



The Fruiterers' Company NEWSLETTER

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His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales joins the Livery at historic ceremony



Our pictures show HRH, the Prince of Wales being congratulated by the Master, and the Court of the Company, after the ceremony.

HRH, the Prince of Wales became an Honorary Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers on June 15 last.

The historic moment took place at St James' Palace, in a ceremony before the Court of the Company. Here he was admitted to the Freedom, and clothed with the Livery, by the Master David Hope-Mason.

The Prince's election was supported by Harry Lewis, the

senior Past Master present, and Past Master Ronald Starns. Mr Starns had led the Court during his own year of office, on the first visit to Highgrove to inspect the fruit trees, presented to His Royal Highness as a wedding present.

After signing the Roll of Freedom, HRH expressed his delight at being the first member of the Royal Family to have joined the Livery in its near 700 year history.

The Master in response, wel-

coming the Prince of Wales added that it was a fitting occasion in view of his declared practical interest in fruit growing.

He had also impressed Liverymen with the concern that he shared with the Company, and which he had expressed at the Annual Banquet last February, for the future of the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale.

New Awards Council will broaden involvement

A NEW strategy designed to strengthen the work of the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers was unveiled by the Master at the Audit Court dinner held at the Barber-Surgeon's Hall in May.

This will shortly be embodied through the formation of a new Fruiterers' Awards Council. It will take over the work of, and replace the Fruit Culture Council which has given such essential support particularly to fruit research over the past 30 years.

Comprising the Master's Committee, and eight other appointed members mostly drawn from the Livery it will be the catalyst for a wider spectrum of interests.

"Our responsibilities towards fruit culture will be none the less, but our concern for the industry as a whole will be more complete," said the Master.

While the exact details have yet to be formalised, the substance of this change is embodied in a report which he presented entitled "The Way Ahead."

It recalls the time when even as far back as the 14th century, the prime objective of the Livery was an involvement in both the commercial and fruit cultural affairs of its members. High on the list of priorities was the furtherance of the standards of excellence and pride in the profession it served.

These tenets still hold good, though the involvement today is on a different scale. The policy document which has been unanimously approved by the Court, identifies the industry's awareness for example, of the need to encourage more young people into its ranks, at a time when the impact of the reducing number of school leavers has yet to be felt.

In a Livery where over half the members are involved in fresh produce and increasing numbers are specifically involved in selling and retailing fruit, apart from ancillary services, this particular subject is of considerable interest.



Over the past few months some very special apple trees in Kent have been the object of intense interest by the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers, and fruit growers as a whole.

They are the nation's fruit collection at Brogdale, regarded as not just of historical interest, but of vital

Livery still have a vital role

significance to the international apple world as a whole.

The 2,500 apple varieties, the largest collection anywhere, represent the fruit equivalent of a national gene bank ensuring the future for following generations.

The reason is that up until July 11, it was believed that the collection was at risk, because of the swinging cuts that government was making across the board, affecting research and development.

But answering a question in

the House, Minister of Agriculture John MacGregor will have set many minds at rest by confirming that the Fruit Trials will be saved, although the station itself will still be closed through the lack of any alternative viable funding proposal.

The initial threat was first highlighted by HRH the Prince of Wales, speaking at the Company's Annual Banquet last February. He bluntly said it would be a disaster, if the collection was lost. The cry was again taken

up by Lord Selborne, Chairman of the Agricultural and Food Research Council and himself a respected fruit growers and nurseryman, at the Audit Court Dinner.

Subsequently, because of its unique, and unbiased role, the Livery was approached from several sources to become the catalyst in helping find a solution.

Professional and research centres of excellence including Wye College, the Institute of Horticultural

"Decisions taken too fast and too secretly"

IF HORTICULTURAL research may still be saved by some government formula linked to self help, the fruit industry nevertheless has every reason to be aggrieved because "decisions have been taken too fast and too secretly," complained Lord Selborne.

His views have always had great influence in the top fruit industry. Not only is he Master Elect of the Mercers Company, the foremost Livery Company in the City, but he is also a practical grower and nurseryman and is a firm supporter of co-operation.

In these roles he was the architect of the Kingdom scheme, and one time vice chairman of the Apple and Pear Development Council, which, when he spoke, was teetering on the brink of existence.

Last May in the heart of the City, he was guest speaker at the Audit Court Dinner, of the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers, at a time when, he agreed, the industry was in turmoil over the research cuts which are being made.

It was a record attendance, despite being the hottest night of the year, with members also having to brave the traffic congestion caused by the wave of public transport strikes.

Ironically the Agricultural and Food Research Council, of which he is chairman, is being better supported than before. He

says Lord Selbourne

estimated that it now has funds of £30m for long term development, compared with the previous budget which was two thirds less.

But growers, and indeed the Livery itself, were then more concerned over more immediate problems, highlighted by the question mark over the future of the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale. Here 2,300 varieties, regarded as the ultimate gene bank for apples, were at risk.

Support for its continuance has already attracted the interest of HRH The Prince of Wales, who appears to have stayed the government's hand. The Fruiterers' themselves have even been pushing the case with the Ministry of Agriculture.

Meanwhile, the Company itself is showing marked signs of becoming increasingly involved with trade practicalities. While it has always done sterling work in support of fruit culture, it is now hoping to foster marketing skills as well.

This area has been left virtually untapped, with the exception of the presentation of the Lewis Medal, although a remarkably high number of members are directly involved with other aspects of fresh produce, as distinct from growing.

Announcing a new initiative, the Master, David Hope-Mason

revealed that a new Fruiterers' Awards Council would be established, "which would have a wider remit than anything we have done before."

"Our responsibilities towards fruit culture will be none the less, but our concern for the industry as a whole will be more complete," he added.

Just how such a concept will operate, and be funded, remains to be seen. But he spelt out that the Livery was to create a new appeal "to all concerned in this great international business."

"We have, at the very least, as our ancestors before us, a responsibility to fulfil," he added.

Support, he hoped, would come from the current UK trade organisations themselves.

For, in the same breath, he warmly welcomed guest chairmen and presidential representatives from the National Federation of Fruit & Potato Trades, the Fruit Importers' Association, and the Produce Packaging & Marketing Association.

He also paid tribute to the progress being made towards Confederation which will entail the unification of the various trade associations. "It is a move which must surely bring enormous benefits to the whole industry, with important ramifications not just for this country, but for the whole trade in Europe," he added.

Commander Michael Styles becomes Clerk

The announcement at the Audit Court Dinner that Commander Michael Styles had been appointed to the office of Clerk to the Company, after holding an acting role, was greeted with acclamation, signifying it is a very popular choice.

Since he was recruited some 12 months ago, he has had a busy time indeed. Many of the decisions which have been recently taken by the Court, have required a considerable amount of administration.

And this is apart from his day to day contact with members to ensure the smooth running of the Livery.

His personal interests during a 36-year life at sea, including being a qualified helicopter and fighter pilot, are both varied and intriguing.

They include public speaking, antique silver, cooking (with a preference for Middle and the Far East); and he is an acknowledged expert on beer.

It includes writing and collecting, apart from tasting!

Michael is married with two daughters

to play as Brogdale trials are saved

Research at East Malling, Kew Gardens, and the Royal Horticultural Society, have already been represented at a collective meeting at the Ministry itself in May to discuss the future.

Signs that the collection would be saved were first mooted by Baroness Trumpington, the Minister of State in the Lords, prior to Mr MacGregor's announcement.

There is no doubt that the news will be welcomed. Other countries have a

similar international trials. France for example houses the international pear collection, and Belgium is proud to be responsible for nuts.

English apple growers have always argued that it takes up to 15 years to grow and trial new varieties, which is far removed from the government remit of cutting back on "near market" research.

Also, as His Royal Highness pointed out, in the climate of opinion which is

more and more concerned with the environment, it would be catastrophic if old traditional varieties disappeared. They might well be called upon again, possibly to provide certain disease resistant characteristics to face new, but as yet, unforeseen problems.

The details as to where the collection will now go still remains a matter for discussion.

"At the present time the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers is deeply involved

over the future home for Brogdale's unique collection", confirms Master David Hope-Mason. "If called upon we will continue to do everything we can to help facilitate its move."

The land at Brogdale itself will now probably be sold. So high on the list of potential alternatives are Wye College, perhaps the best option, the East Malling Experimental Station in Kent, or possibly the Royal Horticultural Society which has grounds at Wisley.

Lord Mayor's Show participation reflects strong City ties

The 800th anniversary of the City of London, has already brought the long history and traditions of our capital into greater public prominence, and in this respect with the celebrations which are planned the Fruiterers' Company is playing a major part.

It was exactly a decade ago, then under the Mastership of the late Gordon Hope-Mason, that the Livery participated in the Lord Mayors' Show, with a colourful float, which drew praise from the industry as a whole, and enthralled the crowds.

Plans are already in hand to repeat this achievement in support of the City in enjoying such a momentous celebration.

Arrangements, including the design of the float which will be decked with fresh produce, are already well in hand.

Amongst those who have generously already given their support, are our own English apple and pear growers, the promotional organisation which represents UK Caribbean banana interests which export fruit to our market, and Foods from Spain, the UK office of the national promotional agency.

The date of the Show is Saturday, November 12. More details in our next newsletter.

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Late Autumn is also the time when the Fruiterers' are involved in their traditional ceremony at the Mansion House, with the presentation of fruit to the Lord Mayor. The date is October 26 next.

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Amongst the events which are being arranged which many Liverymen may like to attend to give them a closer understanding of the City's role both in the past and the present, is a

A number of Liverymen have asked whether they can obtain copies of the pictures taken at the Banquet of our new Honary Liveryman, His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales. Copies are indeed available from Helen Panayi at Lockwood Press Ltd on 01-622 6677 at a cost of £5 each.

series of lectures to be held at the Guildhall on October 14 next.

A number of distinguished speakers and experts will trace the Mayoralty from 1189, dealing with the often crucial role that it has played in social, economical and political affairs of the realm.

For example, Liveryman can become more closely acquainted down the ages with Fitz Ailwyn the first Lord mayor; William Walworth, and his role representing the conservative force during the anarchy of the Peasants' Revolt, and hear the real facts behind the myths which surround Dick Whittington!

The modern era loomed, and the City population expanded in the suburbs, but the Lord Mayors' role has been no less diminished, for amongst many other aspects he is now recognised as a leader of the financial community.

The programme, which includes lunch and a guided tour begins at 10.00am, in the Old Library, Guildhall, and will last until 5.00pm.

Price £9.95 inclusive of tea and coffee. Details from the Clerk.

Members' help needed!

THIS edition of the newsletter is unique in many respects. One such reason is it carries the first-ever questionnaire designed to ascertain just what appeals to Liverymen.

The Court believe that the results will enable them to establish the most accurate profile yet, to quantify the modern needs of members. This in turn will hopefully lead towards greater participation and interest in the annual diary of events.

They hope that members will take the time to answer these questions, and at the same time, add any further appropriate comments they may feel could be helpful.

Fruit Culture Council reports year of success

At the last meeting of the Fruit Culture Council, before it continues its valuable work under the new Fruiterers' Awards Council, Past Master Donald Mack has reported that several research projects in which the Company had been involved, had been successfully completed.

These include the plantation of virus-free scion wood at Wisley, which had been marked with the plaque acknowledging our participation.

Dr. J. D. Quinlan of East Malling, the recipient of a major company bursary for travel had visited South Africa, and in particular the Fruit Technology Research Institute at Stellenbosch.

Past Master Mack recorded his thanks to Unifruco for providing

funding, and to Past Master Norman Sheldon for organising the visit.

Dr Neil Hipps had also been granted financial assistance in his visit to the Granite Belt Horticultural Research Station in Queensland. This is in connection with his work on fertigation on the establishment of young apple trees.

Travel bursaries had also been drafted to Dr Mark Wilson of the University of Manchester School of Biological Sciences, to assist him in presenting papers at the 5th International Fire Blight Workshop in Belgium. Dr Connie Garrett from East Malling attended the same event, and also the 7th Plant Bacteriology Conference at Budapest.

Diary Dates

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Election of Lord Mayor at the Guildhall.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2

Livery visit to a money broking company. Honorary Assistant, Derek Tullett, is offering Liverymen the opportunity to see how the money market works. He has also generously offered to provide the party with lunch. Those interested in joining the visit should contact the Clerk as soon as possible.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5

This will take the form of a tasting of wines produced in the Loire Valley, and will be accompanied by a selection of French cheese. It will take place at an unusual venue in London. Details will be circulated in September.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6

For the first time, as far as is known, the Fruiterers' Company will pay a visit overseas. The trip will include a tour not only to one of the largest and most modern apple packhouses in France, but to the wine regions and chateaux. Departure from London by coach to the Loire Valley, returning on Sunday October 8th. Open to Liverymen and wives. Full details will be available shortly.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26

Presentation of fruit at the Mansion House.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9

The Court Meeting at the Tallow Chandlers Hall, followed by the Master and Wardens Dinner

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Please come and cheer your Company's float!

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Fruiterers tee off

THERE was a record turnout of both Liverymen and guests at the third Fruiterers' Golf Day held at the Kingswood Golf Club in May.

Played in brilliant sunshine there were three separate competitions for Liveryman with handicaps either below and above 19, and a guests' prize.

This is in addition to the elegant annual trophy, known as the Fruiterers' Cup, donated by Past Master Michael Barton, who appropriately was also amongst the prize winners at the end of the day.

The various trophies were presented by the President Ralph Felton, who also with good spirit manned the hospitality bar at the 10th Tee.

RESULTS

THE FRUITERERS' CUP
Liveryman **Ted Dilley**

THE MASTER'S VASE
Liveryman **David Morgan**

THE PRESIDENT'S VASE
Derek Felstead

The Company are also indebted to Liveryman Tom Hilliard, the owner of Kingswood Golf Club for his generous hospitality, and helping to make the day such a success.

GOLF PLAYERS

It would assist the joint secretaries if all Liverymen who wish to receive details of the Golfing Society contact Robert A. Sice and David Hohnen, 2 Southwark Street, London Bridge, London, SE11RQ



Top: Liveryman Ted Dilley receives the new Fruiterers' Cup from Past Master Michael Barton, who also donated the trophy. Above: Liverymen K. Lipscomb and Ken Broomfield accept their prizes from the President of the Golfing Society, Ralph Felton.

New members and Honary Assistants

New members of the Livery clothed on May 23 were:

Kenneth Allmey, retired partner in Lloyds Underwriting Agency.
Jonathan Choat, managing director, of a public relations consultancy.
David Shapley, director of publishing company.
Frederick Starns, director of wholesale fruit and vegetable company.

They are all warmly welcomed

to the Fruiterers' Company.

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Four new Honary Assistants were elected to the Court for a two-year period in May. They are:

Michael Cronk, a sugar broker.
John Hailwood CBE, retired chairman, Geest, West Indies.
Tony Harris, Headmaster.
Derek Tullett, Chairman, Money Broking.