



# The Fruiterers' Company NEWSLETTER

Number 15

December, 1992



## The Presentation of Fruit at Marden Fruit Show

October 28th, 1992, will be a day for the Archivist and our Liverymen to remember. As far as is known this was the first time when the Master has made the Company's traditional presentation in front of the public and beyond the square mile. It was also recorded for television.

On a brilliant autumn day the Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor, Sir Brian Jenkins GBE and Lady Jenkins arrived at the Detling show ground, the new permanent home of the Marden Show, at 10.30 am and inspected the prize winning displays of Cox, Conference and Concorde, as well as Gala and Bramley and many other varieties, and visited many stands.

The presentation ceremony followed with the Master and Wardens fully robed and the Beadle with Mace and the Fruit Porter in attendance.

The fruit will be sent to the Heart of Kent Hospice at the Lord Mayor's request.

At the official luncheon, the President, the Rt. Hon. Lord Selborne KBE, proposed the Loyal Toast and replied to the toast of the Society, jointly proposed by The Lord Mayor and David Curry MP, Minister of State at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Mr Peter Tipples, Chairman of the Society, made his farewell speech and proposed the toast of the Visitors and Judges.

The Lord Mayor told us that he had really enjoyed this unique experience and the chance to see at first hand the very best of English produce.

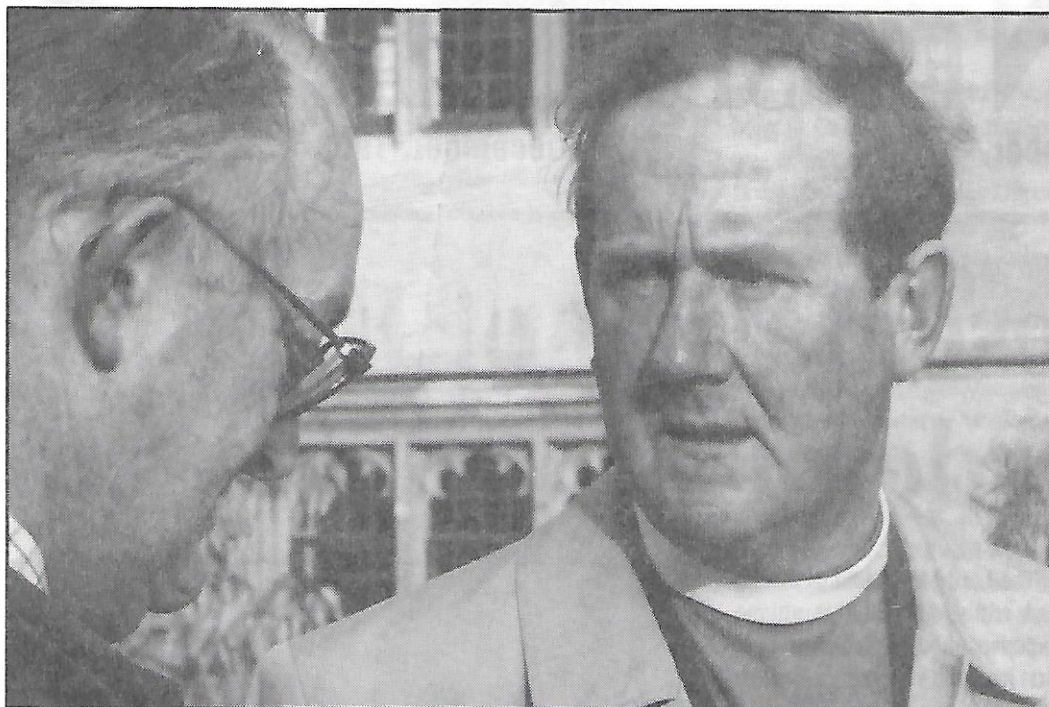
The Company had its own table at lunch. Many Liverymen took the opportunity to attend and the learned Clerk kept a cool hand on the tiller to achieve a most successful occasion.

The Master thanked all those who had worked so hard, naming particularly Past Master H.R. Lewis and Past Master R.E. Starns (Chairman Presentation Committee) and Honorary Assistant D. Homewood.





# Our Chaplain's visit to China



This time last year, Elizabeth and I were preparing to start a period of sabbatical leave that would take us half way round the world and back again. We had never been so far from our native shores before, but family circumstances provided an opportunity to visit China and, with help from friends in this country and in China itself, we were to enjoy the enormous privilege of sharing in the lives of Christian communities in Peking, Nanjing and Shanghai.

It is only recently that we have been able to learn more about China's 10 million Christians - a tiny minority in a country of 1.1 billion inhabitants. Their faithfulness and loyalty to Jesus Christ during the years of Mao Tse-

Tung's Cultural Revolution in the late 60s and early 70s contributes to one of the most outstanding stories of courage under persecution in the annals of Christian history. In 1970 not a single church remained open for worship. Pastors had been denounced as 'counter-revolutionaries and Capitalist-roaders' and sent into the countryside for 're-education'. Theological training ceased. The only way to continue anything resembling church life was by stealth and secrecy. Christians even learnt how to sing hymns so quietly in their homes that their neighbours couldn't hear them! One of their leaders, commenting on this period at a later date, said: "We were very weak indeed, a little flock. By all human reckoning Christianity...was breathing its last breath." He then continued: "What we were blind to was that when we were weak and dying, life was in the offing."

Some fortnight after Christmas Day last year, Elizabeth and I found ourselves worshipping at St. Paul's Church, Nanjing - part of a large and devout congregation of some 1,200. The pews were packed to overflowing, with benches down all the aisles. It seemed terribly unjust that we, as honoured guests,

should be ushered into seats specially reserved for us at the front, while most of our fellow-worshippers had had to get up early that Sunday morning and come to church over an hour before service time - in order to get a seat!

The church was almost in darkness. The weather was dull and rainy, and Nanjing was enduring one of its frequent power cuts. The only light in the church was from a tiny candle next to the pastor's lectern. "Would I bring greetings from the Church in Britain?" I was asked. It was a humbling experience to stand before this great congregation of men and women who, for the most part, had given so much for their Lord. "I'm so glad to be with you," I started, "and I am glad to be visiting you on the day you are suffering a power cut, because this candle burning here in the darkness is a symbol of all I feel and want to say to you this morning. Jesus Christ, the Babe born in the manger in Bethlehem, is truly the Light of the world. That Light shines in all the darkness of this world, and the darkness has never been able to overcome it. We in Britain thank God for the way you have kept the Light shining in your own country during the dark years of

persecution." As I sat down, I thought of the lady at the Chinese Embassy in London and of her direction to me: "No preaching!" I was just bringing greetings - belated Christmas greetings.

Later in the service, Pastor Chen was in the middle of his sermon. He was just referring to my message about Christ the Light of the world when suddenly all the lights in the church came on! And what a sight it was. A Christmas tree near the choir stalls, which we had not previously discerned in the gloom and darkness, started winking its lights. A string of fairy lights over the altar began pulsating into a hundred different colours. The congregation, who up to this point had been listening quietly and attentively to the pastor's sermon, burst into a thousand expressions of delight and wonder. Never had there been a better sermon illustration!

As Elizabeth and I celebrate this Christmas our thoughts will be very much with those faithful Christians in Nanjing. They taught us so much about the cost of Christian discipleship and of what it means to be faithful to the Light of the Living Christ in a world that is often filled with darkness and despair.

A very happy Christmas to you all.

## NEW FREEMEN

On 11th, November, 1992:  
Richard Charles Brighten  
Michael Stewart Taylor  
William Jeremy Wakely  
James John Maitland Flegg

## NEW LIVERYMEN

Bruce Andrew Mack  
(son of Matthew)  
Hugh Richard Edwards

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JANUARY 25  
St. Paul's Day

JANUARY 27  
Livery Banquet

MARCH 26  
United Guilds Service

MAY 27  
Audit Court

JULY 15  
Summer Court

NOVEMBER 11  
Master and Wardens' Dinner



# Autumn Golf Meeting at Addington

On 22nd October, 1992, the third joint meeting of the Fruiterers' Golfing Society with those of the Fanmakers and Carmen Companies was held at the Addington Golf Club, Shirley, Nr Croydon.

On a damp morning a number of enthusiasts set off to play the famous and most challenging course.

Scoring was on the basis of the best three individual scores from each Company and the Carmen were winners with 111 points. An error in the basis of scoring denied the Fruiterers the prize.

Our three winners were Andrew Poulton, Geoffrey Brewer and Ivor Robins (42 points). Our photograph shows Ivor collecting his prize from the President of the Fruiterers' Golfing Society, Ralph Felton.

The next meeting of the Society will be on 6th May at Kingswood.



## A message from the Master

"I am coming to the end of my year in office; it has truly been an honour and a privilege to serve and represent our Company. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the very many people who have supported me during this year. Sally and I have enjoyed being able to

meet many Liverymen during the year.

"It has been my endeavour to encourage people's awareness of our Livery Company with its roots in the City but its all embracing relevance to the fruit industry at large; from marketing, distribution, retailing and ultimately the consumer. Equally important I feel, is the opportunity for those directly involved in the City being able to support our Livery and understand a little of our industry.

"Long may our great Company draw all sides of the City and the fruit industry together in excellence and fellowship for the benefit of all.

"With all good wishes to you for a very happy Christmas and during 1993."



## Marden Fruit Show winners

Best Exhibit of Dessert Apples: **RICKARD FARMS LTD**

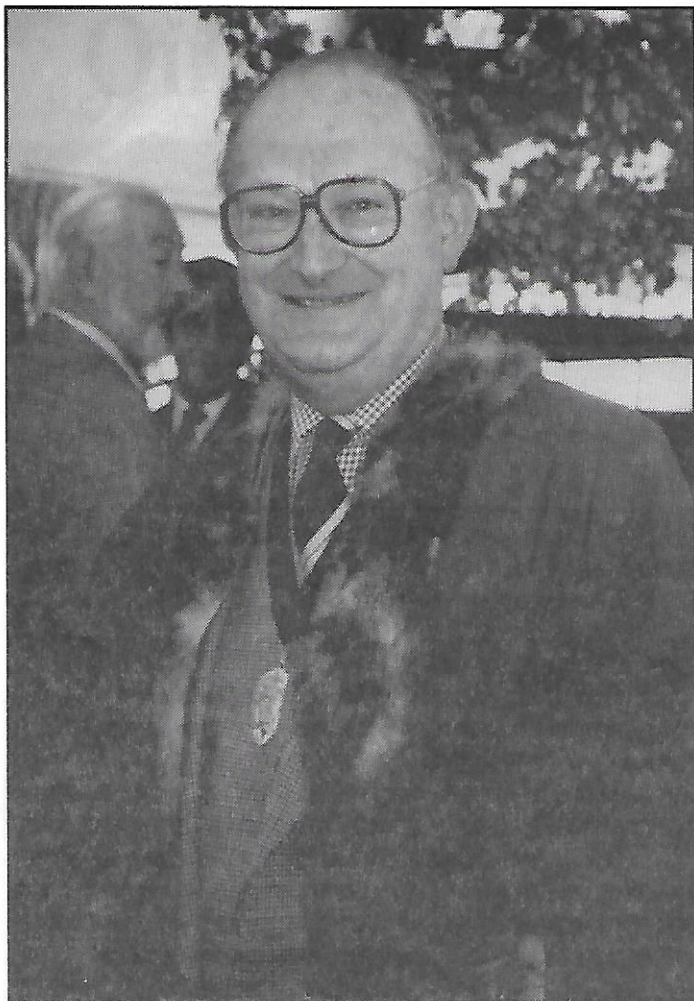
Best Exhibit of Pears (Class 12 Conference): **J.A. & N.J. BARDSLEY**

Best Exhibit of Culinary Apples: **PAYNES FARMS LTD**



Our photo shows Mrs Annie Bardsley with the company's medal at the show.





# The Master-Elect

A true man of Kent, Michael was born in Gravesend. "My mother was actually just passing through at the time," explained the Upper Warden, "but I obviously knew I wanted to be born in Kent rather than Hertfordshire."

Educated at King's School, Worcester, Michael joined the Army and was commissioned from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1954. He stayed in the Army for 11 years and was stationed in several European countries - which explains why he can order several beers in almost any European language. He also had a period of secondment to the Army Air Corps.

On leaving the Army, he joined the plant protection division of ICI to prepare himself to take over the family horticultural business. The Nurseries, which he took over from his father, grew mainly tomatoes, cucumbers and flowers. After some years he sold the nurseries and about 20 years ago he set up his own nursery and branched out into a retail florist business. The only other thing he really knew about was wine and so he expanded by opening a wholesale and retail wine company - and has been running both the florist and wine business happily ever since.

Michael was introduced to the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers in 1978 by his father-in-law, Jim

Webster, who was Master of this Company in 1973.

Today, he and his wife are living in Sawbridgeworth and, two years ago, his daughter presented him with a granddaughter who is a great joy to them both. His greatest pleasures, other than his family and his wine, are old cars and, in particular, his Bentley. When not roaring around the countryside he is usually to be found under his beloved Bentley.

He is involved in the local community both as a Parish Councillor and member of the British Legion.

During his year as Master he plans to forge ever closer links with the fruit organisations in the rest of Europe. "The recently announced overseas scholarships are a wonderful innovation," said the Upper Warden, "they will help broaden our horizons. Whether we like it or not, we are members of the European Community and it is extremely important that we play our part and recognise the opportunities it offers."

## Acknowledgements

The Editor wishes to thank the Master and all those who sent contributions for this issue.

I am sorry I could not use them all, and hope the flow will continue.

## The Company's Fruit Industry Award



On the review of the Company's annual awards, the recently lapsed Skilled Artisan and Junior Artisan awards have been renamed, recategorised and revived. The Master took the opportunity of the

Marden Show lunch to present the Senior Fruit Industry Award to David Burd, Senior Lecturer on Fruit at Hadlow College (now retired) and formerly at Long Ashton.

## Liverymen seen and heard

David Morgan appeared on BBC discussing financial problems of Golf Clubs on 15th September, 1992.

David Shapley, of the Grocer Magazine, gave an interview on radio on 6th September, 1992.

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Clerk: Commander Michael Styles, RN  
Denmead Cottage, Chawton, Nr Alton, Hants GU34 1SB

Editor: David Hohnen

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