



Reaching out: Past Prime Warden Nigel Whitehead skydives for *Crisis* – See page 15

Welcome from the Editor Abigail Farr



'The major problem of life is learning how to handle the costly interruptions. The door that slams shut, the plan that got sidetracked [...] Or that lovely poem that didn't get written because someone knocked on the door.'
– Martin Luther King Jr

Martin Luther King may well have been referring to an incident which has become a literary myth:

While staying on the Exmoor coast in 1797, the poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge took opium 'to check a dysentery', following which (as related in a preface written in 1816) he fell into a deep sleep, where he had 'the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines.' Once awake, and now inspired, he began writing down the lines he remembered, but was interrupted by a 'person on business from Porlock'. The

remaining lines 'passed away like the images on the surface of stream into which a stone has been cast.' The fragments he had recorded became 'Kubla Khan', one of the most famous poems of English Romanticism.

If only we could claim that the interruption of lockdown and the pandemic has brought us such treasures. Instead, the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths has missed the fellowship and camaraderie of Livery events, county shows and City life. The narrative of occasions, visits and gatherings, by which the year of the Livery usually takes shape, has been put on hold. But the spirit of

the Blacksmiths is 'safe and well', as demonstrated in the pages ahead.

At a time when all activity had been forcibly stopped, it might have proved challenging to become editor of the newsletter! But I have had extraordinary support from members of the Company, to whom I am most grateful, including: Jim Cook and the P&PR Committee, our Learned Clerk, Jill Moffatt, and past editors, Past Prime Warden Nigel Whitehead, Merv Allen FWCB and Charlotte Teale. My thanks to those who have so kindly contributed articles. Please do send your comments and suggestions for the next edition to abigail.farr@icloud.com.

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'This is the biggest size glass that we get at the Farriers' dinners.'

Congratulations to **Mike Shepherd**
the winner of the 55th Issue
Caption Competition

– Please contact the Editor
so we can send your prize to you –

From Court Room to Zoom – *Third Warden, Nick Land,* reports on the second half of his year as Prime Warden

The second half of my Prime Warden's year has not gone quite as planned, but it started well with an excellent Epiphany Luncheon at Trinity House. Trinity House exemplifies the tradition of service of so many City institutions. It was founded in 1514 and for 500 years has dedicated itself to the safety of shipping and the well-being of seafarers. We entertained the Masters of the Turners, Tin Plate Workers and Tylers and Bricklayers Companies and heard about the charitable and educational service that they give to their crafts and the wider



The Prime Warden rings the bell!

suddenly it all stops." Well they were right about it suddenly stopping – they just didn't tell me that that would be in late March!

The change really came home to me in May when I looked in my Prime Warden's diary and found that I should have been at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party – but instead I was chairing an NHS Covid-19 Ethics committee. I was particularly sorry not to preside at our Mansion House Banquet because those of you with long memories will remember that my father, Father Emeritus Brian Land had his Banquet cancelled in 1992 because of an



Michel Saminaden Master of the Worshipful Company of Tylers and Bricklayers

community. A highlight for me was ringing the bell from the Royal Yacht Britannia to summon the guests for lunch!

In February one of our most exciting projects came to fruition. We were sitting in the Craft Committee when Adrian Legge received a text confirming that the Secretary

of State had approved the funding to establish a four-year professional Blacksmiths' apprenticeship training scheme. My thanks to Court Assistant John Slater and Adrian for all their hard work ensuring that future generations of young people will have the chance to learn that 'By Hammer and Hand all Arts Do Stand'.

March started with one of the highlights of the Blacksmiths' year, the Champion Dinner. We feasted in the splendour of the Mercers' Hall and enjoyed musical entertainment organised by Past Prime Warden John McCuin. At the dinner we were also delighted to receive a portrait of one of our most illustrious liverymen, Lord Tonypandy, donated by Liveryman Neville Shulman.



The Prime Warden welcomes Eric Stuart-Bamford



The Prime Warden welcomes Charlotte Teale

When I was elected as Prime Warden, a number of Past Prime Wardens told me, "Enjoy your year; it will be over before you know it: one moment you are out feasting four times a week; then

IRA bombing campaign.

However, whilst events were cancelled, the work of the Company continued with Zoom committee and Wardens' Court meetings and I was pleased that we were able to approve a grant scheme to help those of our practising Blacksmiths severely affected by the Covid crisis. At Midsummer, we held our first ever virtual Court meeting. I have suggested that the picture of that meeting would make a good caption competition! I was delighted at the Midsummer Court to admit my son Edward Land into the Freedom of the Company by servitude.



Edward Land

My thanks to our Learned Clerk Jill, her assistant Jackie and to all of our committee and Court members for their support and hard work in running the Company over the past year, particularly in somewhat unexpected circumstances.

It has been a deep honour to have been Prime Warden of this Ancient and Honourable Company and I have enjoyed my year immensely. However, I was delighted at the Election Court to hand over the Prime Warden's badge to an eminent successor – Alderman Alastair King.



The Champion Dinner – from left to right: Sheldon Shapiro, Les Armstrong, Bob Linton, Jane Davis and Leslie Morgan

Artistic Talent Flourishes at Treloar's

Jim Cook, Renter Warden

Craft Warden Jim Cook and his wife Lou were delighted to represent the Prime Warden Nick Land and his consort, by attending the Lord Mayor's annual visit to Treloar's School and College in Alton on Friday 28 February 2020.

Treloar's is one of the UK's leading centres of excellence for children and young people with complex physical disabilities. Treloar's offers teaching, learning, care, therapy, advice and guidance, working towards developing a more independent future for students. There are about 170 students on campus whose ages range from 2 to 25 years. The Treloar's charity was founded in 1907 by the then Lord Mayor of London, Sir William Purdie Treloar.

Many of the students require support – both day and night care – and over half of the students stay in one of the five residential houses. Treloar's also offers much appreciated long weekends of respite for the families of day students.

We arrived on a very wet Friday morning and were welcomed by the Treloar's team, who, after registration and refreshments, invited us to attend the students' art exhibition which was set up in the main hall. Numerous creative works were on display. The pictures had not only been created with paints and brushes but also by using different materials and techniques. The styles varied greatly throughout the hall.

We were so impressed that we purchased two of the exhibits on sale, with all proceeds of course going to Treloar's.

The first exhibit was "Moth", a collagraph print, created by artist student Emily Harvey. Emily told us about the elements of her design: shape, colour, texture and form.



Moth by Emily Harvey, student of Treloar's College

She used tissue paper, lace and sand to create the form of a moth, which was then coloured delicately with ink and put into a press to create the print.

Emily explained, "This work says to me, 'Don't be afraid if someone upsets you; shake it off.'" Such wise words from a young talented lady.

The second exhibit we purchased was "Bella the Pug" by artist student Harriet Bond. The background was created by intense organic splashes of ink, which contrast with controlled horizontal and vertical lines, with layers of additional fine lines and shading.

Harriet created Bella as she is a dog lover. She explained that her "bright and happy colour choices reflect the personality of pugs who are often referred to as the comedians of the canine world."

The fantastic imagination and artistic talent of all the students was evident in the exhibition, which was testimony to their determination to succeed.

After our visit to the art exhibition, we were given a guided tour of Treloar's and the education complex, including the specialist classrooms, student accommodation, central living areas and recreational rooms; we also met some of the students and their tutors.

The classrooms are of a specialist nature designed to fulfil the requirements of students' particular educational and physical needs. The staff are incredibly supportive and caring. There are about 800 tutors and support-staff, some of whom are resident. Treloar's facilitates a high degree of one-to-one tuition and in some situations two-to-one tuition, which is reflected in the high ratio of tutors to students.



Bella the Pug by Harriet Bond, student of Treloar's College

Following a delightful lunch in the main hall, both the CEO and the Lord Mayor gave short speeches. The CEO thanked the Lord Mayor and the City of London Livery Companies for their support - both donations and gifts-in-kind. The Lord Mayor confirmed that Treloar's remains one of the City of London's important charities.



Sheriff Christopher Hayward in conversation with a Treloar's student and teacher

We were then invited to attend a rehearsal vignette performance of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which was given in Treloar's theatre. The main characters were all played by students dressed in appropriate costume, some even with wings attached. The students were ably supported by members of staff. The performance was awe-inspiring and very much enjoyed by both students and audience.

The recently published Annual Review for the year ending 31 August 2019 indicates that about £23.4 million was spent in the last financial year: £20 million raised mostly from fee income, and £3 million from charitable support, including donations, legacies and fundraising events. The financial support that Treloar's receives each year from the City of London and London's Livery Companies is crucial in helping to balance the books.



Treloar's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*



From left to right: Alistair Mackintosh Chair of Trustees, Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of the City of London William Russell, Simon Birch, Interim CEO

An Extension to the Mayoralty

In the press release of 17 April and bulletin of 1 May, the City of London Corporation and Lord Mayor explained the decision to extend the Mayoralty for an additional year, until November 2021.

Similarly, in the bulletin of 24 June, the Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor William Russell wrote: 'Ordinarily at this time of Midsummer the Livery would be assembling in Common Hall to choose

"two fit and able persons to be Sheriffs of this City for the year ensuing", as the Serjeant-at-Arms and Common Cryer traditionally proclaims at the opening of proceedings. The COVID-19 emergency has denied us the opportunity to gather in our usual way, but I am delighted that our two excellent Sheriffs, Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli and Chris Hayward, will continue in office for a further year.'

The Lord Mayor will renew his oath to HM The Queen in November, at the start of his second year, and, happily, the Lord Mayor's Show will go ahead, albeit in a slightly different form, to celebrate the event on 14 November 2020 – a welcome opportunity to express gratitude to our key workers from the NHS and all other critical sectors who have kept the country going during this difficult time.

The Epiphany Luncheon Laurence Mutkin, Master of the Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers alias Wire Workers

My learned clerk and I were delighted to be guests of the Blacksmiths' Company at your splendid Epiphany Luncheon on Thursday 23 January, at Trinity House. It was in many ways the perfect Livery occasion: a delightful setting; a delicious meal; a warm and relaxed atmosphere, and speeches of just the right tenor – and duration. Your corporate generosity also extended to the Master and Clerk of the Tylers' and Bricklayers' Company, and the Master of the Turners' Company.

The day was fine and bright, so the neoclassical magnificence of the oval room in Trinity House, where the meal was served, was adorned with perfect, clear views of the Tower of London. Your Prime Warden had chosen a menu and wines well suited to the time of year, with a feast of wild mushrooms, suckling pig and blackberry and apple crumble – all rounded off, of course, with Epiphany Cake. The Prime Warden having proposed the loyal and municipal toasts, the Prime Warden's health was proposed by the Father of the Company, Mr Brian Iles – who also treated the gathering to an Ode to his iPad. The health of the guests was elegantly proposed by Court Assistant John Richardson; in response, the Master of the Worshipful Company of Tylers and Bricklayers, Dr Michel Saminaden proposed the toast to the Blacksmiths' Company.



The Beadle and the Father



The Procession

Compared to the Blacksmiths, the Company of Tinsplate Workers alias Wire Workers is something of an upstart, 2020 being only the 350th anniversary of the grant of our Royal Charter (by Charles II). We had planned some events to mark this milestone, which have had to be cancelled due to the pandemic; but we anticipate, with undiminished enthusiasm, the celebration of our 351st anniversary next year.

Why 'alias'? Unusually, our Company at the time of its incorporation represented a marriage of old and new trades. Whereas wiredrawers are noted in Corporation of London Letter books as early as the 14th century, the art of plating tin onto iron did not arrive in England until the mid-17th Century. Tinsplate proved to be such an extraordinarily useful and versatile product that many wireworkers took to plate-working. The new technology came to dominate, so that by our 1670 Charter the 'wyreworkers alias plate-workers' of Elizabethan times had become tinsplate workers alias wire workers.

In more modern times, our Company has continued to be closely associated with the steel, wire and metal packaging industries, through our membership and through prizes and awards such as apprenticeships and travel grants to students of materials science and related fields of engineering.

I have become ever more aware during my time as Master of the Tinsplate Workers alias Wire Workers

that while all Livery Companies are recognisably similar, no two Companies' traditions are the same.



The Prime Warden with the Master of the Company of Tin Plate Workers Alias Wire Workers

In our Company, for example, we traditionally hold evening rather than daytime events, so it was a particular pleasure for me to enjoy a such fine gathering at lunchtime, enabling one to enjoy the – for me – rare pleasure of a Livery occasion in daylight. How practical, too, to be finished in time to head back to the office for a couple of hours' work (I admit I did not witness this at first hand).



Trinity House

A New Master of the Blacksmiths' Guild



Merv Allen FWCB

On the 5 October 2019 The Blacksmiths Guild held their AGM at the Standerwick Centre in Frome, Somerset, where Third Warden Dr Robin McNeill Love DL and his wife Poppy were guests of honour.

The business of the meeting included the election of Guild Master, a position that had been held by Andy Hall FWCB for the previous four years. I had the honour of being elected new Master and expressed my sincere thanks to Andy for his dedication and hard work throughout his term of office.

Many of you will know me from my career as a blacksmith and former editor of the newsletter:

My father was apprenticed as a farrier and blacksmith in a small village on the

borderlands between Co. Donegal and Co. Tyrone. He then became a career soldier and served in Egypt, Palestine, Norway and Belgium, before being injured in action during the Second World War, when he was sent back to England for recovery. Unfortunately, the injury sustained prevented him from continuing with blacksmithing in civilian life or the army.

As a child, I played with the few tools that my father had kept and was enthralled to hear tales of life 'by the fire' and Irish songs and myths. At the age of 15, I was apprenticed to a firm of fabricators, but the pull of blacksmithing was never far from my mind and, around 1980, I discovered the Guild of Wrought Ironwork Craftsmen of Wessex. It was



Merv Allen at a Livery event on London Bridge in 2010

there that I attended courses under the guidance of Frank Day and his group of amazing blacksmiths.

I developed my skills and experience and, before retirement, received numerous prizes at competitive events, whilst regularly teaching blacksmithing at my Metal Wizardry Forge. As well as producing traditional and modern forged items, my work included historical and fantasy arms and armour. In 2002, I was awarded the Company's Bronze Medal.



Merv Allen with Sadie Star, recipient of the Blacksmiths' Guild 'Richard Jones Bursary'

Prime Warden, Nick Land's Sunday Lunch

Past Prime Warden Don Barker FWCB

Following an invitation to the Livery from Prime Warden, Nick Land, and his wife, Helen, members of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths converged on their home, at Low Farm House at Ingleby Greenhow, for Sunday Lunch on 14 September 2019.

The food and wine were laid out on a groaning dining table (as all Yorkshire tables should be). We tucked in, and then adjourned to the garden to take in the vast array of vegetables and fruit trees tended by Team Land. It was interesting to see how they manage their various plots to achieve the best results. The views from the garden are stunning, particularly in the beautiful Yorkshire sunshine.

I particularly enjoyed being back in the area as my ancestors, as far back as 1590, originated from just down

the road in Bilsdale and Hawnby.

Many thanks to Nick and Helen for the superb lunch and hospitality.



The Church, the Bell and the Blacksmith

David Skinner AWCB, Liveryman

Around 950 AD, a former blacksmith called Dunstan became Archbishop of Canterbury. According to legend, while he was working at his forge one day, the Devil, disguised as a beautiful woman, paid him a visit. The astute St Dunstan spotted the cloven hooves beneath the dress, and grabbed the Devil's nose with his red-hot tongs, causing the devil considerable pain and foiling his plan to lead the smith astray. A pair of tongs still preserved in the Sussex village of Mayfield are said to be those with which Dunstan pinched the Devil's nose. According to one version of the story, the injured devil flew off to cool his nose in the springs at Tunbridge Wells, and that is how its famous waters got their reddish tint. In another legend, Satan returned as a weary traveller in need of a horseshoe; Dunstan saw through his disguise and, having made the shoe, nailed it to the Devil's foot. This caused the Devil great pain. Dunstan only agreed to remove the shoe and release the Devil after he promised never to enter a place with a horseshoe over its door. This is claimed as the origin of the lucky horseshoe.

In 960 AD Dunstan founded a church in Mayfield. It is reported as originally being a log church, which lasted until it was replaced by the Normans in the 12th century with a stone structure. In 1389 the Norman church was virtually destroyed by fire. Only the tower and very little else survive to this day. The church was rebuilt between 1410 and 1420. Further work was carried out during the reign of Henry VIII

For many years, bells had been tolled in monasteries and churches to mark the time of day and to call people to pray, but most of these bells were lost during the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536. Following the Reformation, churches began to rehang bells, so that most in England used the new system of bells mounted on a wheel with a stay and slider. The oldest bell in St Dunstan's Church Mayfield was cast by Thomas Giles in 1602. By this time the English method of hanging bells was well developed,



The ring of eight bells in St Dunstan's Mayfield

consisting mostly of a wooden construction with iron fittings where extra strength was required. All this gave much greater control, so the ringer could stop and start the ringing at will. If a number of bells of differing sizes and pitches were hung in the same tower, then patterns or "changes" could be rung to avoid monotony: hence "ringing the changes". This evolved into method ringing where every possible permutation of the bells is rung without repetition: on eight bells a complete method or peal takes over three hours to ring. During the reign of James II, bell ringing became extremely fashionable with the aristocracy, as it provided physical exercise and intellectual stimulation, while in the rural churches bands of ordinary ringers competed to outdo each other.

In 1666, sixty-four years after Thomas Giles cast the bell for Mayfield, the City of London was devastated by the Great Fire. Initial attempts were made to repair old St Paul's cathedral, but this proved to be impracticable; so, a new building was commissioned, the architect, Sir Christopher Wren.

Work finally began, nine years later. Despite a shortage of construction labour during the rebuilding of London, Wren hired only the finest artists and craftsmen. Among his distinguished assistants were the sculptor and carver Grinling Gibbons, who produced the wooden choir stalls, the organ case, and the bishop's throne. The mason-contractors were Thomas and Edward Strong, the

master carpenter John Longland, the mason, Joshua Marshall, and the ironworker, Jean Tijou.

Jean Tijou was a French Huguenot who is known solely through his work in England, where he worked on several key English Baroque buildings. He arrived around 1689 and enjoyed the patronage of William III and Mary II. His major commissions included making gates and railings for Hampton Court Palace, where he worked between 1689 and 1700; he was paid £2,160 2s ¼d for the wrought iron screens at Hampton Court. He also produced the screens and grilles of St Paul's Cathedral for Sir Christopher Wren, and worked at country houses such as Easton Neston, Burghley and Chatsworth. At Chatsworth his surviving works include the balustrade of the upper flight of the grand staircase and the set of gates known as the Golden Gates, which were moved to their present location at the north entrance to the park in the 19th century; he is also known to have worked at Kensington Palace.

Tijou elevated blacksmithing to an art with his lavish baroque sheet metal overlay. To achieve this style of artistry, called repousse, sheet metal is hammered from the rear to create forms such as acanthus leaves, shields and masks, then attached to foundation iron structures. This had not been seen in England before and some of his work was gilded to add to the aesthetics.

The south west tower of St Paul's is known for the geometrical staircase with its balustrade by Tijou, which leads to the cathedral library and archives, while St Dunstan's Chapel adjoins the north west tower.



Acanthus leaves by Jean Tijou

The most distinctive feature of the new St Paul's is Wren's great dome; however, at the outset it was probably not clear even to Wren how it could be built. Between about 1691 and 1694, Wren introduced iron chains into his designs to contain the outward bursting thrusts of the cone and inner dome. These chains, which are encased in masonry and may perhaps be regarded as a forerunner to reinforced concrete, were also made by Tijou. They, along with many other items, are recorded in the accounts for the cathedral.

Tijou was not the only smith working on St Paul's. Thomas Robinson and Thomas Coalburne also get many mentions in the accounts.

March 1706				
To Jean Tijou, Smith, for the great Iron chain or Girdle round the Dome by Agreement for Iron and workmanship (viz.)				
Weight of said chain	c	qr	lb	
	95	3	23	
Wedges	3	1	9	
	99	1	4	at 5 ½ d p lb
				254.16.8
For Extraordinary Workmanship in the Joyns				20. 0. 0
				274.16. 8
June				
To Jean Tijou, Smith, for the iron work of the round staircase in the South West Tower (vest.) For 139 ½ of Rail and panelling to ye staircase, and windows at 22s 6d per foot				
				156.18. 9
For 8 ½ foot of Iron work in the hatch door and other ornaments. At the bottom of ye stairs at 36s p. foot				
				146.14
				303.12. 9

On 2 December 1697, 31 years and three months after the Great Fire destroyed old St Paul's, the new cathedral was consecrated for use. The Right Reverend Henry Compton, Bishop of London, preached the sermon. It was based on the text of Psalm 122: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." The first regular service was held on the following Sunday. The "topping out" of the cathedral took place on 26 October 1708, performed by Wren's son Christopher Jr and the son of one of the masons. The cathedral was declared officially complete by Parliament on 25 December 1711, but construction continued for several years. Tijou left England for the continent in about 1712 and in 1716 the total costs amounted to £1,095,556.

For almost the first two hundred years St. Paul's had no change ringing bells. The original service bell, "The Banger", was hung in the south west tower and is still in use today. There are the three clock bells: the two

quarter bells are inscribed "Richard Phelps made me 1707" and the hour bell is inscribed "Richard Phelps made me 1716". There is also "Big Paul" the heaviest bell ever cast in the British Isles, being just over three tons heavier than Big Ben. It was not until 1878 that Taylors of Loughborough cast the twelve change ringing bells, which hang in the north west tower and form the second largest ring of bells in the world. It is surprising how late St Paul's was in getting its ring of bells. For comparison, when St Paul's got its ring of twelve in 1878, St Dunstan's at Mayfield already had a ring of four, the earliest of which was made by Thomas Giles in 1602. The final three bells in the Mayfield eight came from Taylors, the same foundry that made the St Paul's twelve.

In the 1974 cracks in the tower walls at Mayfield meant that it was forbidden to ring all the bells at once, and it was thirteen years before the tower could be restored at a cost of £140,000. The bells were removed for retuning at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry and, in an echo of Wren's chain, a concrete and steel ring was cast into the tower walls at the level of the bell chamber. Ringing restarted in 1987.

On 18 August 2019, while the ringing was taking place before a Sunday service at Mayfield, the clapper in the tenor bell broke and fell out. The clapper is the pendulum that hangs inside a bell and strikes it to make the sound. I don't ring at Mayfield on Sundays, but when I arrived the following Tuesday to practise, I was shown the two broken pieces and asked if I could repair them.



The upper end of the broken clapper

The clapper hits the bell at about forty miles an hour, so is traditionally made of wrought iron to tolerate the shock. They rarely break, but when they do, they should be fire welded back together again. This one broke so close to the bearing eye that I thought a strong fire weld would not be possible. Fortunately, I was able to take advice from Simon Adams from Taylors, the makers of the bell, and Peter Trick, who had been the

blacksmith at the Whitechapel Bell foundry. This clapper was a metre long and weighed about 13kg; any fire weld would be a two man job. Peter had mended hundreds of clappers and he offered to come to my forge and help me with the weld, if he thought it was possible. Peter arrived on 5 November. We went into the forge where both parts of the clapper were laying on the bench.

Peter: I'm terribly sorry, David.

Me: Why? What's wrong Peter?

Peter: That break is much too close to the eye to get away with a fire weld.

Me: I'm not surprised, but what can we do? We were hoping to get the bell working for 11 November.

Peter: You could electrically weld it up and add some strengthening straps across the weld. It might last.

Me: How long?

Peter: I don't know. Maybe 20 years. When it breaks again, we could always cut your weld off and make a new top with a longer shaft section, then fire weld that on properly.

Well if, like Peter, you are used to working on bells that were made a hundred or more years ago, then twenty years may not be a long time. But, to me, this was an ideal solution. All the eight bells could be rung on Remembrance Sunday, 11 November, no irreversible changes would have been made to the clapper and with a bit of luck we would have bought ourselves a twenty-year reprieve, but that was probably more up to the will of St. Dunstan than to the quality of my electric welding.

The following day, I welded the two parts of the clapper together and left it in the fire overnight to anneal. The repair had gone well and on 9 November, we reassembled the clapper, back in its bell in the tower. As I had done the work, it fell to me to ring the bell up for the first time with its repaired clapper. All seemed good, so I rang it down again and left it with the Mayfield band to ring for the service of Remembrance. When I arrived for practice the following Tuesday, I was pleased not to see pieces of a broken clapper on the floor but a lot of happy faces. Thank you, St Dunstan. I bet you would have loved an electric welder.



The repaired clapper ready to refit in its bell

The Blacksmiths' Charitable Trust

Past Prime Warden Nigel Whitehead

It is with pleasure that I begin this article on the work of the Company's Charitable Trust by declaring that the number of Liverymen making regular contributions to the Trust has increased notably since the last appeal. No matter how small, regular donations help swell the Trust's coffers, which in turn enables us to increase both the number and size of student bursaries and donations to a wide range of charitable causes, some of which the Trust has supported over many years.

The Charitable Trust is managed on behalf of the Wardens (The Trustees) by a Committee of eight, supported by the Prime Warden and the Learned Clerk; each member having useful knowledge and practical experience to offer. Its *Terms of Reference* guide the Committee in the distribution of funds which, in addition to providing bursaries for student blacksmiths, support charities related to the City of London, charitable beneficiaries proposed by the Prime Warden and other charitable causes.

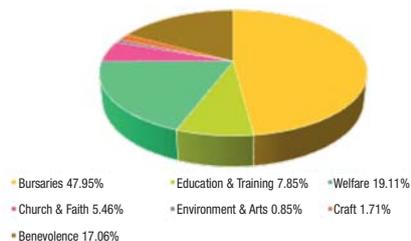
One of the most important functions of the Livery movement as a whole is its charitable role. The Blacksmiths' Company is particularly fortunate in that, after seven hundred years, it still has a thriving craft to which the Charitable Trust is able to offer modest financial support in the form of student bursaries, related purposes and help for established Smiths who, through no fault of their own, find themselves in straitened financial circumstances. The benefit of a bursary awarded can best be encapsulated in letters from recipients such as those shown in the adjoining panel.

The Trust's annual turnover for 2018-19 in terms of income and expenditure is shown in the pie chart. The slight excess of income over expenditure was due, in part, to fewer bursary applications being received from one particular college, where changes to its course structure were being undertaken.

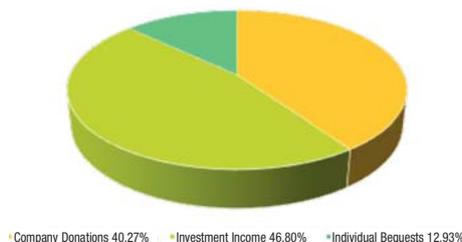
All donations to the Trust are both welcome and important for

it to continue with its significant work. If you are not already a donor, please join the many members of the Company who are already contributing on a regular basis, by asking the Learned Clerk for the standing order mandate in favour of the Charitable Trust.

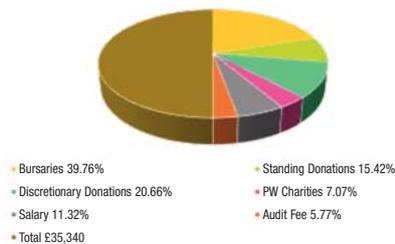
2018-19 Expenditure Grants – £29,300



2018-19 Income – £38,658



2018-19 Expenditure – £35,340



2018-19 Bursaries: Making a Difference

"I would like to start by thanking the Worshipful Company for the bursary. The bursary helped enormously in the production and execution of my final pieces, by helping me to afford to buy the more appropriate materials.

The bursary also went towards transporting these pieces to three exhibitions: the Mall Galleries (London), New Designers (London) and Fresh Air (Gloucestershire). This

exposure led to my first professional gallery sale from the Mall Galleries!"

"The bursary has helped me a lot so far with completing the course and the transition into my own workshop. The money helped towards new tooling (oxy-propane torch set, chop saw + stick welder, for example) which meant that I was able to work on my projects from home, alongside the forge time at college. With this extra making time, I was able to push myself and generate more work than I could have achieved if I just used the allocated 15 hours a week at Holme Lacy.

The bursary also helped relieve financial pressure in the past few weeks, when I have exhibited work in the degree show in Hereford, New Designers in London, Fresh air in Gloucestershire, and The Mall Galleries in London. This has involved a lot of time and money travelling and transporting work to shows, but hopefully work will come off the back of it."

"Thank you very much for selecting me for this bursary. I thought you might be interested to know that I was the winner of the Elmley foundation award for outstanding achievement 2019, and I was also talent-spotted for The Goldsmith Centre at New Designers. I will also be graduating with a first-class degree in three days' time."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths for choosing me to receive this bursary. It has given me the chance to explore more fields of blacksmithing and to take on projects that I would not otherwise have been able to and as a result I have learned a great deal."

"Through completing the Design and Forge Work course at Hereford, I now have the knowledge and skills to help conserve some of Ireland's traditional forge work. The money you have provided will greatly contribute to my efforts in carrying out this work, to the best of my ability."

The Ninth Clifford Champion Commemoration Dinner

Chris Cherry, Liveryman

The Clifford Champion Memorial Dinner has become a highlight of the year for the Livery. It is always an outstanding evening of first-class food, wines and entertainment in line with Clifford's wishes. This year's dinner truly upheld the conviviality and high standards set by previous Champion evenings.

The evening was set in the fantastic Mercers' Hall, the third Mercers' Hall to occupy this site, as the first Hall was destroyed in 1666 by the Great Fire of London and the second by enemy action in 1941. This splendid hall opened in 1958 and boasts a grand ceremonial staircase and many stained-glass windows, some of which incorporate glass salvaged from the second hall.

We were lucky that this event went ahead, as Covid-19 was already beginning to cast its shadow: most guests greeted one another by bumping elbows. I can truly say, however, that the evening was not dampened in any way by the unfolding virus situation which would see most activities cancelled everywhere and for everyone during the months to come.



The Champion Dinner

On arrival, everyone enjoyed a glass of champagne, before we were summoned by the Beadle to take our seats, and addressed by the Prime Warden, Dr Nicholas Land, who gave us a warm and moving tribute to Clifford Champion. Many who knew Clifford personally nodded in firm agreement with the Prime Warden's comments which evoked a clear picture of the man for those of us not fortunate enough to have met him. Past Prime Warden John McCuin also spoke about Clifford; he and William Simmond (also present) are Trustees of the Champion Trust.

This year's menu was very enjoyable with seared scallops to start and duck as the main course, all accompanied by some fantastic wines (which included two Burgundies and a Bordeaux) from the cellars of Berry Bros and Rudd.

Our spirits were further lifted by Neville Shulman who presented the Company with a portrait of the Viscount Tonypany, painted by the well-known artist June Mendoza. Neville wished for it to be featured whenever the Viscount Tonypany Blacksmiths' Cup is awarded and at

other Company special occasions. The painting was on display during the evening for guests to view.



Neville Shulman's Gift

This year's entertainment was a fantastic musical interlude, comprising a medley of pieces performed impeccably by Connaught Brass. Connaught Brass is a group of very talented young musicians who are making a name for themselves in the Chamber Music world and have already played live on BBC Radio 3. So good was their performance that their departure was delayed due to demands for an encore! Well done Connaught Brass!



Connaught Brass

Prime Warden in 1995, Clifford Champion was by all accounts a determined and generous man which is why we are able to enjoy this commemorative dinner every year. It was part of his bequest that 100 Liverymen from the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths should dine together on the occasion of his birthday. It is very clear that his memory and generosity will live on within our Company for many years to come.



Clifford Champion

The new Prime Warden, Alderman Alastair King

It is an immense honour to have been elected as Prime Warden of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths on 23 July 2020. Although the Election Court was held electronically, I am aware that I now have the immense privilege to be Prime Warden of a Company that has a documented history dating back to 1299, and in all probability some time before then.

My experience with the Company started in 1983 when I was apprenticed to my late Father at a ceremony in Innholders' Hall. In addition to a much appreciated day off school, I was struck by the friendliness of the welcome I received, even then. Throughout



my time as a proud Liveryman of the Company, I have been the recipient of friendship, support and good wishes. This makes me very proud to have had such a long association.

Although the programme for my term as Prime Warden will not be what we had hoped, my fellow Wardens and the Court of Assistants will, I am sure, deal with the changing situation with pragmatism and their customary good humour. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible during the course of the year, virtually or in person.

With all best wishes as ever.
Alastair King (*Alderman*)

History made: Midsummer Court 25 June and Election Court 23 July 2020

The Learned Clerk, Jill Moffatt

March 2020 marked the start of a challenging few months of lockdown and coronavirus-related restrictions, resulting in the cancellation of a number of events, notably the Ladyday Court Luncheon and the Annual Banquet at the Mansion House.

Once it became clear that it would also be impossible to meet in person for the 25 June 2020 Midsummer Court, arrangements were made to hold the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths' first ever virtual Court meeting via Zoom.

Twenty-seven Court Members joined the Court via a range of devices and the Company even held its very first virtual admissions (with a few minor tweaks to the ceremonies). Mr Edward Land, a time-expired Apprentice, was admitted

to the Freedom of the Company, supported virtually by his grandfather, Father Emeritus Mr Brian Land, and was fortunate to be able to read the Oath in the presence of his father, Dr Nicholas Land, the Prime Warden. The Court then admitted Mr Graham Watkins to the Livery as well as two new Court Assistants to the Court, Mr Tom Brettle and the Hon. Company Valuer, Mr Sheldon Shapiro.

Alderman Alastair King very kindly permitted the use of his Company Boardroom for the Election Court on Thursday, 23 July 2020. The Wardens were able to assemble in person, suitably socially-distanced, for the installation ceremony whilst the remainder of the Court and the Clerk attended via Zoom.

Upon election, the new Prime

Warden Alderman Alastair King was duly sworn in, the outgoing Prime Warden, Dr Nicholas Land, was elected as the Third Warden, Mr Jim Cook was elected as Renter Warden and Mr John Richardson was sworn in as the Craft Warden.



The Wardens

The proceedings concluded with a presentation to the Prime Warden by Past Prime Warden Mr Jash Joshi of a new travelling chain, gifted to the Company for use at the Prime Warden's discretion.

We send warm congratulations to Alderman King on his election and look forward to an interesting year ahead!



Mr Graham Watkins

A retired Property Developer and Building Surveyor, now busy with charity work and chairman of his parish council, Graham has attended all Company events over the last two years.

So, what did you do during lockdown??

Court Assistant, Col Jane Davis, DL

I never imagined that in 2020, on International Nurses' Day and 200 years since the birth of Florence Nightingale, I would be saying goodbye to NHS Nightingale Hospital London after seven weeks and two days.

Late on Sunday 22 March I got a call from founder member of the Company of Nurses, Deirdre Barr, also the Director of Operations in setting up a 4,000 bed Intensive Care Unit at London's Excel Centre. She asked if I would like to join her; so, on Monday 23 March off I went to Excel.

Initially, I worked as part of the Operations team setting up the facility, with special responsibility for staff wellbeing and family and relative support. The set-up period was intense: Excel is 1.3 km end to end and I was walking an average of 12 km a day – thankfully not usually in the steel toe capped wellington boots, which were only six sizes too big and very difficult to walk in!

We worked long hours but were very well looked after in terms of food, beverage and accommodation; in fact Di, the lead for staff welfare and a

freeman of the Company of Nurses, says she never wants to see another Lindt chocolate bunny again.

I soon took on the role as Lead for the Family Support and Liaison Team. The team was responsible for the provision of compassionate care to the families of patients, by maintaining telephone contact with the relatives of those transferred to NHS Nightingale.

My knowledge of London and the City through both the Lieutenancy (Jane is Vice Lord-Lieutenant for Greater London – *Ed.*) and the Livery enabled me to harness valuable support: firstly, by mobilising the call-handling skills of the FANY (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry), which have been fine-tuned from decades of support for the City of London Police and Metropolitan Police Casualty Bureaus as well as the City of London's Economic Crime Division; secondly, through our Learned Clerk Jill Moffatt and her network – through the Fellowship of Clerks, I was able to arrange a supply of hand knitted, crocheted and felt hearts. The amazing response enabled us to give a heart to every patient and send two to

relatives, each with a note.

I was fortunate that I was in a supporting role and not having to work in full PPE for a 12-hour shift like those giving direct clinical care to our patients. They are the real heroes of the NHS and the wider care environments across the UK.

NHS Nightingale Hospital London is now on 'stand-by' and remains prepared and ready to reopen, in the event of a second surge of the virus.



A Nudge in the Right Direction

With thanks to Bob Tunks, Craft Assistant

Bob Tunks and his Company are contracted to Cambridge Science Companies, who are involved in the research and development of medical devices. While there has been much reporting centred around ventilators and PPE, Bob has been kept busy with DnaNudge Ltd who have developed a successful rapid, lab-free RT-PCR test for Covid-19. As contractor, Bob produces the plastic injection mouldings that make up part of the test kit.

Significantly, the DnaNudge 'lab-in-cartridge' test, does not require the use of a laboratory to determine the result. The kit produces results in a little over an hour, whereas laboratory tests take 1-2 days. The DnaNudge team have worked with Imperial College London and NHS Trusts to investigate how the test performs in different clinical settings, and to enable extensive use of the product. The test is authorised by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for clinical use and

recently obtained a CE mark, enabling its additional use in non-clinical locations, including care homes and other public services.

The DnaNudge coronavirus test is based on their DNA in-store testing device. After having their genetic profile analysed in-store, customers use the DnaNudge smartphone App or wrist-band (DnaBand) to scan product barcodes in supermarkets to find out how well a food suits their genetic make-up, and to 'nudge' them to make choices that will be more nutritionally beneficial. The company is using the mechanism of this device to detect the genetic material of Covid-19.

At the beginning of August, the Government placed an order for 5.8 million CovidNudge test kits to be used in NHS hospitals and out-of-hospital settings from September 2020.



Testing Times: News from the 42 (Expeditionary Support) Wing

Wg Cdr Daniel Penter, former OC of 42

(Expeditionary Support) Wing

It is now just over two years since the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths and 42 (Expeditionary Support) Wing formalised their affiliation. It has been a busy time for the Wing that has seen deployments around the world as well as within the UK. The Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron (JARTS) joined the four other squadrons on the Wing in November 2019, and, on 31 March 2020, 5131 (Bomb Disposal) Squadron stood down from its final duty, prior to disbandment the next day.

The JARTS Training Team, last years' winners of the Thunderbolt Award, have continued to push the boundaries in their training. As lockdown started in March, they were supporting the police with a very complex task involving biohazards and historic aircraft crash evidence. The lessons learned from this extended deployment were rapidly turned into a training requirement and a series of socially distanced training activities were organised in June.

Early July saw the rescheduling of a no-notice crash exercise to test Warrant Officer Simmons, the Squadron's new Warrant Officer, and trainee Aircraft Recovery Officer (ARO). Located at RAF Wittering, the

exercise simulated a mid-air crash between a Hawk aircraft and a Wildcat helicopter. The Training Team prepared a site based on previous crashes, including a weapon that needed making safe by Explosive Ordnance Disposal, two fatalities, and a complex land ownership scenario including an angry farmer wanting compensation. The media reserves from 7644 Squadron provided a mobile media team who acted both as exercise players (aggressive media) and captured the whole exercise to provide a video to the RAF's Aircraft Post-Crash Management (APCM) course which trains the personnel who are required to coordinate any real crashes.

42 Wg is fortunate to have several trained APCM Officers, one of whom has previously led the response for a real crash; Squadron Leader Dale Hornsby of 93 (Expeditionary Armament) Squadron participated in the JARTS crash exercise under orders to do everything wrong to test Warrant Officer Simmons' ability to guide him while keeping his temper. Overall, the exercise was a resounding success resulting in the qualification of Warrant Officer Simmons and the end-to-end testing of the Squadron's response.



Third Warden Dr Nicholas Land and Wing Commander Daniel Penter present the Thunderbolt Award to Petty Officer Daniel Clark and Corporal Michael Broad, October 2019

On 7 August 2020, I handed over to Wing Commander Mike Dutton. I bid the Wing and the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths a fond farewell as I move to a new role in Bristol, to take over the team that procures and supports aircrew flying clothing. I have immensely enjoyed sharing our work with the Company and being able to participate in the first two years of our affiliation.



Warrant Officer Simmons

A Rousing Reception and a Beautiful Sunset

Past Prime Warden Don Barker

Following an invitation from Group Captain Jo Lincoln MBE and Royal Air Force Wittering, Lincolnshire Past Prime Warden Don Barker FWCB and his wife Barbara attended the Annual Reception of 42 Expeditionary Support (ES) Wing on 4 September 2019.

Wittering specialises in training of logistical support with the facility to be anywhere in the world within 24 hours. Each section has a specific roll including: the 5001 Squadron, which is the engineering capability of RAF A4 Force; 71 (inspection and Repair)

Squadron; No 93 (expeditionary Armaments Squadron), and the Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron. We visited stands manned by the young people in training, who were highly informative about their particular trades.



As a grand finale, we were treated to the Sunset ceremony, a combination of the ancient ceremony of Beating Retreat, Tattoo, and lowering of the national flag. Traditionally, at sunset, a call was sounded, to summon the guard for the night to ensure the town was fortified. This was performed by the RAF Wittering Band, marching and playing on the runway apron; it culminated in the lowering of the flag to close the day.

It was a splendid visit and our thanks go out to all the RAF personnel who made it so enjoyable.

Is my Husband Mad? Marion Whitehead

As an 80th birthday project Nigel set himself a target of raising £10,000 for *Crisis*, whose primary objective is to end homelessness. To achieve this aim, he had the mad idea of completing a tandem skydive from 12,000ft. Because of the age factor, his doctor had first to confirm that the jump was 'an acceptable risk'.

The day arrived with lovely blue skies and puffy white clouds, not too windy and perfect for the flight. Nigel said he wasn't a bit nervous and certainly didn't look worried as we set off in good time for the airfield.

As soon as we arrived, Nigel had to go straight off for his briefing and training, so I met up with two friends of long standing (only three supporters allowed during lockdown) to watch the activity.

We had a long wait, as Nigel was one of two on the last flight of the day, but then he appeared, trussed up in all the gear, and flew off into the blue sky until the plane was just a dot. Eventually, first one and then another tiny figure emerged, free-falling from 12,000ft, tumbling, at first, until stabilised by a small 'chute but still falling fast. When the 'proper' parachute was deployed they first shot suddenly upwards and then gently downwards,

swinging, until coming to earth on the landing site.

Nigel said he enjoyed it all, especially the free-falling part, but he doesn't want to do it again!

As the pandemic continues, many people face returning to the streets or to uncertain, unstable and sometimes dangerous living situations. Others are being pushed to the brink of homelessness for the first time. If you would like to support Nigel's inspiring fund-raising effort for Crisis, please visit:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/nigelwhitehead80th>

– Ed



Remembering Tony Keeble FWCB (1946-2020)

With thanks to Bill Cordaroy AWCB and Past Prime Warden Don Barker FWCB

Tony was a Liveryman until poor health meant that he was unable to do the fine blacksmithing work that he loved to do. He was on the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths' Craft and Show Committees and also a member of the British Artist Blacksmiths Association. He represented the Livery at the East of England showground at Peterborough, continuing to do so when the stand was



moved to the Norfolk showground.

Tony was a skilful artist, particularly admired for his life-like animals and birds. One prize-winning piece in the traditional section of the Yorkshire Show was a beautiful gate covered in butterflies and dragonflies; another was a spray of gladioli. He will be missed by those who knew him, and our thoughts go out to his wife Bev and his family.

Clerk's Corner Jill Moffatt

Functions

Given the current Government advice on social gatherings, many Livery events have had to be cancelled. We have unfortunately had to take the difficult decision to postpone the Michaelmas Court and Awards Luncheon on 22 October 2020. We hope to merge this important annual event with either the Epiphany Court Luncheon on 21 January 2021 or the Ladyday Court Luncheon on 25 March 2021. We will be monitoring the situation closely and will send out an update as soon as we have confirmation of the date.

Quarterage

In these challenging times, Quarterage payments are more important to the Company than ever. We will be sending

out the annual reminders as usual, but we would ask Liverymen to please check their standing orders to make sure they are paying at the latest rate. However, we are also conscious that some people may be experiencing short-term difficulties with their payments and would encourage them to notify the Clerk as soon as possible so that we can see how we might help.

Coronavirus Grant

We would like to remind all working blacksmiths who are Liverymen or Freemen of the Company and whose business is suffering as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, that a grant of £250 is available to them from the Charitable Trust upon application to the Clerk. All correspondence will be treated in strict confidence.

Caption Competition



*Want to
win a bottle
of bubbly?*

Send your answers
to the Editor
abigail.farr@icloud.com
by 1 December 2020

Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths' Shop

Prices:

- Livery Tie £10 (*Liverymen only*)
- 'Social Tie' £22
- Umbrella £20
- Cuff Links £30 (*T-bar*)
- Cuff Links £32 (*Chain*)
- Brooches £72.50



All items available from the Clerk. A limited supply might be available at Court luncheons.

Diary of Events 2020-21

Notifications will be sent to all Liverymen but please put these in your diary now

- 22 September 2020 – City Giving Day
- 25 September 2020 – Admission of Sheriffs, Guildhall
- 29 September 2020 – Election of Lord Mayor, Guildhall
- 22 October 2020 – Michaelmas Awards Luncheon, Painters' Hall **POSTPONED**
- 2 November 2020 – Garden of Remembrance, St Paul's Churchyard
- 13 November 2020 – Silent Ceremony, Lord Mayor, Guildhall
- 14 November 2020 – Lord Mayor's Show
- 8 December 2020 – Christmas Carol Service with Castle Baynard Club, St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe
- 31 January 2021 – Epiphany Court and Luncheon, Grocers' Hall
- 16 February 2021 – Shrove Tuesday: Inter-Livery Pancake Races, Guildhall Yard
- 8 March 2021 – Clifford Champion Memorial Dinner, Brooks Club
- 19 March 2021 – United Guilds' Service, St Paul's Cathedral
- 25 March 2021 – Ladyday Court Luncheon, Painters' Hall
- 14 May 2021 – Annual Banquet, Mansion House
- 4-6 June 2021 – Prime Warden's Weekend, Newcastle
- 17 June 2021 – Midsummer Court & Dinner, (*venue tbc*)
- July 2021 – City Beerfest, Guildhall Yard (*date tbc*)
- 22 July 2021 – Election Court and Dinner, (*venue tbc*) Court Members only

Please note that the website, including the Members' area, has been updated to reflect the above dates

Design and Photographs

Many thanks to Les Allen for Design and Typesetting, and to Philip McCarthy for the photographs of recent Company events.

For copies of photographs, please visit Philip's website:

<https://philmccarthyphotography.smugmug.com/Worshipful-Company-of-Blacksmiths>

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Tel: 020 7248 1861

<https://blacksmithscompany.co.uk/>

Editor: Abigail Farr

e-mail: abigail.farr@icloud.com