

# The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths

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Editor  
Merv Allen



# First Words from your Editor

**Merv Allen FWCB**

*'He who allows his day to pass by without practicing generosity and enjoying life's pleasures is like a blacksmith's bellows. He breathes, but does not live'*  
 – Indian proverb

With the lengthening of days, the turning of the year brings with it both optimism and the hope that any challenges we may face are met with renewed vigour and dealt with effectively. We live in somewhat uncertain times and the future consequences of changes afoot can only be guessed at. One thing of which we can be certain is that the Company with its long and proud traditions will continue to support and encourage the present and future generations of blacksmiths. The accolades presented at the 2016 Michaelmas Court and Awards Luncheon bear witness to the fact that in Britain we have some great blacksmiths who produce work of the highest quality and they have been justifiably rewarded for their efforts. The awards and prize winners are shown on pages 8 and 9 of this edition and I am sure that you will join me in congratulating them.

The Ypres Poppy Cenotaph project was brought to a successful conclusion in November when this outstanding monument was inaugurated at the German War Cemetery in Langemarck. A report is included in later pages of this edition and again please join with me in applauding the outstanding efforts of the many involved.

Many thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition; your input is greatly appreciated so please keep sending in any items that may be of interest. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the content of the Newsletter I will be delighted to receive them.

With very best wishes to you and yours for a healthy, peaceful and prosperous 2017.

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On the front page are pictured the Lord Mayor Alderman Dr Andrew Parmley, Sue and Steve Miller with the Treloar's Swan, Prime Warden Richard Regan and Past Prime Warden Nigel Whitehead being expertly transported by Liveryman Charley Teale.

# Our New Lord Mayor and

Alderman Dr Andrew Parmley is a reminder that there is more to the City of London than just Banks. He does not come from the usual lines of city business but from the fields of music and education.

His first job was playing the organ at Blackpool Pleasure Beach and other tasks there included choreographing skating chimpanzees. If you can do that you can do anything. From there he went on to be Director of Music at a number of schools before becoming Head, later Principal, of the Harroddian School. He has been the organist at St James' Garlickhythe in the City for thirty-five years. He has long served the City of London having been a Common Councillor since 1992 and an Alderman since 2001. He is also deeply involved in charitable work.

Lord Mayor of the City of London is no mere ceremonial role. He will be head of the City of London Corporation and lead numerous trade missions abroad to promote the City of London and UK plc. An even more important job now with the challenges and opportunities of Brexit.

His wife Wendy is an eminent educationalist in her own right.

Andrew has long been a friend of our Company providing music and song to many of our events – most recently our Mid-Summer Church service - and has been a regular guest at our banquets. So, when in my year as Prime Warden he was proposed to become a Sheriff, it was logical to formally forge our link and he accepted our invitation to become a Liveryman.

To demonstrate support of our Liveryman as Lord Mayor, how better than to take part in his Show and accompany him to the edge of the City to pledge allegiance to the Queen before returning him to Mansion House, his home for the next twelve months, to begin his year of office. The Court agreed, sponsorship was obtained from generous Liverymen and a committee formed to make the arrangements.

The Lord Mayor's theme was Education which was easy for us as the majority of our Charitable expenditure is upon bursaries for students, assisting with apprenticeships and the training of the next generation of blacksmiths. Not to mention our Awards which are held in high regard by the craft.

We also wanted to have a lasting purpose to our involvement. In 2013 Steve and Sue Miller had designed and organised the creation of the 'Moving On' Arch for Treloar's which we paraded in the 2013 Show. It now stands proudly in their central Courtyard and is the focus of many events (see article later in this newsletter).

This year Jim Cook, head of our Publicity and PR Committee, suggested we take the Swan from our coat of arms, re-create it in iron and then sell it after the show to benefit an educational charity. Treloar's sprang to mind and Steve and Sue



# his Show Adrian Oliver

immediately volunteered to design and lead the construction.

A circular was sent out to AWCBS and FWCBs inviting them to take part and twenty-six agreed to help. Sue created the design – given the challenging brief that it must look light whilst being made of iron – and sent out sections for volunteers to make at home.

Kingston Maurward College in Dorset kindly agreed to host a forge-in under Simon Grant-Jones FWCB for experienced smiths and KW students to assemble the parts and produce feathers for the wings.

Meanwhile David Skinner AWCBS was constructing the trolley to hold the Swan high for its parade through the streets of London.

Craftsmen from the REME under Don Mallett AWCBS created the anchor and chain to go around its neck.

The Swan then moved to the Miller's forge in Essex for another weekend of assembly and 'fettling' before being taken to South Eastern Galvanising of Witham for galvanising, for which they have kindly omitted to charge. Then Sue added the final touches with gold paint.

Our Prime Warden is used to travelling in style around the City so 'Team Oliver' obtained a bicycle rickshaw, repainted and re-upholstered it in the Company colours.

The Show started for us the afternoon before when Steve and Sue delivered the Swan (and I delivered the rickshaw) to their overnight home at Smithfield Market where they were assembled and dressed. We shared a compound with the Blackpool float which deafeningly sound tested with 'Oh I do like to be beside the seaside'. Then it was off to Guildhall for the Pageant Master's briefing.

The day started early at 7am as we



walked the Swan to its starting point to be joined by the participants at 10am. Company umbrellas and flags were issued and briefing given.

The Show did not start till 11 but at 10.30 we started shuffling forwards as 140 floats started converging with military precision from different directions towards the starting line.

As we neared the start line we were delighted to see the television interviewer home in on Steve and Sue and then they were on BBC 1!

We had known about this interview for several weeks beforehand but had kept it secret as there are many reasons why it might not have been broadcast. But it was and we had one minute and forty-two seconds on BBC 1. I think we got our monies worth in advertising for the craft!

If you haven't seen the interview yet, go to [www.blacksmithscompany.org](http://www.blacksmithscompany.org) and look in the News section.

The weather forecast was appalling but the crowds were there and we gave them our best, liverymen in gowns, blacksmiths and students in their aprons, REME craftsmen in uniform and our gleaming Swan.

We marched on to the Law Courts where the parade stopped for a quick snack, then it was back up the hill to the Mansion House where our Prime Warden dismounted to organise the Guard of Honour for the returning Lord Mayor. The parade then dispersed into the back streets and the Swan and rickshaw were loaded onto their waiting vans.

Our spectators had long before adjourned to a local wine bar, 'Shaws Booksellers', which we had booked for the day and enjoyed an excellent lunch. In due course the marchers joined them to rest weary feet, dry out and refuel.

My sincere thanks to everyone who helped create the Swan and do all the 'back stage' work that made this event a great success. Especially Sue and Steve Miller AWCBS who once again put weeks of their time into creating another masterpiece. David Skinner AWCBS for making it happen, PPW Don Barker FWCB for again providing the Pure Iron and Les Armstrong FWCB for donating coke for the KW forge-in. Our Learned Clerk, Martin who successfully kept track of us on spread sheets. Last but not least, 'Team



The Finished Swan

Oliver' who rescued me from panic on numerous occasions.

The Swan Makers were: Hector Cole, Melissa Cole, Richard Jones, Simon Grant Jones, Michelle Parker, Andrew Hall, Brian Hall, Paul Gilbert, Eric Lamprell, Dave Harman, Dai Price, Ian Parmenter, Tony Ingarfield, Steve Miller, Rhys Harlin, Don Barker, Will Barker, Dean Harris, Dave Skinner, Dave Cooper, Dave Theobald, John Clouts, John Bellamy, Wendy Alford, Adrian Oliver, Ben Oliver, Don Mallett and REME craftsmen: Cieciora, Ongley-Snook, Walmsley and Pearce; Students from Kingston Mauward: Simon Gomm, Sam Smith, Titus Smith, David Bath, Scott Bedwell and also thanks to: Travis Perkins and Eastlake & Beachell insurance.

PS – Since the Show, the Swan has been auctioned on the internet and sold to a lady who saw it in the Show. It is now living in Pembrokeshire, where we hope it will be very happy.

PPS – If anyone would like to buy a two seat pedal rickshaw – *don't hesitate to contact me!*

Swan under construction



# The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths at the Lord Mayor's Show 2016

Lyn Grant-Jones (*Wife of Blacksmith Simon Grant-Jones FWCB LWCB*)

The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths (WCB) entered the Lord Mayor's show again this year along with the elegant and beautiful Swan which was created especially for the parade with a view to being eventually sold to raise money for the Treloar School and College for disabled children. The Swan references the WCB coat of arms and was designed by Sue and Steve Miller AWCB. After they had received the working drawings, 26 Blacksmiths from all around the country made individual components and met up at a forge-in to assemble the pieces to bring the Swan to life, prior to Sue and Steve arranging the finishing treatment and paintwork.

I had the job of finding images of swan's legs so that my husband Simon and his Blacksmith colleague Brian Hill AWCB could make the enormous feet, legs and thighs. I'm sure everyone felt as I did that it was awe-inspiring to be involved in this venture. Blacksmithing students from Kingston Maurward College were proud to be part of the project and made special commitment to work on the Swan and to be in the parade. Adrian and Jane Oliver were instrumental in co-ordinating the



Forge-in at Kingston Maurward College, a day where we all became better acquainted, working hard but in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

On the day of the Show, Simon, Brian, Clare Davison (the recently retired Principal of Kingston Maurward College) and I came up to London from the West Country on a

much delayed train, arriving only just before the procession began. The weather was a 'little damp' with a light drizzle falling for most of the day but we didn't mind, we felt privileged to be part of it all.

Clare and I speedily followed the procession looking for opportunities to take videos and photos to record as much of the day as possible. The atmosphere was magical, like stepping back in time to days of glory with horses, vintage carriages and many coloured ceremonial cloaks decorated with beautiful gold braid and furs. We were honoured to be close to the military and cadet bands' upbeat music, the other Companies' floats and of course the Lord Mayor's gorgeous red and gold carriage, pulled by 6 magnificent horses. My favourites however, were our team of Blacksmiths and Wardens with Charley Teale pedalling a rickshaw with Prime Warden Richard Regan and Past Prime Warden Nigel Whitehead aboard, while Kingston Maurward College student blacksmiths Sam Smith, Scott Bedwell, David Bath and Titus Swift together



with Michael Merillo and Dane Stevens of Hereford College hauled the wagon carrying the majestic gold and silver Swan. Craftsmen Cieciora, Ongley-Snook, Pearce and Walmsley carried the banners at the front.

At the end of the day, safely tucked up by the fire at home, we watched a recording of the BBC coverage of the show to learn even more about the Swan and all the other entries. Steve and Sue were amazing in their live interview. Perhaps not everyone knows that the anchor placed around the swan's neck is a tribute to St Clement who was apparently thrown into the sea with the anchor around his neck and is known as "old Clem", the Patron Saint of Blacksmiths. Thank goodness we don't live in those ancient days of martyrdom but can still experience the historical glamour recreated on this very wonderful annual occasion whilst witnessing the handing over of office to the new Lord Mayor.

Thank you WCB for getting us all into this fantastic event.



*A note from Prime Warden:*  
 'Congratulations to all involved for a truly generous and excellent example of our Craft and Blacksmiths' generosity to those less fortunate than ourselves.'



# Michaelmas Court and Awards Lunch

This year's lunch, held once again in the magnificent Painter's Hall, provided the opportunity to celebrate the talent and achievements of blacksmiths and others who have contributed to or are associated with the Company.

The standard of work produced for the various County Shows on the National Blacksmithing Competition circuit and other venues was outstanding and the prizes awarded,

together with the various Diplomas and Medals presented, confirms the healthy state of the craft.

In recording these achievements it is important to recognise the enthusiasm, dedication and abilities of all those who educate and inform the next generation.

Guests of Honour were Master Painter Stainer, Mr James Lee and Master Innholder, Mr Charles Attlee.

## The Ypres Poppy Cenotaph Merv Allen FWCB

During the first week of September, around 175 blacksmiths and farriers from all over the world gathered in Flanders at Ypres Market Square to forge panels and poppies for this unique and dramatic project. Among those taking part were Company Liverymen and WCB Award and Prizewinners including the 2016 National Live Champion Blacksmith and Liveryman Richard Jones FWCB and Past Prime Warden Adrian Oliver. Richard had travelled directly from the Edenbridge and Oxted Show to Ypres in order to help set up and acting as a Forge Master throughout the event at one of the forging stations – a fantastic commitment for which I'm sure you will join me in congratulating him.

During the event there were parades, music and the laying of a beautiful wreath at the Menin Gate. The wreath had been forged by children from around Europe under the



The wreath forged by children and laid at the Menin Gate



Left to right are Terry Clark FWCB, Merv Allen FWCB and Luc Vandecasteele at the Cenotaph inauguration

guidance of Blacksmiths Guild members Robert and Carol Smith. Merv Allen's band, Rusty Wizzard, entertained a lively crowd in the Market Square on the Saturday night. The Belgian beer, kindly provided by the Belgian Blacksmiths' Guild, flowed and the crowd cried out for many encores of 'The Wild Rover'. There was also spontaneous singing by a contingent of Irish blacksmiths.

I am sure that you will join me in extending congratulations to Liveryman Terry Clark FWCB and Luc Vandecasteele of the Belgian Blacksmiths Association and to all those involved in the Cenotaph's design, manufacture and project fund raising. There are too many individuals to mention by name but the outstanding work by members of BABA and the Belgian Guild of Blacksmiths (Ambachtelijke Smedersgilde) plus the many others seconded to the project is noted.

The Cenotaph commemorates all those involved in the brutal and bloody World War One conflict. This includes military and civilian on all sides and all those who died, all those wounded, all those displaced and, of equal importance, their families and their communities.

The completed project provides evidence of what can be achieved with imagination, skill, hard work, dedication and the camaraderie of blacksmiths from around the world. Further, it stands as a symbol of hope for a peaceful world.

It was visited by the Father of the Company, Past Prime Warden Rodney Lyons and his wife Janet, who were mightily impressed by the organisation, scale and friendliness of the event.

# Ypres 2016– The Inauguration of the Poppy

## Cenotaph Keith Gabriel

**F**landers Fields provided characteristically wet weather for the inauguration of the new Poppy Cenotaph alongside the German Studenten Military Cemetery at Langemark-Poelkapelle. The inauguration was organised very efficiently by the local civic authorities and was attended more than 300 people, including a large contingent from the British Artists Blacksmithing Association.

BABA had played a pivotal role in project managing both the forging, globally, of thousands of poppies and the forging when the 25 individually designed railing panels of ironwork to surround the cenotaph were created. While the cenotaph and the 2016 poppies around its base are impressive, it is the surrounding panels which are the most thought-provoking. They vary from primarily pictorial (tanks, biplanes, etc) to the highly symbolic such as the one with flowers and a dove emerging from spent bullet casings. Barbed wire appeared in several, which was predictable, whereas the focus on shovels in two panels highlighted a less obvious aspect of the daily lives of the soldiers involved.

The ceremonies started with speeches in the newly completed, all black, access 'tunnel' leading to the cemetery. From there, we all moved to the mass grave in the centre of the cemetery. It is a rather forbidding place, full of poignancy, beneath the canopy of oak trees, with all the memorials in black basalt. These record the names of the 25,000 young soldiers, mainly teenagers (hence the 'studenten' cemetery) in the mass grave, while throughout



the remainder of the large cemetery the bodies were buried vertically in order to accommodate them all. The wreath laying there was accompanied by a piped lament and the last post, played by a Belgian group dressed in the period uniforms of General Haigh's Pipe & Drum band.

Fortunately, two open-fronted marquees had been erected alongside the Poppy Cenotaph, and a gazebo was hastily erected over the lectern. The formal inauguration speeches included

profuse thanks to BABA for their coordination of the ironwork. The speeches were interspersed with musical entertainment, and followed by a ceremony when dignitaries from all the countries involved signed the official record of the occasion. Some wrote lengthy essays, which prompted the host to comment that he should have asked them to send their comments in advance by email!

The whole party were then invited to the town hall, for a drinks reception. A delightful end to a very moving day, and one which must further have enhanced the reputation of the British blacksmithing community.

# Visit to the Royal College of Surgeons

## Nigel Whitehead

**I**n September a party of liverymen and partners joined Prime Warden Richard Regan OBE and his wife Anne on a visit to the Royal College of Surgeons of England in Lincoln's Inn Fields for a fascinating tour of the Hunterian Museum (not for the squeamish) followed by an excellent dinner.

After an introductory talk given by a knowledgeable guide we were shown some of the more interesting exhibits, including the skeleton of the seven and a half foot tall "Irish Giant". The museum has a vast collection of animal and human anatomical and pathological specimens as well as artefacts relating to the art and science of surgery from the 17th century to the present day.

In 1745 the Company of Barber-Surgeons, established in 1540 as a trade guild and a London Livery Company, was split by an Act of Parliament into two bodies, and the new Company of Surgeons built a new hall with an anatomy theatre near Newgate Gaol so it could dissect the bodies of executed criminals. Then, in 1796, the Surgeons bought properties in Lincoln's Inn Fields and applied for a new constitution that would modernise its organisation. At the same time the government bought the museum of the late



The library at the Royal College of Surgeons

surgeon and scientist John Hunter (1728-1793) and gave custody of it to the Company of Surgeons.

About a third of the museum's specimens were destroyed when massive damage was caused to the building by incendiary devices during the Second World War. The post-war rebuilding of the College provided the opportunity to rethink its role, and to expand the teaching and research it provided. The College continues its important roles of training, supporting and examining surgeons, auditing clinical effectiveness, and advising the Department of Health and other bodies.

# Award Win

*Presented by Past Prime Warden,  
Peter Allcard*

## Stanley Allcard Cup



Tobias Forbes Gower

*Presented by the Craft Warden, Dr Robin McNeill Love*

## The Camelia Botnar Foundation Cup



Fraser Homewood

*(Received by Camelia Botnar Foundation Blacksmithing Tutor Tim Clement)*

## The Blacksmiths' Company Army Cup



Craftsman Michael Thorne

*Presented previously by the Craft  
Warden, Dr Robin McNeill-Love*

## Companionship of the Company



John Bellamy CWCB

*Presented by the Prime Warden,  
Richard Regan OBE*

## Freedom of the Company



Geoffrey Fairfax MBE



Mrs Christine Fairfax

*Presented by the Renter Warden, Jash Joshi*

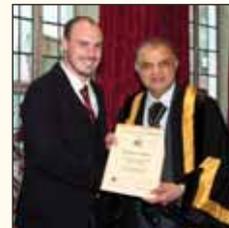
## Diplomas of Merit



Douglas Campbell AWCB



Rhys Harlin AWCB



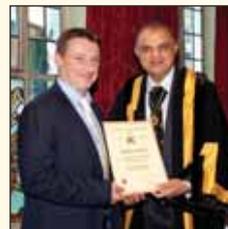
George MacKillingin AWCB



Remuna Picard AWCB



Bex Simon AWCB



Jason Greenberry AWCB



Rebecca Knott AWCB



Keith Mahoney AWCB

## Reserve National Live Champion Blacksmith



Michael O'Sullivan

Norman Rose AWCB  
*(Norman will be presented with  
his award in January)*



Rhys Harlin AWCB

## Reserve National Champion Blacksmith



Sam Bailey

# Winners 2016

*Presented by the Prime Warden, Richard Regan OBE*

## National Live Champion Blacksmith



Richard Jones FWCB

## National Champion Blacksmith



Rhys Harlin AWCB

## Bronze Medal



Neil Lossock FWCB



Simon Grant-Jones FWCB

## Silver Medal



Past Prime Warden Don Barker FWCB

## The Viscount Tonypanydy Award



Peat Oberon FWCB

*The Requirements for Awards are described on our website [www.blacksmithscompany.org](http://www.blacksmithscompany.org)*

## Tonypandy Cup **Martin Heath**

In 1998, Past Prime Warden Delwyn Dennis presented the Tonypandy Cup to the Company. It was given in memory of Lord Tonypandy (George Thomas, Former Speaker of the House of Commons) who was an Honorary Member of the Court of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths. The Cup may be awarded annually for a piece which is considered to be an outstanding example of the skill of a blacksmith or blacksmiths. A special Committee is established every year to assess the nominated works and the Company is extremely grateful to Sally Clark and her judging panel for evaluating all of the entries. The Tonypandy Cup is regarded as the most prestigious award given by the Company.

This year's winner is Peat Oberon FWCB for a pair of traditional gates made for a private garden near Darlington. Peat has been a fulltime blacksmith since 1980 and began teaching the craft in 1990. In 2008 he was awarded a Silver Medal by the Company. I quote from this year's report by the Judging Committee.

These gates are very well executed and are a beautifully crafted piece of work. There are several very challenging elements within them, with multiple fire-welds and a wide range of scroll types. Made almost entirely using ambitious traditional decorative motifs and techniques, the gates are consistent with their surroundings and complement

the period and style of architecture. There were many traditional techniques evident in the making of the gates, all carried out with confidence and expertise.

They are made from pure and mild steel which has been forged in a traditional and very individual way. From the top to the bottom of the gate it shows exactly how it was forged. We liked that the gates were 'honest' and that Peat had not covered up the obvious signs of workmanship, the marks and textures which, to the trained eye, tell the story of their making. The individual elements were exactly that, individual, and it was good to see that they were truly handmade and had a life and character of their own. The work is well executed with good examples of water leaves, forged balls, collaring and branch scroll work. It is very honest and skilful work, made by a confident maker who knows how to handle the material.



Peat Oberon's award-winning gates

## Remembrance Day Ceremony at Treloars **Susan Miller**

### The significance of the use of the Arch at Treloar School and College

*Readers will recall the magnificent efforts made in 2013 by Steven Miller AWCB and his wife Susan who, together with WCB Award winning blacksmiths, created the wonderful Treloar's Arch. Susan now provides an update of how the Arch is being put to use (Ed.)*

Students from across the School and College gathered in a circle around the Arch on the morning of the 11th November.

Their Chaplain conducted a short service that heard from Treloar's Principal Martin Ingram as well as two of the students. Nigarish read her own poem about the war and Sally read 'in Flanders Fields'.

A member of the Salvation Army attended and played The Last Post which was followed by a minute's silence.

At the end of the service the students hung poppies they had decorated in class onto the Arch.

It is hugely rewarding to learn that there are also many other ways in which the Arch is used at Treloar's and wonderful to hear that it is constantly enjoyed by students, staff and visitors. It is a focal point on the



piazza and is decorated for various events throughout the year.

It is used during the Leaving Ceremony – when, following their valuable time spent at Treloars, students leave making a symbolic journey through the Arch. Elements of the ironwork design depict the concepts of 'Enable', 'Moving on' and 'Dare to Dream'.

The Arch is also used for the Student-led music festival, TFEST, and at the annual fundraising plant sale. It is a focal point for photographs with visitors and Patrons, plus a great talking point.

Treloar's wishes to point out to us that it is a brilliant way to explain to visiting, non Livery groups how Treloar's was founded by former Lord Mayor Sir William Purdie Treloar in 1908, and how the Arch also portrays Treloar's relationships with the City. Many Livery Companies still support the School and College 100 years on!

# My First Few Months in Office – The Prime Warden

The past 3 months as Prime Warden have been busy both socially and in terms of looking at our Worshipful Company to ensure that we continue to flourish Root and Branch in the words of the Toast 'For Ever'. We now have a process to assist new Court Assistants to prepare for future responsibilities and are looking at our Protocols to ensure we give them experience of all aspects of the Company and every Member is aware of how to become involved.

By far the most exciting and enjoyable event during this period must surely have been The Lord Mayor's Show on the 12th November! The magnificent Swan at 6 feet wide and 6 feet high which is to be auctioned for Treloars College, not only attracted the BBC Cameras but bids were received that day and have been coming in since! Our sincere thanks must go to all those involved in the preparation of the Swan and in arrangements to get it there, and to the 50 plus Blacksmiths who took an active part on a very wet day displaying both the Blacksmith's Craft and the warm and friendly spirit of our Livery Company. A very special thank you goes to Steve and Sue Miller who, with the help from other willing blacksmiths, led the design and crafting of the stunning Swan. Congratulations to Adrian Oliver for organising the Show from start to finish and to his daughter Charlotte who pedalled the Rickshaw and its two occupants effortlessly and with great good humour throughout the whole Show.

The visit and dinner at the Royal College of Surgeons was most enjoyable with a conducted tour of the Museum suitable reference to some of the more 'Grisly Specimens' and the amazing collection of body parts illustrating how some deformities occur and illnesses develop. Regrettably it was during the exam period so we did not have the chance to try our hand at keyhole surgery in the teaching theatre, but dinner that evening was not spoilt by the earlier exposure to Clinical specimens and we had the opportunity to see their Council Room and the priceless Holbien painting.

Your Prime Warden has attended some 14 evening functions including dinners over the past 3 months, ranging from lectures on insurance and risk assessment to how the composition of plants as they grow can be applied to engineering and building structures and a Concert by young musicians. It was a particular pleasure to attend the Presentation Dinner given for our Lord Mayor and Court Assistant Alderman Dr Andrew Parmley and to attend the Remembrance Ceremony at St Pauls to lay a Commemorative Cross together with the Masters, Prime Wardens and Upper Bailiff of the other Livery Companies.

The Awards Lunch is a particular pleasure for every Prime Warden as it Celebrates the outstanding work of our Craftsmen and in particular that of the Award Winners. Another great pleasure is the privilege of admitting new Freemen of all ages to our Company and their subsequent admission to the Livery – in the last 5 months we have admitted 3 new Members details of whom are given in later pages of this newsletter.



The Prime Warden with Master Painter Stainer, Mr James Lee and Master Innholder, Mr Charles Attlee pictured at the Michaelmas Awards Lunch

In conclusion may I wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year when I hope to see more of you.

In September, one our two gold medallists, Mike Roberts FWCB, gave a verbal report to the Wardens' Court on how impressed he had been with the contributions of award-winning Company blacksmiths to the very international collaboration of the Ypres 2016 event. The Wardens were gladdened to hear how well they had acquitted themselves. I wrote to Mike thanking him for his briefing and stated how pleased I am that the craft element of the Company is in good heart.



# A Blacksmith's Daughter Rebecca Cole

*Blacksmiths have long fought to be defined separately from Farriers and are a proud community of artists and craftspeople. I am proud to be the daughter and sister of two renowned blacksmiths.*

**M**y father, Hector Cole MBE FWCB, is a Silver medal holder and 'Eminent Master Blacksmith' of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths and a Liveryman of the Company. To achieve this prestigious award, a broad knowledge of smithing skills is required ranging from traditional smithing skills, design skills, knowledge of the blacksmith's craft and its history and the use of modern techniques and equipment. The honour of Liveryman has recently also been awarded to my sister Melissa Cole.

It was for this occasion that I was delighted to be invited to attend the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths' Awards Luncheon in October. The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths is one of the few Livery Companies in London where the craft that bears its name is still a vibrant trade and the Company maintains strong links with the profession in a number of ways. Approximately 50% of the Company's charitable spending is used in the direct support of young blacksmiths in education; the Company sponsors an awards programme which recognises the work of blacksmiths; the Company participates in and supports a large number of County Shows each year at which the work of blacksmiths from all over the country is exhibited and judged.

Unfortunately the Blacksmiths Hall was destroyed in the Great Fire of London, and the Blacksmiths' Company now has offices in Painter Stainers' Hall where it is able to use the beautiful Hall for its functions.

The magical qualities of the blacksmith's forge have fascinated people throughout time: sparkling metal, the alchemic craft of taking the solid metal and forging it to shape with seemingly effortless touches of a hammer and the perception of the strong tough blacksmith labouring away over a flaming forge. However, the macho image of blacksmithing has undergone an upheaval over recent years; women Blacksmiths are now recognised as some of the most talented exponents in the art and craft of blacksmithing. Melissa Cole FWCB was one of the first women blacksmiths to be awarded a prestigious Bronze medal, in 2007, for her forged iron work and dedication to blacksmithing in education projects.

At the Awards ceremony, two women blacksmiths were recognised for their work and received Diplomas of Merit (AWCB). Rebecca Knott creates predominantly domestic scale pieces, and says "the quality is in the detail. It's important that every piece is thought about, even the underside of a piece of work. Just because you can't see it doesn't mean it doesn't deserve the same respect." Bex Simon describes herself as an "Artist/Blacksmith/Designer/Maker inspired by nature, texture, contrast and the environment around us". Having developed a range of cast iron homewares, Bex



Melissa and Hector Cole MBE

also creates traditionally forged large scale domestic and public pieces.

Of course there were some outstanding male blacksmiths who demonstrated exemplary use of forging techniques and design skills. For example a Bronze Medal (FWCB) was awarded to Neil Lossock who is renowned for his beautifully executed plant forms and Simon Grant-Jones also received a Bronze medal for his work which follows a more traditional route. Simon makes beautifully crafted tools and implements for use by traditional craftspeople such as thatchers, coopers and woodcraftsmen.

It was a truly proud moment for me to see both the blacksmiths in my family so genuinely welcomed by the members of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths. I am especially pleased to realise just how much they are doing between them and the other forward thinking blacksmiths to educate people and to promote this most magical profession.

I would encourage anyone embarking on a construction or renovation project to seriously consider putting a portion of their budget into commissioning a true artist blacksmith to contribute to their creation. A bespoke garden sculpture, railing, fence, gate or even door handle can bring a timeless, personal element to your home and will always be a conversation piece amongst friends!

## Dorset Show Norman Rose AWCB

I arrived at the showground at approximately 8.30a.m. after a slow crawl to the entrance. The parking area allocated to me was trade and this year a route-march away from the Blacksmiths' tent. The going was downhill, but a different story coming back: phew! all up hill (it doesn't pay to get older) and the weather by Saturday afternoon had turned foul with rain and high gusts of wind.

On arrival at the stand I was greeted with a nice cup of tea and a 'bacon sarney' which had been cooked on a forge, great! Simon Grant-Jones and his team were fantastic. After a chat with Hugh Adams and Eric Lamprell who had driven all the way down from Kent to take part in the live forging, the Chief Steward was ready with all the cards for judging.

There were fifty pieces in the static competition and all of these were of a high standard so judging was quite a task. At this point I must explain that I had help from the very able daughter of Rob, the Chief Steward, who was

invaluable in finding the next piece. Unfortunately the tent was on the small side because of a mix up and getting about with the public coming through proved very difficult. The task was eventually completed and the cards put out to show the public results by lunch time. The lunch itself was wonderful. Afternoon proved to be terrible – rain coming in and high gusts of wind made things pretty nasty but some brave lads kept the forges working.

Sunday was a different day, calm and muggy with plenty of people and again I was looked after by Simon and his team. There was a high standard of live entries with all smiths doing really good work. Well done to them.

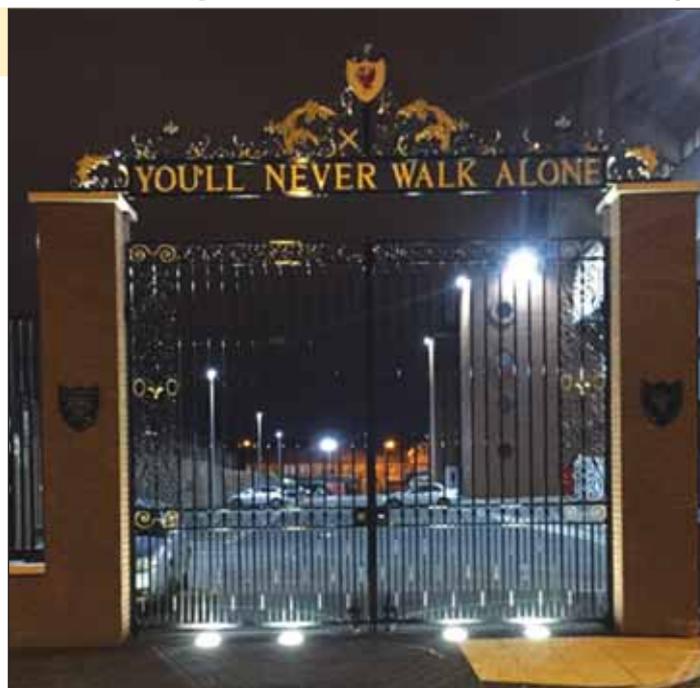
I would also like to thank the many members of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths who gave support and inspired talks at the show.

The Dorset Show was a great success and thanks once again to all concerned.

## The Refurbishment and Fitting of the Shankly Gates Ian Baxter AWCB

The Shankly gates were erected in memory of Bill Shankly, a former Manager at Liverpool FC, and were officially opened by his wife Nessie on 26th August 1982. The overthrow of the gates is renowned for the wording 'You'll Never Walk Alone', the title of the Club's anthem during Bill Shankly's time as manager, which was a hit for Gerry and the Pacemakers. The gates were unveiled on Tuesday, 6th September 2016 in front of Shankly's family in their new position at the entrance to the Centenary Stand.

These iconic gates needed refurbishment and refitting. This job was assigned to Ian Baxter AWCB, who repaired them to their former glory. Once the paint was removed, then a true assessment of the gates was made. The work included welding repairs and hinges, replication of missing or non-repairable detail, particularly the wrought iron leaves, and repair of the 3 cast iron club crests. The dimensions of the gates are 16 foot wide and 14 foot high weighing 3.5 tonne, with the overthrow spanning the brick pillars.



## The Harmonious Blacksmith

Those who attended the memorable Prime Warden's Weekend in June will recall the wonderful unaccompanied singing of The Cambridge Voices at the formal dinner held in the 13th century St. Mary's Guildhall in Coventry. One of the songs, set to George Frederic Handel's well known keyboard piece "The Harmonious Blacksmith", had been especially arranged by the Group's founder and director, Ian de Massini at the request of the Prime Warden, with lyrics set to a four part arrangement of the tune, consisting of every known article and process known to the blacksmith.

Ian has kindly given permission for the Company to issue copies of the score so if you are interested please contact the Editor of the Newsletter.



# Amina Chatwin – 1927-2016 Dick Quinnell CWCB

While younger blacksmiths may not have known Amina, she was a hugely important figure in the development of BABA – and indeed in the British late 20th Century revival of blacksmithing.

Amina was known to many blacksmiths around the world from her attendance and talks at conferences, through her articles in 'Artist Blacksmith' and 'The Anvil's Ring' and her major book, 'Into The New Iron Age: Modern British Blacksmiths' which is the only comprehensive and authoritative account of the great revival in artist blacksmithing in Britain, and the first seventeen years of BABA.

In 1957 Amina, after learning French she became a cook/house-keeper/seamstress to the family of the British Military Attaché in Paris. She travelled extensively and started writing regular reports on life and the Arts in Paris for her local paper, 'The Cheltenham Chronicle and Graphic'.

Her first publication was in 1961 – a discourse on the history of English ballet. Around this time she joined a number of societies including, the Gloucester Society for Industrial Archaeology of which she became President in 1994, the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society and the Historical Metallurgy Society of which she became Chairman. During this time she wrote a number of papers and in 1975 her book, 'Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork'.

This led to her being invited to participate in the Crafts Council's ground-breaking international conference 'Forging Iron' at Hereford in 1980. The experience led to her write; "It all entered our minds like a thunderbolt... It was a revelation... I have never known any conference like it, the very air was electric... It is no exaggeration to say that it changed our lives..."

On Amina's first visit to the USA, to attend an ABANA (Artist Blacksmiths Association of North America) conference my friend Bill Gichner, in a rare lapse of judgement before I'd formally introduced them, muttered to me "Dick – who's the schoolmarm?" He was rapidly disabused and they became great friends. Typically, on this occasion she travelled before and after the conference to see ironwork in Philadelphia including a visit to Samuel Yellin's workshop to Washington to see Yellin ironwork and an exhibition of Albert Paley's work. Then on with 'Gich' and me to a forge-in at Arlington with a demonstration by the great Alfred Habermann. After this she went by bus on her own to Charleston, Atlanta, and New Orleans to study the culture and ironwork of the deep South. In all she travelled 2000 miles through 10 states in 18 days.

On another visit to an ABANA conference in the

late 1980's, she confided to Mike Roberts that as nobody else had, she felt driven to write a definitive account of the revival of blacksmithing and in 1995 published her masterwork, 'Into the New Iron Age: Modern British Blacksmiths' undertaking everything from research and writing to distribution.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of this book in the history of our craft. Without it there would be no public record of the revival of artistic blacksmithing in the last quarter of the 20th century, no record encompassing the background and founding of ABANA and of BABA, no record of the fine detail of the Crafts Council's hugely significant international conference 'Forging Iron' at Hereford in 1980, and the subsequent international exhibitions at the V&A and the Building Centre and no comprehensive record of work by Amina's personal selection of rising British smiths with their overseas influences. The vast majority of these have confirmed her judgement by becoming WCB award winners in subsequent years.

While she didn't get 'down and dirty' at BABA events, she wanted to acquire a hands-on understanding of forging metals, and visited Mike

Roberts' Anvil Barn for practical instruction probably 40 times over a 5 year period.

From 1998 to 2012 she served as an adjudicator on the WCB's Tonypany Cup award committee and in recognition of her contributions to the craft Amina was awarded the Companionship of the Company in 2002.

She continued her international quest for jewels of historic artistic and metalworking achievement and in both 1997 and 1999 joined the epic European tours for groups of American smiths. The first covered 2000 miles through Bavaria, Switzerland, Italy and Austria over three weeks. There were also many other European trips to record ironwork with various friends and societies.

What a woman!

*I am indebted to Amina's friend Julian Rawes for detailed biographical information about Amina's non-blacksmithing life, and to Michael Roberts and Alan Evans for additional material. The most valuable information has been from Amina's own unpublished autobiographical memoirs, kindly sent to me by Julian. He hopes to publish these, perhaps in electronic form. He also hopes to re-publish 'Into The New Iron Age: Modern British Blacksmiths', and there is a project to publish Amina's monumental unfinished book on the history of metalworking.*



Amina Chatwin – Photo courtesy of Geoffrey North

## New Liverymen

We welcome our new Liverymen and look forward to seeing them at future Company events

*Michaelmas 2017*

### Christopher Bowyer

Apprenticed to Past Prime Warden John Barber in 2004. Admitted to the Freedom of the Company in February 2016.



### Melissa Cole FWCB

Proposed by Past Prime Warden Michael Shepherd and seconded by her father Hector Cole MBE. Melissa is a working Blacksmith who was awarded a Bronze Medal in 2007. Admitted to the Freedom of the Company in February 2016.



### Eoin Murray

Proposed by Past Prime Warden Michael Shepherd and seconded by Past Prime Warden John McCuin. Has an ancestor who was a working blacksmith on the Isle of Lewis. A fund manager with Hermes Investment. Admitted to the Freedom of the Company in February 2016.



## Obituaries

*It is with great sadness that we report the passing of the following Liverymen. Our thoughts and condolences go out to their families and friends.*

**BRIAN GEORGE BRAYFORD SHEPHERD 1943-2016** – Brian Shepherd died suddenly on 6th October 2016. A Liveryman since 1978, father of Past Prime Warden Michael Shepherd and grandfather to Company apprentices Elizabeth and Benjamin.

After national service as an RAF pilot, Brian qualified as a chartered surveyor with Messrs Hilbury and Chaplin, working in Romford Essex and Salisbury Rhodesia.

He married Mary at Upminster in 1955 and in 1957 they set sail for Rhodesia where Brian worked for the South Rhodesian Government.

On his return to the UK in 1964, Brian decided to set up his own firm. His father gave him £1000, was guarantor to his debts, and Shepherds – Chartered Surveyors and Valuers was created. The firm went from strength to strength, with offices in the City and at 94 Park Lane.

Brian developed a lifelong interest in the City of London, its history and institutions. His Grandfather had been a Freeman, qualifying Brian through paternity and his membership of the Blacksmiths Livery Company.

He subsequently helped found the Worshipful Company of Chartered Surveyors.

A keen sailor, Brian created the Shepherds Trophy, still presented at Cowes to the fastest Surveyor in the Round the Island Race.

Brian loved parties and always came up with an excuse for one, usually with abundant wine and little food.

**ALASTAIR COURT-SMITH** – Born in 1942 and a Liveryman since 2002, Alastair died suddenly on 20th November 2016.

## Honorary Freemen

### Mr Geoffrey Fairfax MBE and Mrs Christine Fairfax

Geoff Fairfax MBE has been the Company Beadle since 2008. Together with his wife Christine, they are a vital part of the Company team assisting at the Company's formal functions especially at the Annual Banquet. Geoff also attends the Prime Warden at City events including the election of the Lord Mayor and the United Guilds Service at St Paul's.

### Michael O'Sullivan

Michael has been the official Company photographer at Company functions for the last 14 years. Unlike some photographers, Michael doesn't seek to take over the event. He knows when and where the best shots can be captured and uses his quiet charm to ensure that photographs of our events are always first-rate.

## Prize Winning Gate – made by 2016 NBCC National Champion Blacksmith Rhys Harlin AWCB

This magnificent side entrance traditional gate has been entirely hand forged and measures 1900mm high by 1000mm wide.

Rhys, who is the proprietor of the Darenth Valley Forge in Eynsford, Kent was crowned

Show Champion at the North Somerset, Bath and West, South of England, Edenbridge and Oxted, 3 Counties and New Forest shows.

He was awarded his Title and Diploma of Merit at this year's Michaelmas Court and Awards Luncheon.



# Diary of Events 2017

Invitations will be sent to all Liverymen but please put these in your diary now

- January 19th – Epiphany Court and Luncheon on board HQS Wellington
- March 9th – Clifford Champion Commemoration Dinner at Cutlers' Hall
- March 23rd – Ladyday Court and Luncheon at Trinity House
- March 31st – United Guilds Service at St. Paul's Cathedral
- May 5th – Livery Banquet at Mansion House
- June 23rd – Election of Sheriffs
- June 29th – Midsummer Court and Dinner at Cutlers' Hall
- July 27th – Election Court (Court Members only)
- September 29th – Election of the Lord Mayor
- October 26th – Michaelmas Awards Lunch at Carpenters Hall

Please note that the website, including the Members' area, has been updated to reflect the above dates

## Other Events

- November 18th – St Clems Day, Finch Foundry
- July 15th to 16th – Yeovil Show

# Show Dates 2017

North Somerset	May 1st
Devon County	May 18th to 20th
Royal Bath and West	May 31st to June 3rd
South of England	June 8th to 10th
Royal Cornwall	June 8th to 10th
Three Counties	June 16th to 18th
Great Yorkshire*	July 11th to 13th
Royal Welsh	July 24th to 27th
New Forest and Hampshire	July 25th to 27th
Edenbridge and Oxted	August 27th to 28th
Dorset County	September 2nd to 3rd
Berkshire County*	September 16th to 17th

\* All are NBCC Shows except where indicated

# Caption Competition



Your chance to win a bottle of Champagne for the best 'printable' answer

Entries to the Editor please  
[metalwizard@btinternet.com](mailto:metalwizard@btinternet.com)

by 25th June latest

Judging will be by the Prime Warden and the winner announced at the Midsummer Court and Dinner

# Copies of photographs

Copies of the excellent photographs taken by Michael O'Sullivan of the Awards Luncheon and other formal events and reproduced in the Newsletter can be obtained directly from:

[www.michaelosullivanphotography.co.uk](http://www.michaelosullivanphotography.co.uk)

or [michaelphotography@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:michaelphotography@tiscali.co.uk)

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Editor: Merv Allen

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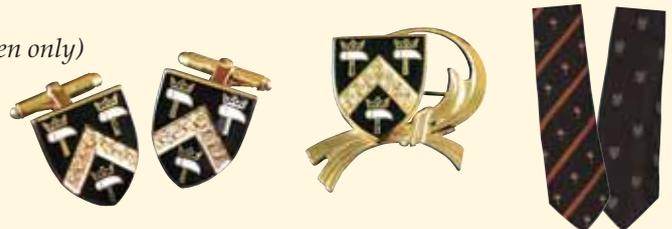
Telephone: 01342 841742

# Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths' Shop



## Prices:

- Livery Tie £10 (Liverymen only)
- 'Social Tie' £22
- Umbrella £20
- Cuff Links £66.50
- Brooches £72.50



All items available from the Clerk, Martin Heath.

A limited supply might be available at Court luncheons.