



THE FRUITERERS' COMPANY NEWSLETTER

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Sixteen new Freemen admitted at Master & Wardens' Dinner

At the Master & Wardens' Dinner, at Ironmongers' Hall on November 8th, the Company welcomed 16 new Freemen to our ranks, as well as clothing one new liveryman, by far the largest single cohort of new entrants to be admitted in recent memory.

Bringing new skills and ideas into any livery company can prove a challenge and Master Fruiterer Laurence Olins welcomed the influx of new talent as a great boost: "We offer the new Freemen our sincere congratulations and appreciate their decision to join us and to have chosen the Fruiterers as their Company," he said. "We, like many other livery companies, depend entirely on the time and work that our members generously give to help us achieve our aims and objectives. Without their pro bono service, the Company would neither survive nor flourish."

At the dinner, the Master presented a special award to Past Master Will Sibley, who he lauded as a shining example to all new Freemen as "one particular liveryman who has and continues to go beyond the normal levels of service, generosity and dedication ... to make a real difference to both the Company and to the fruit industry".

The inscribed wine bottle coaster marked fruit tree nurseryman Will's enormous contribution to the Company, which has included his being instrumental in the successful establishment of the Company's tree planting reputation. He has generously donated trees on numerous occasions and particularly 500 trees in the recent Treebilee initiative, launched to mark Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee. Will has also given his time and expertise to the Fruiterers' Awards Council, of which he recently retired as Vice Chairman after many years of service, and been an influential champion of the Company's Apprenticeship scheme. He now leads the Journeyman initiative, a mentoring project that has created a practical new route to admission into the livery.

On the night, the Master also presented Charnee Butcher with this year's Under 30s award and Paul Hamlyn with the Fruiterers' Management Award.

Laurence, who was speaking at his final formal dinner as Master, has inarguably served the Company as well as anyone, having stepped into the breach for a unique second term at an extremely difficult time for the Fruiterers.

"As all Past Masters will attest," he said, "it is a real privilege to serve in this position for one year. From my perspective, to have the honour of serving a second time as Master has been a double privilege. Unlike when I was Master in the year 2000, this time the Company needed help to steady the ship. After much



L to R: Avnish Malde (Wealmoor), John Valentine (Red Communications), Stephen Swainston (Ethical Food Company), Jai Thakrar (Jalaram Fruit), Lisa Eagles (British Growers)



L to R: Toby Pullen (Chartered Surveyor), Paul Avery (BerryWorld), Samuel Rowe (BerryWorld), Dr Kajal Patel (Forensic Psychologist), Paul Norris (Corporate Finance), Catherine Hoare (Houston PR)



L to R: Douglas Amesz (Agricultural recruitment), Henry Matthews (Writtle University College), Dr Jane Melia (Retired Epidemiologist), Dr Jenny Sillick (Locum GP), Mark Haynes (Soil Association Advisor)



The Master and Guests at his final Dinner

hard work, this has now been achieved. I could not have carried out my task without the help of many of my fellow Past Masters and all our various committee members, and not forgetting our excellent Clerk Sarah Murnane. I am eternally grateful to each and every one of you for your support and encouragement over the last 20 months.

"They say that the more you put into an enterprise, the more you will get out," he continued. "From my

perspective this is absolutely true and I really feel doubly satisfied with what we have achieved together."

"The Fruiterers is on an upward interesting path and long may this continue. I look forward to supporting future Masters, as they in turn take up the heavy responsibility of leading our Company."



*Newly clothed liveryman
Andrew Davis*



Guest speaker, the recently retired Sheriff of the City of London, Alderman Alison Gowman, with the Master



*Special Award for
Past Master Will Sibley*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event	Location	Date	Event	Location
January			April		
Wed 25	St Paul's Day Service & Lunch	Innholders	Sat-Sun 22-23	Marmalade Festival	Dalemain House, Cumbria
February			May		
Tue 21	Livery Pancake Race	Guildhall	Wed 3	Honorary Assistants' Dinner	TBC
Thu 23	Mansion House Banquet	Mansion House	Thu 4	Fruiterers' Golf Day	Kingswood GC
Tue 28	Common Hall Webinar	Zoom	Thu 11	Spring Dinner (Audit Court)	Vintners (reserved)
March			Sun 14	Shooting	Shooting School
Thu 9	Local Livery Lunch	TBC	Mon 15	City Food & Drink Lecture	Guildhall
Su-Fr 19-24	Fruiterers' Ski Trip	Cervinia	Tue-Sun 16-21	Trip to Spain	Lleida/ Zaragoza
Tue 28	Royal Opera House & Lunch (TBC)	London	Fri 26	Local Lunch	TBC
Thu 30	Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch	Guildhall			

Annual presentation of fruit to the Lord Mayor

While the post-pandemic world seems to be in a constant state of flux, it is reassuring that some events, such as the Annual Presentation of Fruit to the Lord Mayor, have seen little change in the past 450 years. The ceremonial event, wherein the Company presents a token basket of fruit to the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress in lieu of the fruit formerly paid in tax, was once again carried out within the beautiful surroundings of Mansion House.

The event began with the Master, Wardens and Company Officers being received by the Lord Mayor Vincent Keaveny and Lady Mayoress Amanda



The Master presents the annual tribute of fruit to the Lord Mayor



Liveryman Peter Thomas, The Master and The Honorary Fruit Porter



The Master, Wardens and Officers of the Company

Keaveny. Within the grand space of the Salon, a silver basket of fruit – selected and displayed by Liveryman Peter Thomas – was unveiled by the Honorary Fruit Porter Jimmy Huddart Esq, as the Master recited the ceremonial speech, explaining the origins of the ceremony and obligations of the Company.

The Lady Mayoress was then also presented with



a silver basket of fruit and all those present were invited to share refreshments with the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress who circulated with Company members.

It was great to see a return to the usual format of the ceremony and, at a later date, the Lord Mayor was pleased to receive a cheque from the Master, as a donation towards the Lord Mayor's Appeal.

A Past Masters' Luncheon was held on October 18th at the RAC on Pall Mall, to recognise the contribution of Laurence Olins, who was of course approaching the end of his second term as Master. The luncheon was organised by Past Masters David Hope-Mason and John Warner, who thanked the Master on behalf of all Past Masters. The total number of Past Masters and wives dining was 23.



Remembrance Sunday

On Remembrance Sunday, November 13th, the Master laid a wreath on behalf of all of the Livery Companies of the City of London and Wales.

The ceremony was attended by the Lord Mayor, outside the Royal Exchange and is a relatively new tradition first established by Past Master John Warner in 2018.

As the Fruiterers conceived and organise the occasion, the Company has the right to lead the ceremony in perpetuity.



The Master lays a wreath



Remembrance Sunday Wreath



Bringing a splash of colour to the City



The Fruiterers brought our own brand of vibrancy and colour to the Lord Mayor's Show, on November 12th, with a large group of liverymen and their families volunteering to dress up as fruit and vegetables for the spectacular annual procession through the City of London.

The Company's party not only featured human watermelons, bananas, lemons, strawberries, avocados, pineapples and aubergines, but also John Goodwin's magnificent award-winning Shire team, a traditional dray carrying the Master, Upper and Renter Wardens and their wives, eight amazing dancers from liveryman Sue Handy's School of Dance, plus a drummer and flautist from the Guildford School of Music.

Expertly curated by Liveryman and Renter Warden Elect George Smith and

Liveryman Sarah Calcutt, the Fruiterers' presence brought a modern twist to events with a state-of-the-art Revo fruit picker, kindly loaned by Adrian Scripps Limited and carrying the names of several generous sponsors. AJ and CJ Snell, Tiptree, Prescott Thomas, Fresh Service, Midsummer Marketing Ltd, MorePeople and Hortus Machinery.

George said: "The weather was unseasonably perfect and we all had great fun. Thank you to everyone who volunteered to take part – I can testify that it's a long enough walk and those of us dressed as fruit were very popular with the crowds, but the energy of the girls who were dancing was incredible. A big thank you too, to the sponsors, who made our participation possible and contributed to the charitable efforts of the Show, which was raising funds for





National Numeracy, The Duke of Edinburgh Award, Place2Be, OnSide, and The Samaritans.

The Lord Mayor's Show dates back to the 13th century and combines the Square Mile's ancient history and modern dynamism, to allow the newly-elected Lord Mayor to introduce themselves to the public. It is televised on the BBC, always attracting millions of viewers.

This year, the spectacular procession once more took over the streets of the City as large crowds lined the route in the November sunshine. London's financial district was awash with pomp and pageantry as 133 groups, around 7,000 participants, 20 military and

civilian bands, Taiko drummers, mounted knights and around 250 horses walked, drove and cycled in colourful costumes and official regalia.

New Lord Mayors are elected on September 29 each year and sworn in the day before their annual showpiece event takes place. The parade completes the swearing-in process by delivering the new Lord Mayor from Mansion House, their official residence, to Westminster, in a golden state coach which has been used every year since 1757, making it the oldest ceremonial vehicle in the world. Once in Westminster, the Lord Mayor swears loyalty to the Crown.

Alderman Nicholas Lyons was elected this year's Lord Mayor and becomes the 694th person to hold the prestigious title. He was previously the Sheriff of the City of London in 2021-22 and has worked in finance for the past 40 years.



The Lord Mayor waves to the crowds from his golden State Coach



The Royal Family, the City and the Livery



marked the Golden Anniversary of The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. Both were in attendance as the incumbent Master Tony Redsell presented several gifts, including a basket of fruit and a Black Mulberry tree, which Her Majesty took great joy in planting as the visiting Fruiterers looked on. A jovial occasion concluded with the party retiring to the House where, in front of a roaring fire, The Queen and The Duke mixed happily and spoke informally to all.

King Charles III was an Honorary Fruiterer while serving as Prince of Wales. Nine years prior to that Sandringham visit, in February 1989, the then Prince was the guest of honour at the Company's Annual Banquet, hosted by the newly elected Master David Hope-Mason, who told him "Your Highness has a better claim than many to being a genuine Fruiterer". On the occasion of the Prince's marriage to Princess Diana, the Fruiterers donated a collection of fruit varieties that were planted in the walled garden at Highgrove, and at the banquet, HRH delivered an impassioned speech. He illustrated his passion for sustainable growing, for the environment and a wish to preserve historical varieties.

The involvement of the Royal Family with the Livery Companies is by no means a modern phenomenon. Monarchs of note such as King James I, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I were all members of

Since the last issue of this Newsletter, we have all experienced the immensely sad occasion of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, after an extraordinary life of dedication and service to our country.

Our Monarch of 70 years died just a couple of months after we celebrated her seven decades on the throne, leaving the country in mourning, as the vast majority of us looked ahead for the first time in our lives to a Great Britain with a new Monarch.

Our Master Laurence Olins sent a note of condolence to Sir Clive Alderton KCVO, Private Secretary to HM The King, to express sincere sadness at the news of the Queen's death. He wrote: "On behalf of the members of the Court, all our Liverymen and staff, past and present, I ask you respectfully to convey to His Majesty the King, and other members of the Royal family, our deepest

sympathy and condolences.

"Throughout her long life, Her Majesty was a constant source of inspiration and service to the nation that will sorely miss her. Her examples of service, duty and loyalty are timeless and ones that we can and will follow," added the Master.

Monarchy and Livery

The Fruiterers' association with The Queen stretched back many years; the Company presenting gifts of fruit and more on several special occasions. Perhaps most notable amongst these was a visit to the Sandringham Estate in Norfolk, in 1988, which

Newsletter with Prince Charles





HM Queen Elizabeth II – taken at Wood Farm Sandringham on a Fruiterers' visit in 1998



At another event in 2006, HRH The Prince of Wales enquires about the Fruiterers' regalia

Livery Companies. Both King George VI and Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother were too.

In modern times the Crown retains a special relationship with the City, indeed the Sovereign is the only person who outranks the Lord Mayor in the City, and even so the Lord Mayor's permission is sought before the Sovereign enters the City. By custom the Lord Mayor greets the Sovereign at the City limits, often at the site of the old Temple Bar, and presents the Pearl Sword of the City of London (hilt uppermost) to him or her in recognition of the Sovereign's authority.

Many members of the Royal Family have been recently active or remain active in the City's Livery Companies, with several having held the office of Master or Prime Warden. The following is a selection of some of the most notable connections:

- HM The Queen was Royal Patron of The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights and the Honourable Company of Master Mariners in addition to being a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Drapers and a Freeman of the City of London.
- HRH The Duke of Edinburgh was a

well as Permanent Master of the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights, a Royal Liveryman of the Gardeners' Company, Liveryman of the Brewers' Company and Freeman of the Drapers' Company

- Camilla, Queen Consort, when HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, was an Honorary Liveryman of the Plaisterers' Company and of the Joiners and Ceilers' Company.

Numerous other members of the Royal Family are Freemen, Liverymen, Assistants or Past Masters of one or more Livery Companies, many by right of patrimony. It seems certain that the next generation of the Royal Family will in due course be admitted to the Freedom of one or more Livery Companies, especially where there is a professional, charitable or familial connection.

Beyond the numerous

connections between the Livery and individual members of the Royal Family, there are events when the City hosts the Sovereign and other members of the Royal Family in an official capacity. Events such as the presentation of a Royal Charter to a Livery Company, Royal Weddings, State Funerals, Jubilees and other occasions have all seen the Sovereign and other members of the Royal Family participate in the life of the City of London.

As we saw for the first time in 70 years, in September, the City also has a particular role in the proclamation of a new Sovereign, an event in which the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens (Freemen) of the City of London are explicitly mentioned in the proclamation. The City Marshal plays a role by challenging HM's officers of arms at Temple Bar prior to the proclamation in the City.



Master's Reflections

It is nearly two years since I unexpectedly took over as Master, in March 2021. To say I was unprepared for the maelstrom that greeted me is an understatement. However, all the challenges were dealt with within the first six months of me becoming Master of the Company and equally importantly Chairman of the Foundation.

The latter of these two roles accounted for the most time and expense, as there was much debate as to who were the correctly appointed trustees. Once resolved, it became a real achievement to separate the two entities, namely the Company and the Fruiterers' Foundation. Each are now administered by separate teams and neither subsidises the other, which was the case prior to my appointment as Chairman. Both entities are running very smoothly and efficiently, which is very rewarding.

The unhappiness between various parties that caused the internal rift in Company relationships took more time to resolve. Unfortunately, it also resulted in several members feeling the Company was not a natural home for them. Their departure was regretful, but on reflection necessary to start afresh and quickly move the Company onto a happier front foot. That we have done this was evidenced by the Reunion dinner held at Plaisterers' Hall in November 2021, when more than 250 liverymen and guests defied Covid and enjoyed reuniting with each other. Since then, the direction has only been upward with every event held – both

formal and informal - being hugely enjoyed and supported. We have welcomed new people too; in 2022 alone, we have inducted 21 new Freemen, who have injected a wave of enthusiasm from both within and outside the industry. Importantly, they are young of age and very diverse in ethnicity and background.

The next area I focused on was how we governed and administered ourselves. It had long been my contention that finding a single person with a multitude of skills to be our full time Clerk was becoming a mission impossible. To that end, I persuaded the Company to sub-contract all its back-office work to a specialist firm – British Growers Association. Our management accounts, final accounts and forecasts are now accurate and timely. Our year-end accounts are posted online months ahead of previous years and submitted on time to the Charity Commission. This change occurred in February 2022 and has been an outstanding success. It allowed us to recruit our brilliant Clerk, Sarah Murnane, who concentrates mainly on members and events. Her work is shortly to be made even more effective by the adoption of new data management software, which will make her and all our lives easier. Committee meetings are now held increasingly via Zoom, which has not only meant that members are less inconvenienced, but also broken down the silo mentality I inherited due to meetings being separate and held in person. There is

much more cross-fertilisation of committee members, which has resulted in better all-round governance.

As I hand over the reins of office and responsibility, I do so with an enormous amount of satisfaction. I look back at what has been achieved over the last 22 months with immense pride. To be Master is a privilege few of us attain. To have had the opportunity a second time under the circumstances I inherited was a chance to really make a difference. We achieved that together. The result would have been very different without the invaluable help I received from Past Masters and committee members. All have given their time and energy so generously, in order to right a damaged ship and create a sleek new liner.

I wish the new Master and those following much joy and success and hope that the foundations laid these last two years will stand the Company in great stead for the next chapter in its very long life.



Reminder: City Food & Drink Lecture delayed

The renamed City Food & Drink Lecture will be delivered on the later date of May 15th next year by Sir Charles Godfray (pictured), the Director of the Oxford Martin School and the Oxford Programme on the Future of Food.

Sir Charles's research interests include the UK and global food system, population and community ecology and how the global food system will need to change and adapt to the

challenges facing humanity in the 21st century, and in particular in the concept of sustainable intensification, and the relationship between food production, ecosystem services and biodiversity. He is the leading scientist and academic of his generation with a worldwide reputation.

Sir Charles will address the 2023 City Food & Drink Lecture on issues covering food security, the impact of the war in Ukraine, how we might feed

the nine billion on the planet, sustainability, diet, nutrition and climate change. This promises to be another stimulating evening for all

those who attend, either in person or online. More details will be sent out in due course, but suffice to say, we are hoping for another strong show of support from the Fruiterers.



Call for Award Nominations 2023

Among its responsibilities, the Company's Awards Council has the privilege of selecting worthy winners for our various annual awards. While members of the council are well connected within the industry, we would really like to hear from the full breadth of the Livery. If you can recommend someone who has been outstanding in their field, please take a few minutes to provide us with outline details on no more than one side of A4.

Nominations are invited for the following prestigious annual Fruiterers' Awards.

Fruiterers' Management Award:

Recognising the progressive and innovative skill of the many outstanding managers working within the fruit industry. Recipients can be from a soft or top fruit background. The 2022 award was presented to Paul Hamlyn, Production Manager at AC Hulme & Sons.

Under 30s Award:

This award recognises young people who have already made a significant contribution to the fruit industry and advanced or improved the business in which they work. This is a vigorously contested award. This year's worthy winner was Charnee Butcher, Crop Technologist and Development Assistant at Worldwide Fruit.

Candidates who wish to be consid-

ered for this Award should be:

- Working for a UK based employer
- Not in college or university education
- No more than 30 years of age
- Developing a career in the Fresh Produce industry and be working with fruit and/or fruit related products.
- Making a significant contribution to the sector by having undertaken a project(s) that has (have) advanced or improved the business in which they work.

Candidates with their sponsors should submit a comprehensive summary of the contenders' achievements and aspirations to support their application for the Award. This award is usually presented at the Master and Wardens' Dinner.

Fruit Culture Award:

Given in recognition of someone who has made a substantial contribution to the fruit industry through communicating skill or the transfer of technology. This year's winner was Brian Tompsett. The award is usually presented at the National Fruit Show.

Craftsman's Award:

This award recognises conspicuous craftsmanship in the exercise of practical skills in fruit growing. The 2022 winner was John Longley.

Further details of all annual awards are published on the Company's website.

The winning candidates for most awards will be announced in May following the April Awards Council meeting.

Triennial Awards:

The company also makes three highly significant triennial awards which are usually presented at the Annual Banquet:

- Ridley Medal; for distinguished services to fruit growing.
- Lewis Award; for distinguished serv-



Under 30s Award 2022 – Charnee Butcher

ice to the marketing of fresh fruit.

- Matthew Mack Award; for distinguished achievements in education, training and innovation within the growing industry.

Nominations for the triennial awards can be received at any time during the year and will usually be considered at the April meeting of the Awards Council.

Student Prizes:

In addition to the above awards the Company, with the generous support of the David Hohnen bequest and Berry Gardens Ltd, awards two prizes annually to the successful applicants. The winner of the David Hohnen award will receive a cheque for £2,500. In addition the winner of the Berry Gardens prize will receive a cheque for £1,500. These are usually presented at Fruit Focus and follow a rigorous assessment process by some of the Company's leading academics. The submission date for Student Prizes is March 17th.



Management Award 2022 – Paul Hamlyn

The selection of awards winners is made at our April meeting, if you have a suitable candidate for consideration we would like to receive details (emailed to our Technical Secretary – Jack Ward jack.ward@britishgrowers.org) by March 17th. Full details can be found on the Company website.

Meet the next Master

Matt Hancock

Relevance, inclusivity, and fun are my three key words for 2023.

Relevance because it is essential for the future of our Company that we remain relevant to our current and future industry and environment. Without this there will be no reason for future generations to join and develop this ancient Company.

Inclusivity to ensure we have the widest possible membership embracing gender, ethnicity, and age. I am keen to offer a broad spectrum of activities outside of our traditional formal functions that are affordable, interesting and have broad appeal.

Fun! It shouldn't be seen as a dirty word. We have lived through unprecedented times across the world and within our Company for the last few years. The stresses and strains of our new economic challenges are also pressing for many of us. It is important that we should find time to have some fun while getting on with the business of raising funds for our Charitable endeavours.

During the next 12 months, I aim to provide a wide range of activities for all members to enjoy while not breaking the bank. I plan to continue the sponsorship of our dinners to reduce ticket prices and enable as many people as possible to support our events, as well as using any surpluses for charity.

To start, I am pleased to announce that we will be back in Mansion House on February 23rd for our annual white tie banquet. The Common Hall Webinar will be repeated the week after, following such positive feedback earlier this year.

In March, the Fruiterers will be skiing in Cervinia, Italy between 19th and 24th. This trip is for skiers and non-skiers alike. In late March, we have a visit to the Royal Opera House to listen to a lunchtime performance followed by an informal lunch planned as one of our affordable events.

I will let you know



about more planned events in the next few months.

I have enjoyed a somewhat nomadic background! I was born in Belgium and lived there until I was 11 before moving to Italy until I went to University in the UK. A gap year spent in Argentina and a placement year in France cemented my love of Latin cultures and languages.

These experiences provided me the opportunity to start a career in fresh fruit at Frumar in the early 1990s. A public schoolboy who didn't know his pawpaw from his rambutan had a steep learning curve as the sharpest of wholesale traders put me through my paces with all the banter that our trade can offer.

Today, I run a specialist cherry, stonefruit and citrus business based in Kent, which is part of the Poupart group of companies to whom we sold the business in 2007. Cherries are the core of the business, and we source them

from around the globe as well as the UK, to supply a range of retailers and independents. It's a fast, volatile and innovative product category, filled with dynamic people around the world.

I joined the Fruiterers in 2006 because I love the history of the Company, the fellowship it offers and the opportunity to give something back to an industry that has been good to me. Our peripatetic status is a bonus as we enjoy access to a wide range of venues that we simply wouldn't see otherwise. My journey within the Company really began when I decided to get actively involved having served as an Honorary Assistant. I have chaired the Fundraising Sub-Committee for the last three years; I sit on the City Food & Drink Lecture's technical and organisational committees and arranged the virtual auction in 2020 at our online banquet.

I have enormous shoes to fill following on from Laurence Olins, who has done the most incredible job for this Livery Company and over the last 20 months. We all owe him a huge debt of gratitude as he ends his tenure having achieved so much. Thank you, Laurence!

I am really looking forward to 2023. I hope you will join me in having some fun while doing as much good for our industry and communities as possible.



Our next Master Matt Hancock and wife Fliss at the Lord Mayor's Show last month

Talented trio given Fruit Show platform

The Fruiterers' Livery Conference, at the National Fruit Show on November 2nd, provided a platform for three fruit industry researchers whose respective academic journeys have been supported and funded by the Company, in one form or another.

Hosted by Chris Newenham, Chairman of the Fruiterers' Awards Council, the well-attended event underlined two of the core goals of the Fruiterers, which are:

- To promote excellence across all sectors of the fruit industry.
- To support education and research within the fruit industry.

First to speak was Lauren Farwell of NIAB EMR, who was the winner of the Berry Gardens prize and is doing a PhD via the CTP Fruit Crop Research Scheme, researching the epidemiology and management of *Cladosporium* on raspberries. Lauren's work to date suggests that biological control agents could be a viable management strategy for *Cladosporium* on raspberries, which when prevalent, is a huge problem for growers.

The promising results have been achieved in sterile environments, however, and the next stage of the research is to step up the field trials to analyse whether the same results are possible in a dynamic ecosystem.

Adam Peter has received eight years of support for his research into 'Apples in a warmer world', a project that is studying the impact of climate change on apple production in the UK. He is



Chris Newenham introduced each speaker to the stage

currently a third year PhD student in Crop Sciences based at the University of Reading and National Fruit Collections, Kent, and has conducted extensive field trials to look at the effects of warmer and wetter climates on the production of apples. To date trial results indicate greater variability in apple production and fruit quality outputs, across cultivars and varietal traits, when seasonal temperature increases. The trials have picked up significant changes in firmness and brix levels, as well as storability and fruit colour.

Although final conclusions will not be drawn until late 2023/early 2024, there is a strong indication that future crop management strategies may need to adapt to ensure abundant, high quality fruit is produced every season, if the aim to reduce the country's dependence on imports is to be achieved.

The third speaker, Thomas Heaven,

was the inaugural winner of the Fruiterers' David Hohnen prize, for outstanding levels of dedication and achievement in the field of horticulture and fruit in particular. His PhD researching the viability of the use of genetic sequencing technology to improve disease diagnosis in fruit crops is funded by the collaborative training partnership for fruit crop research.

Thomas's work has focused on the genetic characterisation of powdery mildew infecting UK apple, strawberry and raspberry plants and has so far generated the first genomes for apple powdery mildew in Europe and the world's first genomes for raspberry and strawberry powdery mildew. He has also discovered that there is different genetic sequencing in the powdery mildew that affects each of the three fruits and identified unique targets for diagnosis by sequencing.



Lauren Farwell



Adam Peter



Thomas Heaven

Castle visit proves fascinating

On July 25th, the Immediate Past Master David Simmons, together with a large number of Liverymen and their guests received a very warm welcome on arrival at Allington Castle, the home of Sir Robert Worcester.

Both the IPM and Sir Robert spoke briefly before the visitors divided into two groups and enjoyed an interesting guided tour of the Castle and gardens prior to the planting of a Victoria Plum Tree by the IPM and Sir Robert.

Allington Castle is a Medieval 12th-century castle that lies about three miles north-west of Maidstone in Kent. It is fully furnished in character with its Medieval origins, with tapestries, antique furniture and Great Hall in which Henry VIII & Anne Boleyn dined with Sir Thomas Wyatt around 1530.

All that remains of the original castle is a section of wall and the kitchen fireplace built in 1174. The Castle was converted into a mansion house in 1491 when the Wyatt family acquired the property. It was severely damaged by fire in the late 16th century and was abandoned until 1905. The castle was then purchased and partly restored by Sir Martin Conway. Between 1951 and 1999 the castle was home to a convent of the Order of Carmelites, before it became a private residence.



The IPM took the opportunity to show Sir Robert the many names engraved on the Ceremonial Spade of other residences and locations where the Fruiterers had planted trees.

With the tree planting formalities completed the group, accompanied by Sir Robert, adjourned to the Grand Hall where a delicious Buffet Luncheon was served.

This long-awaited visit and tree planting proved to be a most memorable occasion.



Sir Robert Worcester and IPM David Simmons plant a Victoria plum tree with the ceremonial spade

Jack steps up on Awards Council

Jack Ward N.Sch, FRAGS will succeed Andrew Tinsley as Technical Secretary to the Awards Council, when Andrew steps down in the New Year.

Jack has a wide and varied cross-sector background and is currently most widely recognised as CEO of British Growers, which of course now looks after the Company's accounts. He has been with British Growers since 2014 and in his role is closely involved with every sector of the fresh produce industry.

Prior to his time there, Jack spent seven years as Chief Executive of City & Guilds Land Based Services, after 24 years at the National Farmers Union, where he rose through the ranks to become Regional Director for the East Midlands.



Jack Ward

"I have some experience in vocational skills through my role with City & Guilds Land Based Services," he said. "I was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship while I was at the NFU, in 2004 and

studied the factors affecting political influence within farming lobbies – specifically why some lobbies prove far more powerful than others."

Jack also became Chairman and Trustee of the Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust and sat on the panel when Chris Newenham, no less, was granted his scholarship!

Looking ahead, he said: "It's all about using the awards that are at the discretion of the Fruiterers to promote opportunities in the fresh produce sector. For people who are involved in the fresh produce sector, there is a significant amount of support and funding available through the Company and we need to get that message across to the wider industry."

Scottish visit proves a highlight of the year

When last November, the Court learnt that the 2021 Historic Houses Garden of the Year award was won by Gordon Castle's Walled Garden in Moray, Scotland, there was a big intake of breath. Geographically at least, the Company's tradition of planting a tree in the winning garden each year was being stretched to the furthest limit of its experience.

That said, there was a caucus of Court Assistants who were keen to go the distance to continue our long tradition. And so it came to pass that an intrepid party of Liverymen and their partners, totalling 19, arrived at Gordon Castle on October 11th to spend the most wonderful three days as paying guests of the owners Angus and Zara Gordon Lennox, in their private and exclusive castle on the banks of the river Spey.

When Angus and Zara took over the estate in the north-east of Scotland, in 2008, it had already been in the family for generations. However, the walled garden was little more than an eight-acre grassy field, in which Angus' grandmother grew raspberries for a local jam factory in the 1980s. The garden contained 259 fruit trees, many of which were over 100 years old and still producing so much fruit it was a struggle to know what to do with it.

The trees were preserved thanks to the pruning efforts of the gardener, who had been on the estate since 1948, and Angus and Zara decided to bring the space back to life and make it the main feature of the estate, alongside the



The happy group pose in front of the castle

excellent fishing on the Spey. To transform such an enormous garden, they commissioned designer Arne Maynard to come up with a plan. The result is the finest and largest producing walled garden in Europe, as the photographs alongside this article show.

The garden is situated in a surprisingly benign microclimate on the Moray Firth. The area has low annual rainfall and incredibly long days. The growing season is therefore more intense and shorter than gardens further south and the amount of daylight produces an abundance of fruit, vegetables and flowers which if not used around the castle are sold locally. To add to the variety of fruit produced, the Master planted, up the south facing wall, an espalier Peregrine white-fleshed peach tree, donated by Past Master Will Sibley. The tree planting was accompanied by the excellent playing of

the bagpipes by a local Scottish guardsman Ben Byrne.

During the visit, the Company had the entire use of the castle, with most of the guests allocated to bedrooms within the castle walls. All of the excellent meals were provided by the resident chef Steve Brown and his team, using produce exclusively from the walled garden or local producers.

The Fruiterers had the most amazing time and felt they were part of an exclusive house party dating from an earlier era. On the final evening, a ceilidh band from Elgin played for the guests and helped them cope with a host of Scottish traditional dances and reels. This proved to be the hilarious highlight of a marvellous and memorable visit north of the border.

The concerns of the Master in travelling so far north in the UK for a tree planting were completely allayed!



The sun shone on the righteous



The Master plants a peach tree

Liverymen with interesting lives

Sue Handy

Fruiterer Sue Handy trained with Betty Vacani, Nesta Brooking and The Royal Ballet School. She danced in the BBC television series 'Steps into Ballet' with Dame Peggy van Praagh, after which Sir Kenneth MacMillan cast her in the role of 'The Child' in his first ballet for television 'Punch and the Child'.

At 17, Sue danced in the recently remastered BBC film of 'Sleeping Beauty' with Dame Margot Fonteyn. She did a season with the Old Vic Theatre Company under Sir Peter Wright and went on to join Walter Gore's London Ballet Company where she graduated to the rank of soloist, dancing many roles including 'Queen of the Spirits' in Giselle and 'Snow Queen' in the Nutcracker amongst many others.

In 1974, Sue was asked to start a ballet class for the children of the Masters at Eton. The first class of six took place in the dining room at one of the boys' boarding houses. Susan Handy Dance, of which Sue is Principal, now has over 600 pupils with schools across Berkshire, Surrey, Middlesex and London as well as providing Dance Club for primary and secondary schools, nurseries and Health Clubs.

"Running my school is not a nine to five operation, far from it," Sue says. "When I was teaching full time I would normally start the classes after the school day at 4.00pm and finish at 9-9.30pm. Saturdays would be teaching all morning from 8.30 to 2.00pm. I would do the administration work in the week, normally in the morning for two to three hours. This would involve answering emails, discussing points with my secretary, planning future events, organising the Elite Group, which performs in schools and senior citizens homes, advertising, entering students for examinations,

timetabling, sending out invoices, dealing with new enquiries and the uniform shop."

The ethos of the school, she adds, is that it will "train girls and boys to develop a love of all genres of dance, to gain self-discipline, be introduced to all forms of music, enter examinations, become tomorrow's audience, help develop students; creative side, give them confidence to go out into the world of whatever career they choose to follow and to perform on many different stages and platforms".

Sue has many proud achievements. As well as those mentioned above, she has worked extensively with the Cecchetti Classical Ballet Society and as Chairman of the Cecchetti Group for 10 years. She set up the Cecchetti Associates Scheme and the Barbara Geoghegan Award; a competition at Sadlers Wells for students studying dance at vocational schools. She has choreographed ballets for Sadler's Wells and The London Ballet Company during her career as a dancer, and over the years for the Cecchetti Annual Congress, Eton College theatre productions, Windsor & Eton Opera and Park Opera at South Hill Park.

Sue is an adjudicator for dance and choreographic competitions and trains teachers for the Cecchetti Classical Ballet Teaching Qualifications at the Linda Sweetzer Teacher Training College. "As a teacher, watching past pupils dance with the English National Ballet and on many West End stages has been extremely satisfying," she says. "I have had the



privilege of teaching four of the Queen's grandchildren and meeting her and other members of the Royal Family after the school took part in the Royal Tournament in Windsor.

"The highlight I think though is standing in the wings at our bi-annual performances, which take place at Eton College's Farrer Theatre, watching small, very nervous pupils waiting to go on stage and then watching them come off stage so excited and wanting to go back and dance again."

Having run the school for over 48 years, Sue says it is time to stand back and hand over to younger teachers. "I will keep an interest in it, but it is now time to enjoy retirement," she adds.

"I became a Fruiterer in 2013 and an Honorary Assistant in 2016. I had come to many banquets and events with Past Master Anthony Turnbull and his late wife Petronel, whom I had known since we were nine. As I had been involved with the dance world for many years, I felt I needed a change of direction and wanted to become involved with more charitable work and meet people from different professions and interests.

"My students danced as ragamuffins in The Lord Mayor's Show in 2013 in Past Master Cooper's year, and again at this year's Show, in November."





Is supply chain at a tipping point?

We are facing a combination of global, regional and local challenges which impact, directly and indirectly, UK farming and food: the strength of the US\$; conflict in Ukraine; climate change; energy issues; the ongoing impact of Brexit, COVID and then our own UK economic/food policy, local food culture and industry capacity/capabilities.

This all makes for an unusually high degree of uncertainty in the horticulture supply chain and these are unlikely to be short-term issues. The “new normal” we are experiencing is probably here to stay for some time.

In horticulture of course, labour and energy costs are critical. Volatility in the price of electricity is often driven by demand from China, as it looks to reduce its dependence on coal. Growers could though, make more use of flexible/capped contracts now available for utilities, rather than settle for fixed price agreements.

Input costs have soared in all areas in the last 12 months and more, for labour, energy, packaging, transport, seeds, fertiliser, crop protection products, machinery and equipment. In some cases, these costs have been passed on to retailers, but it never seems enough to keep pace with the staggering increases. Input prices, especially for fertiliser, might well stay high for the next 2-3 years, unless a resolution to the situation in Ukraine is found.

There is still a need for growers to understand more about their own costs of production. In some cases, they need to get better training on how to deal with supermarket customers and impress upon them why cost increases are justified. Price for retailers is still key, but so is the availability of produce.

The supply chain’s ultra-thin margins hamper its ability to withstand more shocks to the system in future years and business confidence is open to question. Clearly, there should be better/fairer prices for farmers and better distribution of reward/remuneration through the chain. Consumers will ultimately have to be prepared to pay more for food, but this is a major mindset challenge.

If cost increases cannot be passed on to customers, some growers will cut production (plenty have done so already), maybe reduce the number of SKUs they provide, switch to crops with better potential returns (e.g. OSR and wheat) and/or in extreme circumstances stop production altogether. Many growers geared up to supplying the leading retailers could also consider other opportunities, in areas such as foodservice, the wholesale sector and direct sales to consumers.

The changes needed to create the necessary balance in the supply chain are often quite idealistic, difficult to bring about and maybe even involve unpopular/tough decisions. UK govern-

ment policy appears to be giving off mixed messages: on one hand, encouraging local production, but in another way, opening up the UK market to increased competition, from the EU, US, Canada, India and Oceania suppliers.

It may require an element of generational change, but in the mid to long term, both market regulation and consumer behaviour needs to alter if we are to genuinely create a sustainable food chain that does not lurch from crisis to crisis.

The UK supply chain is still often very ‘transactional’ and/or commercial in its nature, but increasingly required to consider issues around sustainability, which tests the ability and will to invest not just for profit, but also for resilience. We have already probably reached something of a tipping point on this with the supply chain shocks we have seen in the last few years.

Supply chain change cannot be achieved through a “silo” based approach. The full supply chain needs to work together on this, to build a more resilient future. There is every chance that this will be led as much by strong industry players as by government policy and objectives.

Piece supplied by Liveryman John Giles, who is also Chair of the City Food & Drink Lecture



Obituary

Harry Wooldridge 20.4.1940 – 17.9.2022

The fruit industry lost a much-loved character when Harry Wooldridge passed away peacefully on September 17th after a short illness, aged 82.

Harry farmed at Beech Farm, West Peckham for many years, growing apples and strawberries, and played a major role in the development of Gala apples in the UK along with his great friend Roger Worraker.

Having studied at Writtle College, Harry spent several years living and working in Tasmania, but it was once back in the UK, that he and Roger struck up a relationship, Harry as a grower and Roger as an advisor, which developed into a firm friendship that led to both being a major force behind the establishment of Gala as the UK's number one apple.

UK Gala has come a long way since the early 1990s, when a few

growers and advisors embraced the variety and had the vision to encourage growers, marketeers and supermarkets that UK Gala could be, and indeed would be, a superior apple to imported Gala. Nearly 30 years later, UK Gala is the number 1 home-grown variety by sales volume and alongside imported Gala, represents one in every four apples consumed in the UK each year.

Harry remained connected to the Gala cause for several decades and in 2013, he led the celebrations of the 21st anniversary of the Gala Club, of which he had been Club Chairman for many years as one of the early visionaries.

The 2014 Gala Club meeting marked the last of Harry's tenure as Chairman. His ability to cajole the captains of our apple industry into committing support for Gala promotion, cannot be underestimated and we should all be grateful for his jovial enthusiasm.

In 2015, he was honoured by East Kent Fruit Society and presented with the prestigious David Hilton Memorial Medal for his outstanding contribution to the fruit industry.

Harry had also become interested in the 'politics' of growing and marketing; while many will remember him as the man with English Gala 'running through him like a stick of rock', Harry spent many hours over a long period of time on behalf of the



Gala apples

top-fruit industry as Chairman of the NFU Fruit Committee and was a founding board member of APDC (Apple & Pear Development Council) back in the late 1970s. Like Harry himself, the APDC worked very hard to improve the marketing structure of home grown apples.

He will leave fond memories of his infectious enthusiasm, his long service to the fruit industry and for being a thoroughly nice man. He had been a liveryman since 2017.

Harry will be sadly missed by his family and friends. His wife Judith, son Charles and daughter Alice invited friends and the farming community to a memorial service at St Dunstan's Church, West Peckham, on Saturday November 19th.

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