

The Fruiterers' Company EWSLETTER



Number 52

April 2005

VICTORY

36° 10' N 6° 25' W

From time to time some liverymen are known to lose their bearings, but Admiral Lord Nelson's famous victory at Trafalgar in October 1805 is recorded as the above position! The Company celebrated the 200th Anniversary of the battle by a dinner aboard HMS Victory on 5th April to mark "The Year of the Sea" and to celebrate his life.

At the invitation of the Second Sea Lord and Commander-in-Chief, Naval Home Command, Vice-Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent, a party of 100 attended a champagne reception in Admiralty House and The Master planted a lemon tree in the garden to record our visit. "I originally thought of a lime tree because traditionally the Navy always carried limes to combat scurvy aboard ships", The Master said, "but I was advised by The Upper Warden that a lemon would be more suited to the climate!".

After the tree planting, the party embarked on the Admiral's flagship, HMS Victory, for a tour of the ship. Dinner was taken on the gun deck at 20.00 hours, with excellent food and wines. The Master, in an amusing speech, concluded by proposing the toast to Lord Nelson (using the toast used at his funeral "To the glorious and immortal memory of our much loved and ever to be lamented hero, Lord Viscount Nelson"), to which our host replied, thanking The Master for our Charitable Trust donation to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund.

This was an outstanding evening and one which will long be remembered.





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY		
May 5th	Fruiterers' Golf Day	Kingswood GC
May I9th	Audit Court Meeting & Dinner	Barber-Surgeons Hall
June 2nd	Bath and West Show	Shepton Mallet
June 23rd	Garden of the Year Visit	Borde Hill
June 24th	Election of Sheriffs	Guildhall
June 30th	Livery Reception and Bonhams Auction Preview	Bonhams, Bond St
July 21st	Summer Court Meeting and Dinner	Skinners' Hall



ANCHORS AWEIGH AS THE MASTER SETS SAIL

It was appropriate that the closing music performed at our Banquet on February 3rd by The Militaire Orchestra had a naval theme, as our new Master has "the sea" as one of his themes for the year ahead.

The Banquet returned to Plaisterers Hall after an absence of some years and the Hall is in very good shape after the redecorations. Mr David Holliday, Master Plaisterer, and his wife Diana were among the guests. There was a full house, in fact the largest number The Fruiterers' have dined there.

The Sheriffs (Alderman John Hughesdon and Sheriff David Cobb) were present with their wives and we had the delight of two Past Lord Mayors, Sir Michael Oliver and Sir Clive Martin, with their wives also being among our quests.

It was an evening for Masters and Prime Warden of other liveries with their wives. Other than the Plaisterers, the Farmers, Gardeners, Butchers, Basketmakers and Barbers were all present.

The military were well represented with Rear Admiral Adrian Johns, Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff, Major-General Robin Brims, Deputy Chief of Joint Operations at Northwood and Air Commodore Mike Barter, Commandant of The Royal Air Force College at Cranwell all guests of our three musketeers.

We were delighted to welcome again The Lord Bishop of Rochester, The Right Reverend Michael Nazir-Ali with his wife Valerie and, representing the Law, The Hon Mr Justice Ryder.

Our guest speaker was Sir Robert Worcester, Chairman Mori Plc and Chairman of the Executive Committee of The Pilgrims, a Society whose object is to promote good Anglo-American relations. Sir Robert was accompanied by Lady Worcester and spoke warmly of his pride at being a Freeman of The City of London. We of course now have three American members.

In his speech of welcome The Master congratulated the Immediate Past Master on his achievements and initiatives during his year, many of which he hoped to develop further during the year. He also gave the first indication of plans for our 400th year and that funding for our works would be sought from the Livery in the months ahead to mark this historic anniversary. He outlined the major visits in the calendar and acknowledged the help he has already had from the industry for what is a "Non Fruit" Master.

In his Speech proposing the health of "Our Guests", Past Master David Hohnen addressing all the many guests quoted his recent words to his optician "Nice to See You" or even "Nice to be able to see you"!

It was a pity the The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor was unable to come and that, at the last minute, neither The Ambassador of Bahrain nor The Ambassador of Japan were able to be with us. However everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves and the caterers came up trumps with a tasty menu selected by The Master and Jenny, which included "A salute to Bramley" with Apple Sorbet devised by Liveryman Jonathan Choat.

Let's hope the winds are set fair for the Master's year!







The Master and Wardens with their ladies



The Loving Cup

THE MASTER AND JENNY GET IN CARNIVAL MOOD

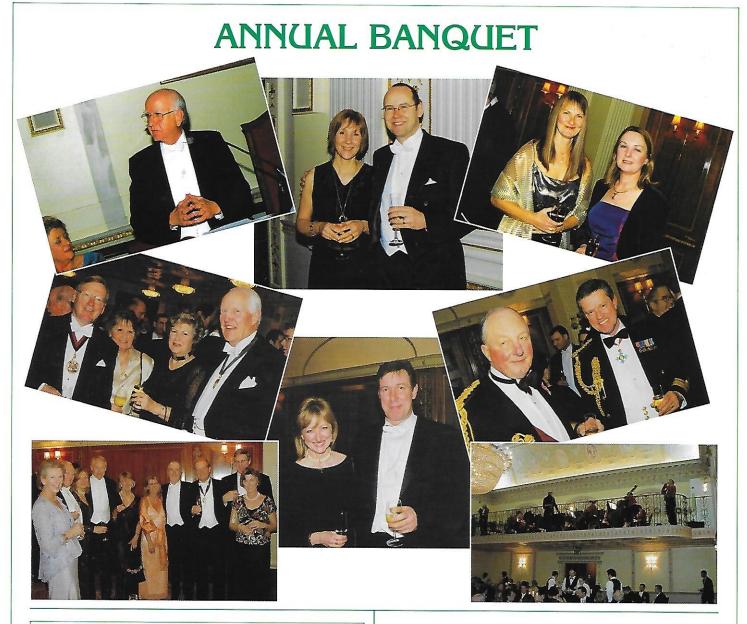


By tradition, the Master and his partner are guests of the Fresh Produce Consortium at their annual dinner & dance held at the Savoy on the

third Saturday in February. Each year a host nation that is important in supplying fresh produce to the UK, is invited to supply a theme for the evening.

The country's senior diplomatic staff, at their London Embassy, are invited as guests honour. This year the FPC was delighted to have Brazil as the host for the first time. The evening characterised was by cuisine and entertainment this vibrant and increasingly active South American state.





A RARE CHANCE OF AN IFORD CHERRY!

Liverymen may remember the work by Will Sibley (currently Upper Warden) in 1998 when he was able to graft the ailing Japanese Weeping Cherry and save it from possible extinction.

This arose from a Company visit to Iford Manor, who were the winners of The Garden of the Year award in that year.

100 young trees were produced and registered with the RHS as "The Iford Cherry". They were made available for sale and all sold. Will promised to see if further trees could be made available, which he has now done. A privileged offer has been made to members of the HHA but the offer is also now available to Liverymen.

All proceeds are donated to the Fruit Culture Trust.

The tree is a "wandering weeper" and is shown to best effect when trailing over the edge of a wall in a raised bed along a path. It is equally at home either in the ground or in a large pot.

Delivery would be in the autumn of 2005. The cost is £30 (incl p&p) and if you wish to place an order you should write to the Clerk's office.

"This remains a wonderful personal effort for us and I thank the Upper Warden for his work and generosity" said The Master.



THE CITY FOOD LECTURE



The 2005 City Food Lecture, promoted by the Fruiterers and six other food-related livery companies, was held at the Guildhall during the evening of Tuesday 25th January. This highly respected annual event was once again generously sponsored by J Sainsbury plc. The Corporation of London provided support with The Lord Mayor of London opening proceedings and the Sheriffs attending both the lecture and supper.

John Sunderland, Chairman of Cadbury Schweppes and President of the CBI and the Food and Drink Federation, provided a highly topical dissertation entitled "The Role of Food in Public Health". Following the presentation there was a question and answer session involving the audience and a group of food experts chaired by Justin King, chief executive of Sainsbury's. The panel consisted of Judy Buttriss, Senior Director, British Nutrition Foundation, Tim Bennett, President National Farmers Union, and Giles Quick, Divisional Managing Director of TNS.

At the conclusion of the formal session a supper was served in the Old Library, featuring British food with the menu including Haggis in recognition of Burns night.

As in past years the event was a "sell out" with over 600 delegates including the Masters of the promoting Companies and HRH The Princess Royal, a Past Master of the Farriers and Farmers' Companies, in attendance.



Speaker John Sunderland



The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor with Justin King and Laurence Olins

GARDEN OF THE YEAR 2005

We are pleased to hear from the joint Sponsors of this prestigious award that this year's winner is Borde Hill, a beautiful garden in Sussex.

We have made an offer of a visit and a presentation of fruit trees, which has been accepted by Mr and Mrs Clarke, and we shall be visiting the garden on 23rd June 2005.

NEW RENTER WARDEN ELECTED

On St Paul's Day Ivor Robins was elected as Renter Warden "for the year ensuing". Ivor has been a tireless worker for the Company for many years, especially in connection with the fruit distribution programme and he is an active member of the Golfing Society. We send him our best wishes for his year in Office.

EARLY TO MARKET

On Saturday 22nd January, the Master (Henry Bryant) and Heather led a small party of Liverymen and their partners/families on a most interesting visit to Borough Market.

They were met by Chris Nicholson and Alan Sugarman who acted as guides. Chris has been the inspirational driving force turning part of the original Floral Market of Covent Garden into a new modern building at Borough Market.

Monies were raised for the restoration of the market (through the sale of part of the land adjacent to the river and Lottery grants) to enable a competition to be held for the best architectural plan for a new building on to which the old Floral Market section could be attached.

This integration has been most successfully achieved. In May this year a new restaurant to be named *Roast* will be opened, which will serve the best of British produce and provide a welcome addition to the already successful fish restaurant on site.

Alan Sugarman is the Chairman of the Borough Market Tenants Association, and we are most grateful to them for a most instructive tour which ended with bacon rolls and hot drinks which were particularly welcome after our early start!

The market is open to the general public from 8.00a.m. until 4.p.m every Friday and Saturday and a visit is highly recommended.











FAREWELL TO THE MALTESE FALCON!

January 25th, the feast-day of the conversion of St. Paul, is a highly important date in our calendar. By tradition, on this day, the new Master and Wardens take office. For many years we have held a service at St Mary's Abchurch, a Wren design, in Abchurch Lane just off Cannon Sreet within the City, with which the Company has a long and happy association. During the proceedings the incoming Master takes his oath of office in front of the attendant Liverymen. This year the pews were filled to capacity and the address was given by the Archdeacon of London.

Henry Bryant, a fruit and turkey farmer from Kent, had proved to be a highly popular and successful Master over the previous twelve months, being ably supported by Heather whose sense of humour and fun became infectious. He has been succeeded by Peter Bartlett, a stockbroker by profession and very keen sailor, who is tipped to introduce a slightly different perspective during his term of office, while observing the key objectives of the livery. His interesting programme includes a dinner on board HMS Victory in

Tony Redsell pays

tribute to Henry Bryant

the year when the

200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar will be celebrated. A trip to Rungis, the important and massive food market on the outskirts of Paris, is on the agenda for April. His wife Jenny is also very supportive and has become a regular contributor of articles and pictures to the Company's newsletter.

Following the service, a lunch was held at the Innholders' Hall, during which insignia of office were exchanged between the outgoing Master and the incumbent. Past Master Tony Redsell, himself a fruit farmer from east Kent, provided a witty and down-to-earth assessment of our outgoing Master before presenting a bouquet of flowers to Heather. He spoke of the tremendous energy exhibited by Henry who, as well as being a full-time farmer, had successfully managed a most interesting and capacity calendar of events and activities. Paying a special tribute to his powers of communication, he wondered that, in the same year that he was Master, both of his children had been married and much of the arranging had fallen on his shoulders. Recounting an amusing tale, it was revealed that he had spoken to a Governor General Laycock, a onetime senior government official on Malta. Henry Bryant was a schoolboy then, and was holidaying on the island and staying with a school chum at

Government House. The GC recounted that at one meeting with Dom Mintoff, which was proving particularly difficult, Henry wandered in to the room. The Governor General broke the stalemate by inviting our then much younger IPM to draw up a chair and give his views on the issue



A VERY CIVIL SERVANT!

ALWYN THOMPSON TO RETIRE AS TECHNICAL SECRETARY

In June Liveryman Dr Alwyn Thompson will retire as Technical Secretary of The Awards Council after a hectic and progressive period of service.

We went to meet Alwyn and to hear of his career dedicated to the horticultural industry. Born in Gloucestershire of a Welsh mother, he considers himself as a true Welshman. The recent Grand Slam Rugby victory had clearly delighted him, being a huge enthusiast and follower of the game as well as a former player for London Welsh.

Alwyn is married to Sue and they have two sons.

Alwyn was educated at St Paul's School (London) and at Kings College, Cambridge. He had originally had a classics education but, wanting to be a vet, changed to science and studied Natural Sciences (Zoology) at Cambridge.

On leaving Cambridge, he joined Shell and was seconded to the Rothamsted Experimental Station, an internal school at London University. His task was to examine the environmental effect of pesticides. After three years he gained his Ph.D. for his research.

He then left the UK to work in Canada (1968) as a Post-Doctoral Fellow of the National Research Council of Canada in London, Ontario for two years. There he continued his research on the environmental effects of pesticides.

He then applied for a position at the National Vegetable Research Station at Wellesbourne (near Stratford on Avon), which he obtained and he stayed there for twenty years as a research scientist. This site later became the Headquarters of HRI, a government sponsored organisation (a Non-Departmental Public Body).

In 1990 his career took a change of direction when he joined the Chief Scientist's Group in MAFF with technical responsibility for all their research spend in horticulture and organic farming. This doubled during his time there by his bringing in new ideas and developing others.

In 1995 he was appointed Director of the HRI site at East Malling - Wye. By 2000 he had become Deputy Chief Executive of HRI and the following year he retired. Since then he has held various charitable posts as well as making his substantial contribution to our Awards Council, including being President of the Association of Applied Biologists. Alwyn has also been elected a Fellow of the Institute of Biology, the Institute of Horticulture and the Royal Entomological Society.

His work for us has seen a complete "make over" of the work of the Council, introducing new contacts and developing our work for the fruit industry. His knowledge has been invaluable to us and his retirement will be a great loss. Dr Mike Solomon is scheduled to be appointed as his successor.





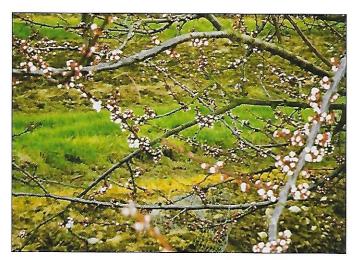
HIGHLAND COURT 'COTS

lan Johnston, the owner and proprietor of Highland Court Investments, farms at Bridge, just east of Canterbury in Kent. The family has been involved with this 1200 acres of prime land since 1928 and have earned a reputation for excellent management and quality production. The principal crop is fruit with 450 acres being dedicated to a range of commercial varieties, apples and blackcurrants being most important (Cox accounting for 100 hectares). The remainder of the farm is dedicated to arable crops and woodland. In amongst the orchards and fields lies just one acre of Tomcot Apricots. Planted 6-years-ago, these bush trees on St. Julian A rootstock, laid out 4m x 3.75m. produced 5 tonnes of Class I fruit in the first two weeks of July 2004. Marketed through a category management company to a well known high street retailer, the fruit received considerable praise and sold fluently to a knowledgeable consuming public. Any Class II fruit ended up in the farm shop or was converted to jam. Adjudged for an award, from the Fruiterers at the Kent County Show in the category, 'Any other type of stone fruit'. Of French origin, Tomcot is a fairly well known cultivar and flourished on the fertile soils of Highland Court, with sizes from AAA downwards.

Simon Foad, (General Manager) and Ian Johnston spoke affectionately of their apricots, when a Newsletter journalist visited them recently. Flavour was described as "unbelievable" while the skin and flesh were almost of a ruby-red hue. Being one of the earliest fruit types to blossom apricots are not grown extensively in this country, but who knows what may happen with global warming. There are some forecasters who are predicting that the UK will be supplying southern Europe with stone fruit and melons by 2060. Walking among the trees on the 21st February, just before a blizzard, the branches were festooned with blossom hopefully portending another successful crop.



Ian Johnston and Simon Foad



Apricot Blossoms





SHROVE TUESDAY TOSSINGS

At the suggestion of the Poulters' Company, (of which the Rt Hon The Lord Mayor is a Past Master), the pancake races, held in the main square of the City's Guildhall on Shrove Tuesday, marked the first occasion that this event has been held. Twelve livery companies, whose trades were considered to be associated with this British tradition, were invited to



compete, along with representatives from the Mansion House and Guildhall. The Company's contribution came in the form of lemons which are traditionally used on this day.

A course laid out in lanes involved four races, (Masters, Liverymen, handicapped - runners wearing Wellington boots and ladies). There were four heats from which the winners went forward to race against each other in the finals. Each team was allocated chefs hats made from identifiable colours which made life easier for the judges. Contestants ran over a straight course carrying a frying pan with pancake that had to be tossed once on the outward leg and again on the return.

The Fruiterers' team distinguished themselves having a runner-up, (Peter Thompson), in the handicap final and a winner, (Nicola Cronk), in the ladies final who was regrettably disqualified by the stewards, for losing her hat as she approached the finishing line.

It was a fun, charitable event, spiced with considerable competition and will be repeated in future years. Pancakes were served from field kitchens during the races and after the completion of the finals a buffet was served in the Basinghall Suite.







REMEMBERING COVENT GARDEN MARKET

The Company, with assistance of the Covent Garden Area Trust and Westminster City Council, is to create a public memorial to celebrate the era of the bustling centre of the fruit and vegetable trade in Britain.

A low relief bronze sculpture, measuring 13 feet by 6.5 feet, and depicting the life and spirit of the old market, will be erected on the wall of the Jubilee Market at the top of Southampton Street, adjacent to the Piazza. Created by renowned sculptress, Glynis Owen Jones, the bronze sculpture will be installed during 2006 as part of the Company's 400th Anniversary celebrations.

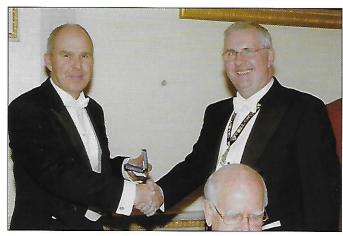
The Company will own and maintain the Old Covent Garden bronze.



Mrs Sheila Springer, the widow of the late Liveryman Barry Springer, is involved in this project, and was present at the Annual Banquet, where a model of the bronze was on display.

A specially designed tablet within the design will enable those whose firms or families were involved in the market may have their names inscribed. Letters are being sent to all Liverymen offering the opportunity and giving details of the costs involved.

A WORTHY RIDLEY MEDAL WINNER



Mr. Peter Vinson, a well known and respected Kentish grower, received the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers' triennial Ridley Medal, 'For distinguished services to Fruit Growing', at the Company's banquet held on the 3rd February at the Plaisterers' Hall.

The Master, Peter Bartlett said that 'Peter Vinson has been - and still is - a man of great vision and drive. In addition to all else he has done for the top and soft fruit industries in the UK, he has probably made more significant contributions to the transformation of the strawberry industry as a whole over the last decade than any other individual. Furthermore, not content with UK challenges alone, he has been working with NASA to develop strawberries that could grow on Mars!'

Peter Vinson took over Edward Vinson Ltd - a large

traditional top and soft fruit business in Kent - from his father in the early 1980s. Under Peter's guidance, the business became and remained dynamic, innovative and pioneering. Peter took it to the forefront of the UK industry, with a reputation for not only its top fruit production but also for its leading, ever-bearer-strawberry breeding programme (which was established in 1986). Peter stepped down two years ago from running the family business and has since been devoting his expertise and energies to his strawberry-breeding programme - which has already seen the release of those well-known varieties Evita, Everest, Everglade, Challenger and Evie.

During his illustrious career he has been Chairman of East Kent Packers, worked diligently for the FAST advisory board, instrumental in the formation of Gro-Act (which in turn led to the formation of the Assured Produce Scheme) and the establishment of the allyear-round fruit business that paved the way for Worldwide Fruits years later. He also played a major role in the setting-up of Berryworld to market soft fruit to the multiple retailers. Serving on many committees (frequently as chairman) and being instrumental in the formation of the Under 40s fruit movement in the late 1960s his work for the industry has been tireless. His CV includes trusteeship of the East Malling Trust for Horticultural Research, activities in English Apples and Pears and involvement in VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas). He freely shares his experience and knowledge with aspiring young managers in the industry.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FRIENDLY BUTCHERS!



The Master Farmer, N J Fiske

In recent years we have been most fortunate to have been allowed to hold most of our informal Carvery Lunches at Butchers' Hall by kind permission of the Master and Wardens of that Company.

We always get a warm welcome and usually our own table! These lunches have

been running now for 5 years and are judged to be a success although rarely "sold out". They offer the opportunity for Liverymen to meet one another and bring guests who may be interested in joining the Company or may be Industry related

Some of our Show Awards are presented at the lunches when there is no other suitable opportunity, bringing growers together. The Roast Beef is "to die for".

On March 16th 24 members and guests attended (having survived the Ides of the previous day!).

The Butchers' Company is celebrating their 400th Anniversary this year. We send them our best wishes.

In part commemoration of this event, the Butchers' commissioned an Anthem, composed by Patrick Hawes (b.1958) and using words from Psalm 8.

The Anthem was performed at this year's United Guilds Service.

OUR FIRST NUFFIELD SCHOLAR SELECTED

The Fruiterers' sponsored Nuffield scholar for 2005/2006 has been selected following the interviews of several able candidates. The award has been won by Stuart John Clark, a 42-year-old farmer from Rainham, Kent. Educated at St. Edmunds, Canterbury and Mid Kent College, Maidstone, Stuart is married with two sons and farms in partnership with his father. He was one of the first to attend the Fruiterers' management training schemes and was a finalist in the 2004 Top Fruit Grower of the year award. He impressed at his interview for the Nuffield Scholarship with his knowledge and work on the development of netting for the prevention of hail damage and for his pioneering successes on the growing of Jazz and Braeburn.

During the year of his sabbatical he expressed a desire to travel to other important apple growing countries of the world such as New Zealand, South Africa, Chile as well as those in eastern Europe. There will be a week's induction programme which will include a trip to Brussels.

We wish Stuart well in his year.

Past Masters Alan Todd and Tony Redsell were members of the interviewing panel and were encouraged by the high quality of the applicants. In addition we are told that two other scholarships awarded this year, but sponsored by others, are "fruit related".

UNITED GUILDS SERVICE

Once a year, the Livery Companies and Guilds of the City of London, assemble for a service at St. Paul's Cathedral. The idea originated from a meeting of the Masters and Prime Wardens of the Twelve Great Companies, held at the Goldsmiths' Hall on February 1st 1943, when it was decided to hold a service in St. Paul's Cathedral for the Companies and Guilds following the Blitz of the Second World War.

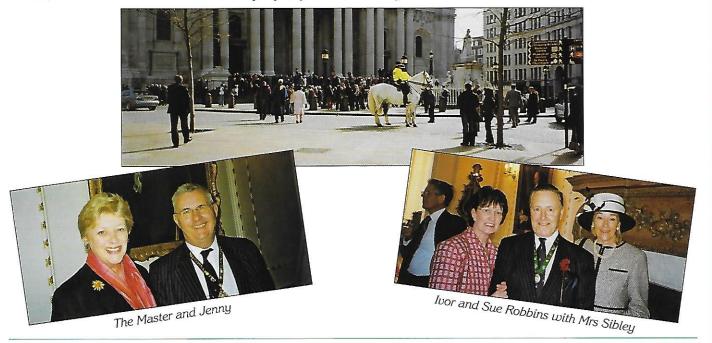
Having regard to religious origins of the Companies, Thursday 25th March 1943, 'Lady Day', was selected as the date for the Service, being the first day of the year according to the Julian-Calendar.

This year the Service could not be held on Lady Day because of Easter and was held on 18th March. The Master, Wardens and Clerk took their proper places in Row 23 (South), supported by other Court members. The Master's Lady was seated with the ladies of all the other Masters in their appointed places.

The Lord Mayor read the lesson (Matthew 2.1 - 12). The Sermon was given by the Very Reverend Robert Willis, Dean of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London gave the Blessing.

In recent years we have been fortunate to be invited to join the Stationers at their hall along with other liveries and a small party enjoyed a most pleasant lunch.

Next year's Service will be on 31st March 2006.



CHANGING PATTERNS FOR THE AWARDS COUNCIL

The Awards Council held a meeting at East Malling on February 9th.

In a long Agenda the Council had a presentation from Hadlow College, which included initial discussions as to how the Company might assist the College in their bid for Centre of Vocational Excellence (COVE) status, specifically in relation to the fruit industry. There were also other matters and ideas which will be developed in the next few months.

There has been a major change in that the Sandwich Course studentships at East Malling and elsewhere, which the Company has supported for some years are to cease and thus there will be no need for funds. The concept of the Trustees of The Fruit Culture Trust part-financing a three year PhD studentship is under review and will be dependent on the bid by East Malling Research for additional funds.

We are supporting overseas visits by scientists and providing funds for industry workshops, as well as

continuing our schedule of prizes and awards at fruit shows and colleges. We are modestly increasing our contribution to The Royal Bath and West Show, thus maintaining our links with the cider industry.

The changing patterns mean that we shall be supporting more projects which run for periods of several years.

Our major awards will continue with a review of the Fruit Culture Award and the Craftsman's Award, and, perhaps most immediately interesting, there has been strong interest in our participation in the Nuffield Scholarships. Each of these Scholarships will cost £7,500.

The Council has been made aware of plans for a scheme (Focus 400) to run a series of events to mark our Quater-Centenary, details of which will be announced later.

The Environmental Awards are under discussion with Waitrose, the sponsor, and news of whether they are to continue in their present form will be given when known.

The City Food lecture, which is run in conjunction with six other liveries, is looking for a new sponsor for 2006.

As will be seen there is no shortage of activity or enthusiasm and, on an ongoing basis, the need for financial strength is as great as ever.



The Victory Party

NEW FREEMEN

On January 25th 2005

By Redemption
Terence Menelaos Spiby



Honoris Causa Diana Hyam



OBITUARY

It is extremely sad that Robert Green has died after his determined fight against cancer, despite having made an encouraging recovery. We send our sincerest sympathies to Annette and her family.

BEST WISHES

The Master has sent a message of good wishes on behalf of the Livery to Liveryman His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales on the occasion of his marriage to Camilla Parker Bowles.

SPONSORS

We urgently need a sponsor for the summer issue of the newsletter this year. The Master and Wardens ask <u>all</u> liverymen to consider if they can help. Details of the cost can be obtained from the Clerk, who would be more than pleased to hear from any member or a group of members!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors would like to thank The Master, Ian Johnston, Jenny Bartlett, Tony Redsell and the Clerk for their contributions to this issue.

They are always glad to have news of Liverymen. Don't be camera shy!

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