queen's for hosting our competition, to Bruce Fraser for his ministrations and to the gallant Clerk for the four months of planning.

**Simon Wood**



# Overwhelming Honour at Her Majesty's Funeral

"Alex, your hat is on the TV!" - my husband yelled. And there it was, being worn by Her Excellency the Governor General of Belize at the Queen's funeral.

Just 36 hours earlier, at a Reception hosted by the Lord Mayor at Mansion House, a guest had approached me seeking advice on where to purchase a hat, as the shops had sold out of black hats and she only had a fascinator, which wasn't in keeping with standard etiquette. Knowing I had a black felt cone at home, I spontaneously offered to assist her, and thus email addresses were exchanged.

I drove home that night rather perplexed at what I had done. I had only completed my City & Guilds Millinery Course at Morley College a few months earlier. Settling into bed, my phone suddenly pinged and an email arrived formally requesting that I make a hat and deliver it by 6.00pm the next evening to the hotel where Her Excellency was staying.

I shot out of bed and set to work. I began



by stiffening the felt hood, dried it and then steamed it and blocked it, using a Percher block, newly bought from 'Boon & Lane'. At 8am the next morning, I removed the felt from the block, wired it and sewed in the Petersham ribbon. Then, creating a fan of stiffened black veiling, I applied a lace trim to the centre of the veil fan and

provided structure using a black quill, sewing all trimmings securely to the felt. To add a little sparkle, I added a few black rhinestones to the lace, to the veiling and to the end of the quill. I left home at 4pm and duly delivered the hat and wondering if Her Excellency would like it or even wear it...

As I watched the TV coverage of the Queen's funeral, it was with some relief, and excitement too, that I saw her Excellency walk down the aisle of Westminster Abbey to take her seat behind the Royal Family, the rhinestones on her hat twinkling.

I felt very proud to have played a very small part in a day honouring our late Sovereign.

**Alex Hayward**



## 2023 Diary Dates

**9 January**  
**Plough Monday Court Meeting & Dinner, Armourers' Hall**



**23 February**  
**Luton Lunch, Luton Hoo Hotel**

**3 April**  
**Spring Livery Dinner, Apothecaries' Hall**



**8 June**  
**Feltmakers' Banquet, Mansion House**

**3 July**  
**Court Dinner, Tallow Chandlers' Hall**



**6 October**  
**Installation Dinner, Haberdashers' Hall**

