

MASTER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR

2013-14

It has been a great honour and a pleasure to have served as the 136th Master of the Cripplegate Ward Club.

Following my installation at the AGM On Monday 25th March 2013, I was privileged to hold our ANNUAL CIVIC LUNCHEON in The Old Library at Guildhall. The venue was very apt for my inaugural function given that I first dined in the Old Library some 28 years ago whilst working for the City of London Corporation. Little did I know that I would go on to become Master of a Ward Club and to host my own lunch in that magnificent room, designed by Sir Horace Jones and built in 1870. Our principal guest and speaker was Alderman and Sheriff Jeffrey Evans, who was delightful company and kept me amused throughout the lunch. During my speech I presented cheques for both Lord Mayor's Appeal and the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund.

A great bonus of being Master is being able to share ones interests with members. As is now well known, my two principal interests are the City of London and food and wine. These themes shaped my functions, as you will see in this report.

On May 10th, I took a large group to a CHAMPAGNE TASTING WITH CANAPÉS in the stunning palm tree adorned Conservatory at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel. The Champagne maker Philippe Brugnion was present and we were delighted to taste both his vintage and non-vintage Champagnes. On 5th June I took a group to the Butchers Livery Hall for an opulent meal entitled 'THE ROAST BEEF OF OLD ENGLAND', an event that was oversubscribed. Butchers' Hall is located in the historic and vibrant Smithfield area and is one of the most elegant of the City livery halls. We enjoyed a sumptuous three course lunch with generous amounts of wine, during which the Master Butcher came to greet us.

On Tuesday 2nd July I took a group on a TOUR OF THE OLD BAILEY, an event that was again oversubscribed. The Old Bailey (or Central Criminal Court, as it is more commonly known) has a history of dispensing justice on the site as far back as 1132. Our tour was conducted by Under-Sheriff and Secondary, Charles Henty, who I presented with a donation to the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund. We were privileged to be able to tour the court rooms and the cells, which are not normally open to the general public. The event concluded with a splendid buffet supper at the City Pipe.

After the August break, on 17th September I took members on a CITY WALK AROUND THE WARD OF CRIPPLEGATE, conducted by Murray Craig, Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court. I have known Murray for years and he is familiar to many people through his daytime role of admitting people to the Freedom of the City of London. A qualified City of London Guide, Murray also worked on the Barbican Estate in the past and knew his way around the quasi-Medieval "City State" with ease. We were delighted that he was able to join us for the three course lunch with wine and coffee at Pizza Express following the walk.

On Friday 4th October our ANNUAL BANQUET was held aboard HQS Wellington, the Livery Hall of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners. Built in 1933, the Wellington served valiantly during the Second World War. My speaker on the evening was the very entertaining Julian White. Having had a very illustrious military career, he is now a wine merchant and UK agent for some 50 or more French Châteaux and Domaines. Julian is a Knight Commander and Ambassador Emeritus of the Confrérie du Sabre d'Or, a Chivalric Order devoted to the promotion of Champagne and the noble art of Sabrage.

My function on Saturday 9th November was THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW with lunch at Guildhall. The Lord Mayor's Show is a magnificent and colourful pageant, during which the newly elected Lord Mayor travels to the Royal Courts of Justice to swear allegiance to the Crown. Some of you may be aware that I was also President of the City Livery Club, an office that overlapped with the first six months of my Mastership. I was called upon to represent the City Livery Club in one of the Queen's landau carriages for a second year but

was able to speak to many of the Cripplegate Ward Club members outside Guildhall before boarding. I was therefore extremely grateful to Past Master Christine Lee, who very kindly hosted the event on my behalf during the Show and afterwards over lunch at the Guildhall Club.

On Monday 9th December we enjoyed a CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE AND DINNER, which I held jointly with Farringdon Ward Club, as I am also their Junior Vice President. The evening commenced with a Carol Service at St. Sepulchre, Newgate, the largest parish church in the City of London. We then retired to the Great Hall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital for a mulled wine reception and black-tie dinner. Designed by James Gibbs in the 1730s, the magnificent Great Hall remains virtually unaltered and is one of the finest and largest public rooms in London. The painter William Hogarth had strong links to the hospital and two of his paintings adorn the Grand Staircase. We were delighted that our President, Alderman David Graves, joined us along with both of the Aldermen for Farringdon.

2014 did not start well for me as I was rushed into hospital on 29th December and needed a major operation. I had already sorted out the details of my function on Thursday 16th January, a VISIT TO DOWGATE FIRE STATION followed by lunch at The Banker. Dowgate is the only Fire Station located within the City of London boundary and covers an operational area that includes the Ward of Cripplegate. It was a privilege to be able to visit, as tours are not normally available. Members received an informative talk from the Station Manager, Mr Stephen Norman, followed by a look behind the scenes. I heard that many were enchanted by Sherlock the fire dog (even though he didn't look like Benedict Cumberbatch)! Having already visited the Fire Station and chosen the food at The Banker, I was very disappointed to be unable to host the function myself but extremely grateful to Barbara Allan and David Herbert for doing so on my behalf. They also presented a cheque to the Fire Fighters Charity on the day.

Due to my extended recovery period from surgery, the visit to the new GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DRAMA building (Milton Court) needed to be cancelled. This would have been the final function of my Mastership so this was also disappointing for me. I am pleased to note that we did make a donation to the School's Trust, as our President is Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Given that the GSMD is located in the Ward of Cripplegate, I hope that a future Master may be interested in reviving the function in due course.

I would like to end by saying some words of thanks. There are too many people to mention individually but I do want to single out our Honorary Secretary, Barbara Allan, and Past Master Christine Lee. Although Barbara stood down from events at the 2013 AGM, she stepped in along with Christine when I needed help and both gave me immense support during my year. I would also like to thank my husband Simon for acting as my consort, photographer, and proof-reader for my flyers; my toastmaster, Ken Chaproniere; Assistant, Christine Nevard for arranging our new regalia (ladies brooches and gentlemen's pins); Hon Treasurer, Sidney Morton, who does an excellent job with our accounts; and of course our President, Alderman David Graves, who has been extremely active and involved in the Club during my year.

Last and by no means least, I would like to thank all the members of Cripplegate Ward Club for their overwhelming support of my events. It has been a great pleasure to share my interests with you. Many functions were oversubscribed and had record numbers of attendees, as a result of which the Club has made a good surplus. I would also like to thank members for the numerous 'get well' cards, together with offers of help. I was deeply touched by the extremely kind comments and look forward to seeing you all at future Club functions.

**Judy Tayler-Smith BA Dip Egy FSA Scot
Master, Cripplegate Ward Club, 2013-14**