



*from the*

# MASTER & WARDENS

The newsletter of The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers

## Start Spreading The News..



Most people who have never interacted with Livery Companies assume that they are a historic throwback with no modern purpose, or clubs for small groups far distant from the challenges facing the rest of the population. We know that it's not true. Our 900+ members cover the whole range of professions in eye health and sight loss but also work in professional services, charities, administration, education in many small businesses around the country and, increasingly, outside the UK. One third of Liverymen are under the age of 50; among Freemen, the number of people under the age of 40 has doubled in recent years and well over a third of all members are female. We now have members in 15 countries outside the UK.

So now's the time to start spreading the news – and you too can be a part of it. How do you describe The Spectacle Makers' Company when talking to friends and family? What makes you proud of being a member? How can we change the misconceptions which still abound and help people see that we are a relevant, diverse group of people with a concern for the community and strong shared values? Here are just a few headlines to start the conversations.

### WE'RE UNIQUE!

We are the oldest optical body in the world, the only one that brings together representatives of all professions involved in vision care and sight loss, and the only City of London Livery Company dedicated to eye health.

### DIFFERENT PEOPLE WITH A SINGLE AIM

You do not have to make spectacles, or have a direct involvement in vision care, to become a Spectacle Maker. The wide range of professions within the Company, and the diversity of thought and background, are key strengths.

We live in different places and do different jobs but we have something important in common – we all support better vision for all.

### WE BELIEVE THAT NOBODY SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND BECAUSE OF POOR VISION

We do not aim to compete with charities who deliver help every day for people with low or no vision. What we can do is support their efforts, make introductions to opinion makers and leaders in the City and celebrate successes in widening access to education, employment, culture and sport. Our research medals encourage the next generation of scientists whose work develops our understanding of vision and can lead to the development of new treatments and therapies.

### CRAFT AND COMMUNITY

We stay close to our craft by supporting those who will take it forward into the future – the dispensing opticians, ophthalmologists, clinical and lab technicians, optometrists, orthoptists and nurses who are training in new ways and with new technology. Our community spirit is as strong as ever – with regular opportunities to meet other Spectacle Makers informally in local groups and family outings, at large-scale ceremonial and City events, or on screen from home, through the now firmly-established “Eye-to-Eye sessions.” We are known in the City for being one of the most friendly and open liveries. Long may that continue!

We'd love to hear from you too...email us on [administrator@spectaclemakers.com](mailto:administrator@spectaclemakers.com), tell us your stories and we can all share the news.

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## THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS

### Ian Davies looks back

As I took the first of my 960,210 steps as Master from St Bride's Church back to Apothecaries' Hall last year, the Beadle to the Society of Apothecaries, who was standing in for our own Beadle, Peter, congratulated me on my appointment. "Master, you are one of only 110 people in the world who are Livery Company Masters at the moment", he said, "Enjoy every minute".



*The Master crosses the threshold for the Annual Service*

Well, I have enjoyed every minute. That enjoyment has only been possible because of the support of you, our members, the Court and my Wardens, Nigel and Liz. To each and every one of you, thank you. I will long remember the conversations, the excitement and the challenges. I felt the Company was with me every inch of the way.

My thanks are also due to Alison Joyce who has been my chaplain for the year. Her understanding of livery companies and the City was invaluable. We can share in her reflected glory, and delight in her tricorne hat, as she has now been appointed as Chaplain to Sheriff Andrew Marsden.



*Ian Davies receives his Deputy Master's badge*

Helen's consistent support as Clerk, confidant, companion at other liveries' events and, I hope(!), still friend, has been pivotal in all that I have done during the year and I can't thank her enough. Finally, and most importantly, my thanks go to my wife Gillian for her tireless support, love and patience without which I simply could not have carried out all that I have done during the past year.



*The Clerk and the Mistress Spectacle Maker*

2022 was certainly a year of contrasting emotions. We witnessed the pageantry and celebration of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee and the pride of seeing our Liveryman, The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Vincent Keaveny, welcoming members of The Royal Family to St Paul's Cathedral.



*The Lord Mayor waits outside St Paul's Cathedral*

Just 3 months later we heard of the Queen's death and a very different mood filled the nation. On behalf of the Company I signed the book of condolences for Her Majesty at Guildhall. En route to the Master's Weekend in York, we modified the programme to allow time for reflection and respect while celebrating the life of The Queen and drinking, for the first time for most of us, the Loyal Toast to "The King". The changes to the words of the Freeman's Declaration take us back not just 70 years, but over 360 years, as new Freeman again affirm the authority of their sovereign Lord, King Charles. Each time I hear those words it makes me think of the long heritage of people who in each generation have helped others to see better and on whose shoulders the fortunes of our Company have been built.

At the start of the year I set out a theme; "Seeing, The Next Generation", breaking this down into 3 areas:

1. Pushing for no child to be left behind academically or socially because of poor vision.
2. Promoting equal opportunities and access to the work place for young people with vision impairment.
3. Supporting people at the beginning of their careers in vision care.

I had no idea at the start of the year just how many opportunities would arise to promote these themes and, more importantly, how much they resonated with people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Being a Livery Company Master gives one access to a wide number of people with influence. As an example, I was invited to a reception supporting "Vision for the Commonwealth" in the presence of Her Royal Highness the Countess of Wessex. At the reception I met the High Commissioner of Antigua and Barbuda and we talked about the basic vision screening that

is carried out at the start of each school year in her country, but not universally across the Commonwealth. What I hadn't realised when I started talking with her was that she was one of the keynote speakers for the evening. In her speech she referenced the conversation that we had had and afterwards the Clerk and I were approached by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff. She offered to propose an amendment to the Schools Bill then going through the House of Lords, requiring schools to make provision for vision screening for children of all ages.



*Hansard journal from the House of Lords*

With input from our Company Think Tank, we very quickly learnt the art of drafting briefing notes and amendments for parliamentary debate. The amendment was proposed the following week and, while it was not adopted, there was learning on both sides and we now have a direct line to someone in the House of Lords who supports better vision for all. Children's vision is something I am passionate about and this will be an area that I will continue to work on.

Other opportunities have arisen. At the Master's Certificate Scheme presentation event at the Mansion House in the Spring, I met the Chair of the City of London Corporation's Education Board, the incoming Master Educator, and other members of that committee. We invited them to an event that we held for Livery Masters at Barber Surgeons' Hall where, along with representatives from 27 different Livery Companies, they took part in a discussion on the importance of eye health. Liverymen of our Company brought the story of vision to life, drawing on their experience of optometry, ophthalmology and sight loss. The feedback that we had from the event was overwhelmingly positive and a clear demonstration of just how interested people are in their vision and that of their families.

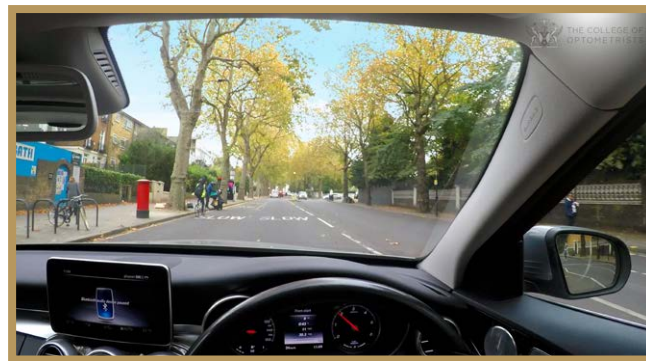
In the last edition of "From the Master and Wardens", we featured the breakfast meeting held at the Mansion House by kind permission of The Lord Mayor, The Rt. Hon Alderman Vincent Keaveny. His continuing support increased the profile of the Company and facilitated discussions with leaders from across the Corporation. Following discussions with Sheriff and Alderman Alison Gowman, she invited us to present aspects of vision to the London Road Safety Council. The Council is made up of council members and professional road safety officers from all London Boroughs. With the support of Freeman Michael Bowen, Director of Research at The College of Optometrists and Liveryman David Clarke, Director of Services at RNIB,



we presented data showing the problems of accessibility and road safety for vision impaired people as well as the impact that the public's attitudes to vision could have on their safety. Michael showed some excellent simulations by The College of Optometrists showing the effect of various eye conditions on a driver's visibility. These images were made all the more powerful with the data that showed that 36% of the population often forget to wear their prescribed spectacles or lenses when driving.



*Driving with undiagnosed glaucoma*  
© The College of Optometrists



*Driving with corrected vision*  
© The College of Optometrists

Our links with charities working across vision care and sight loss continue to grow. As Master I was invited to be an Honorary Vice President of The Vision Foundation (formerly called The Greater London Fund for the Blind) as they celebrated their centenary year. At their centenary gala we heard compelling support for getting people with vision impairment into employment from HRH The Countess of Wessex, Sir John Major, Lord Blunkett and others.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) is one of the best-known charities in the country and we are delighted that we have senior members from that organisation as members of the Company. I was invited to speak at the opening plenary session to their "See the future differently" conference towards the end of last year and then to address their senior leadership team a few weeks ago. I've also had the chance to be interviewed for a couple of podcasts directed towards those with poor sight, explaining more about what we do.

Supporting career development has always been a passion of mine. I was delighted in the summer to visit Moorfields Eye Hospital to talk to nurses there and admit our first two ophthalmic specialist nurses as Freemen of the Company.



*The Master, Clerk, and new Freeman Nurses outside Moorfields Eye Hospital*

I'm delighted with the progress being made by the trustees of our Charity in awarding bursaries and professional development grants to support people at the start of their careers. This can only be funded with your continuing support, and I would like to thank those of you who already give so generously to our Charity and encourage all of us to see if we can increase our giving if possible.

The challenges that we are all facing are keenly felt by the many students who are juggling family life with additional hours' working to help fund their studies. You'll find the story of one of our bursary winners, Katherine, on page 14. It really hit home with our Trustees to hear first hand how the award of £1,000 will make such a difference to her future.

At graduation ceremonies during the year I made the point of talking about the huge opportunities that exist for anyone in the eye health professions. There will be more people in the UK requiring vision correction in the next 40 years than in the past 40, 50% of the world's population is expected to be myopic by 2050 and there remain over a billion people around the world who can't see simply because they don't have a pair of glasses. There is a lot to be done and, as Spectacle Makers, we can play our part in helping with the sense that most of us fear losing more than any other - sight.

Being a Livery Master is an incredible honour. Gillian and I will look back with thanks for the opportunities that my year as Master has given and for the enormous tide of support from Freemen, Liverymen, Corporate Supporters, the Court and the Clerk which carried us through the busy schedule. I have walked (just under) 500 miles and now Nigel will walk 500 more. I congratulate him and his Wardens, Liz and Mike, and look forward to supporting them as they continue to open the eyes of the world to the range of activity and diversity of members of our wonderful Spectacle Makers' Company.

## FLYING HIGH



*The Master 2022-23, Nigel Haig-Brown*

Wow! How can it be? Someone from completely outside the sector is the Master Spectacle Maker. What a privilege it is for me to assume the mantle. Starting with the uplifting Service of Rededication at St Bride's, moving to the Court Lunch in the atmospheric setting of Apothecaries' Hall, and on to representing the Company at a string of events, the first days have been an honour and so memorable and enjoyable for both the Mistress Spectacle Maker and myself.

I count myself very fortunate to be following our Deputy Master, Ian Davies whose experience of life in a multinational setting stands the Company in good stead. Under Ian's leadership we have developed our strategic plan, put in place various checks and balances and enjoyed practical experience of the building blocks we will use to realise our long term aims.

Of particular note were the Livery Eye Health event in May - we know that the session had a real impact as people are still talking about it - and our presentation to City employers at Mansion House in June. This was a collaborative effort designed to highlight how employers, at a time of skills shortages, could, with reasonable adjustment, access talent among vision impaired people - such a valuable resource yet so often disregarded. I venture to suggest it would not be unrealistic to link the success of these activities to success with our principal aim - growing the numbers of Freemen and Liverymen. Both initiatives were well received and, by helping to raise the Company's profile within the Livery in particular and the City generally, gave a taste of the way forward.

As the incoming Master, I am especially grateful to Liveryman Alderman Vincent Keaveny for his support generally during his year as Lord Mayor of the City of London. No-one should underestimate the time and effort he gave throughout his year of office, working hard to promote greater diversity and inclusion in the City.

Returning to the task in hand, how did I get to this point?

After the Second World War, my father joined the Colonial Police. I was born whilst my parents were stationed in Hong Kong. They left with a babe in arms, for spells in Kenya, Uganda and the former Tanganyika. The median length of stay in anyone location was 4 months and apart from the arrival of a brother, life was idyllic, the epitome of a colonial existence. Freedom, wide open spaces, predictable, good weather, no school, a succession of wonderful local nannies and Swahili, a language I resorted to whenever my grasp of English failed me.

My first recollections of the UK were of a cold and wet November 1955 when the Union Castle docked in Southampton after 6 weeks sailing from Cape Town.



*A Union Castle liner*

Our first stay was in a holiday home comprising 2 railway carriages on the beach in West Wittering. Imagine my surprise on waking to see icicles for the first time and the disappointment with not being able to keep them intact. As spring arrived, we moved to accommodation on a farm near Farnham in Surrey. I remember watching cows being milked and someone, most days, leading a horse drawn plough in the fields. Later that year, the family settled near Woking, my fluency in English had improved and I had my first taste of school.

In September 1962 I had my earliest encounter with central heating when I began what turned out to be 7 happy years of boarding school, at the end of which I applied for a cadetship at the College of Air Training in Hamble, a joint enterprise sponsored by the two state airlines of the day. The flying was fun, but the study proved hard and interminable. Predictably I was "chopped" after 6 months, a cruel reminder that after 12 years' schooling I didn't know it all. Finally, 2 years after leaving school, I signed Articles of Clerkship with a Chartered Accountant as my principal. Despite the lure of the bright lights of London, I studied dutifully for my exams over the next 4 years and was then able to join the ranks of my peers.



In November 1989, I was working in an office with windows overlooking the main doors of the Royal Courts of Justice. For the Lord Mayor's Show of that year, my colleagues organised a buffet lunch so that all could, from this unique vantage point, enjoy the spectacle of the newly installed Lord Mayor arriving to swear allegiance to the Sovereign. The promise and the pageantry of the City had me hooked.



*Alderman Nicholas Lyons, the 694th Lord Mayor, Nov 2022*

Although I had never been to a formal event like a Court Lunch or Livery Dinner and had little real knowledge of what it meant to be a Freeman, I followed the lead of a group of friends working in optics who were already liverymen of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers. I moved up to the Livery in 1993. Regrettably my engagement for the next 10 years was non-existent as I grappled with the greasy pole which is corporate life and financial standing. In the early 2000's I mustered sufficient courage to attend a Society weekend away in the Lake District. What a wonderful group of people – you know who you are. As I attended more Society functions, I began to appreciate more and more how, although the venues were memorable, it is the people attending who make these events unique experiences.

By 2009 I was well established in the bulk cargo sector of the marine transportation industry. This was a fascinating business, heavily dependent upon optimising constraints such as the availability of land-based infrastructure, international connections, communications, demand, weather, finance and politics, just for starters. It was about this time that I felt able to devote “day job” working time to getting my hands dirty at WCSM. I offered to join the Finance Committee, an appointment which covered 5 years and in turn won me an invitation to join the Education Committee.

Immediately prior to retirement in 2014, I was persuaded by the local Residents' Association, of which I had been Chairman, to stand for election to Elmbridge Borough Council. This seemed like a good idea at the time. A succession of committee appointments quickly followed, more than taking care of my unstructured free time. My 8-year term as a Councillor involved facing the electorate on 3 separate occasions and saw me chair committees for Overview and Scrutiny, Area Planning as well as membership of Audit and Standards, Performance and Finance and a variety of working groups.



In February 2016, I was invited to assume chairmanship of the WCSM Finance Committee and in December 2016, I became a Court Assistant. In 2018, I was elected Renter Warden, moving up to Upper Warden in 2019. For a variety of reasons connected to the pandemic, I had the unusual experience of repeating the cycle in 2020 and 2021, before being elected Master for 2022/ 23.



*The new Master and Wardens*

My observations of life have taught me that history is not a reliable indicator of future outcomes and continued existence for any entity rests on its relevance to the prevailing environment. Commercial entities are not immune, and that includes Livery Companies.

The stresses on some of the ancient companies induced by the evolution of the economy and a rise in the number of modern companies directly linked to their professions and driven by the march of technology, demonstrates clearly the importance of relevance. To survive in the long term, our Company needs to be as nimble and responsive as any competitor in a crowded market for members.

One of the Company's strengths is that it remains connected to the original Craft. This attribute can be developed for the benefit of the public good, which will in turn will lead to becoming known more widely and the birth of a virtuous circle. The trick to initiating this chain reaction is to identify and exploit opportunities.



*The Master sees a role for technology.*

In fact, there are too many opportunities so the Company has to make choices. As the only Livery Company in the City dedicated to eye health, advocacy for the early detection of preventable disease and vision correction is a perspective the Company can leverage, together with supporting others' efforts to improve lived experience for both children and adults in settings such as independent living, negative bias in the workplace and education, and domestic abuse; all regrettable events encountered routinely by visually impaired people.

Worryingly, these initiatives strike me as treating the symptoms rather than addressing the causes. In the sight loss sector, more is spent on support than on research. Whilst acknowledging

not enough resource is directed to relieving the impact of vision impairment, the “outside the box” implication is that there is a piece of work to do to increase the spend on research in the hopes of reducing the numbers joining the queue in the first place. Why, when the economic cost of visual impairment in all its forms is greater than that of cancer, heart disease and stroke combined would a society not wish for more research spend?

My aspiration for my term in office is to build the framework articulated by the incumbent Deputy Master and agreed by the Court, to support our core mission and to deliver on our belief “Nobody should be left behind because of poor vision”. The Upper Warden will assume responsibility for long term strategy, leaving the Master free to implement a plan for the year in line with that strategy, whilst the Renter Warden marshals and monitors Committee workloads. There should be internal consistency between the Master's vision, the Upper Warden's long term time horizon and the landscape the Renter Warden anticipates will be current by the time they themselves become Master Elect.

The Company starts from a good place as we move towards our 400th anniversary and the Master & Wardens intend to keep it that way. I look forward to meeting as many members as possible in the coming year and learning from you.

**Nigel Haig-Brown**



*....and regular examinations*





# THE ANNUAL SERVICE AND THE DECLARATIONS OF THE MASTER AND WARDENS, 5 OCTOBER 2022

After all the challenges of Covid, many were looking forward to returning to a full church, without masks, to remember those lost in the last year and to witness the new Master and Wardens take office – and then a rail strike was announced, falling on this very special day in our Company calendar. It was easier for Spectacle Makers to travel from Germany than from Cardiff but, not to worry, spare beds were aired for friends, new routes were devised to stations believed to have trains and Spectacle Makers made their way to St Bride's for an uplifting service. The Master chose as his reading words from St Paul's letter to the Corinthians, famously ending: So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

By special request, the full text of the sermon given by the Honorary Chaplain, the Reverend Canon Dr Alison Joyce, appears on pages 10-11. Orthoptists in the congregation subsequently calculated exactly when her treatment would have been carried out – and even tracked down some of the staff she mentioned.

After lunch, Professor Susie Downes introduced the winners of this year's Ruskell and Master's Medals. For the first time, the Ruskell Medal was won by an ophthalmologist working in public health, in Kenya. The Medal was received on behalf of Dr Hillary Rono by his colleague at Peek Vision, Liveryman Dr Priya Morjaria.

The Master's Medal was awarded to Dr Xiaofan Jiang of UCL/ Institute of Ophthalmology for her paper entitled "“Electrical responses from human retinal cone pathways associate with a common genetic polymorphism implicated in myopia”. We know that the numbers of individuals affected by myopia is predicted to increase substantially over the coming years, so research in this area is extremely important. Understanding more of the reasons why children, in particular, develop myopia is a key contemporary issue and this was a very worthy medal-winning submission.

As always, the pictures from the day tell their own story so here it is – a day of reflection and remembrance, re-dedication, commitment, conversation and celebration.



*The Beadle leads the Court into Church, quickly passing the City gin bar*



*The new Master is clothed by the Beadle*



*The Master with the Master Innholder and the Master Stationer*



*The Master Educator shows off her spectacles*



*The Master's first Loyal Toast to the King*



*Guests enjoy the conversation*



*The Master's Medal is awarded to Dr Xiaofan Jiang*



*Dr Hillary Rono, Ruskell Medal Winner*



## The Reverend Canon Dr Alison Joyce's sermon, Wednesday 5 October 2022

One of my very, very earliest memories is of being carried by my dad, as a toddler, through the streets of central London to one of many outpatient appointments that I had at Moorfields during my early childhood. And in between visits I spent much of the time sporting a pirate's patch, because (you will doubtless now have gathered), I was born with a lazy eye.

Even though I was so little, I can remember my Moorfields appointments surprisingly clearly. I had meetings with a lovely lady called Miss Crawshaw, who would sit me down at one of those periscope-like machines with the levers where you had to try and sit the dolly on the swing, or (much less ideologically sound these days) put the lion in his cage.

And a year or so later, when I had just started Primary School, I was back at Moorfields for eye surgery. Those were the days in which they seemed to keep you in hospital for days on end, even for relatively straightforward operations. I can certainly remember the children in my ward waking up with a mounting sense of dread, knowing that each morning one or two of us would find screwed to the bottom of our beds an alarming sign bearing the menacing words: 'For Operating'.

I can remember being wheeled to the operating theatre in a semi-woozy state; I can remember the anaesthetic being applied, and I can remember coming round again absolutely dying of thirst.

It was pretty challenging for a little child. And yet to this day I remain acutely aware that the care and the interventions that I received at that time, from the various industries and specialisms that you represent, fundamentally changed the course of my life. So, the first thing that I want to say to each and every one of you, is a profound, personal thank you. And do please always remember, if ever you find yourself having a particularly bad or frustrating or unrewarding day – do please remember that the work that you do now – or (if you are now retired) the work that you were able to do during your career, changed lives profoundly and changed them for the better.

For there are few more astounding and remarkable and mind-blowing phenomena than the gift of sight. And those whose professional lives are dedicated to the preservation and restoration of sight are without doubt in one of the noblest of callings. So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you!

In our own, rather different way, but sometimes no less dramatically, those of us called to be clergy are also involved in the business of facilitating sight. It is both fascinating and revealing to observe how readily we all use metaphors relating to seeing when describing the process of comprehension, or recognition, or understanding something: 'I see what you mean!' we say (without even thinking about it, despite the obvious literal contradiction in terms). 'Yes, I can *visualise* exactly what you are describing.' We talk about having or gaining '*insight*'. And in days of yore, an individual whose distinctive gift was able to discern hidden truths and meanings was called a 'seer' – one who saw things that others could not.

And it goes without saying that metaphors of 'seeing' and 'sight' abound within the life of faith. Two hymns in the service illustrate that beautifully, although interestingly, they do so from two completely different perspectives (*perspectives* – there's another sight-related word for you!). Because the first of them does so in relation to God; the other in relation to the life of discipleship. Let me explain what I mean. In our first hymn we sang the words:

Immortal, **invisible**, God only wise  
in light in accessible – **hid from our eyes**.

There have been various occasions in my own life when I have experienced, in a very powerful and almost tangible way, the presence of God – usually when I least expected it. Sometimes it was linked with particular places. Indeed, writers on spirituality sometimes speak of 'thin places'; locations where the division between the earthly and the spiritual seems so negligible that it all but disappears. A thin place may be an ancient holy site; or simply somewhere out in nature; the encounter may take place within an act of worship, or in a time of deep silence – it certainly doesn't have to be anywhere or anything that was outwardly religious. And that sense of divine presence, although 'hid from our eyes' can be almost palpable. For me, this church, St Bride's, is one of those thin places – I am most aware of it at those times when the building is closed and I am here on my own very late at night, or in the very early morning. Indeed, sometimes it feels as if the ancient walls down in the crypt have absorbed the prayers of the faithful over so many centuries – T.S. Eliot in *Little Gidding* describes the experience of 'kneeling where prayer has been valid.' It is not something that one can see in a literal sense – anymore than we can see the air that we breathe. But it is no less real for all that.

The second hymn 'Be thou my **vision**' – of course speaks of our own *need to learn how to see*: to see things through the **eyes** of faith (*eyes – there's another metaphor*); to see the world through the eyes of a loving and compassionate God – a God of justice; a God who feels the pain of the lost and the lonely, the poor and the marginalised.

Over the years I have spent countless hours working with individuals and sometimes with groups, helping them to regain a new kind of vision; to acquire insight into their circumstances that will help equip them to survive the present, or help enable them to move forward in hope. More often than not we find when exploring such things together, that the biggest obstacle in the way is the internal clutter that we acquire over the years without realising it: our pride; our insecurity; our lack of self-worth. As someone once wisely observed (*observed – there's another sight word!*): 'We do not see things as they are; we see things as we are.'

And very often the one thing that can enable us to break through all that clutter that is preventing us from seeing the world and ourselves clearly and creatively is the realisation that we are loved. Because once we can truly perceive (*perceive – there's another one!*) and recognise that ultimately there is no longer

anything of which we need be afraid, then we can be set free. But that is always easier said than done. And sometimes it is a truth that is hard to grasp because it is simply too dazzling for us to be able to grasp it: 'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.'

I shall leave you with the words of another hymn. Its words are based on a remarkable poem by the priest and theologian W.H. Vanstone. I know of no better or more extraordinary testimony to the true meaning of that divine love, and the paradoxes inherent in striving to live out that life of love – the things both visible and invisible. Vanstone's hymn goes like this:

Morning glory, starlit sky  
Soaring music, scholars' truth  
Flight of swallows, autumn leaves,  
Memory's treasure, grace of youth.

Open are the gifts of God,  
Gifts of love to mind and sense,  
Hidden is love's agony;  
love's endeavour, love's expense.

Love that gives, gives ever more  
Gives with zeal, with eager hands,  
Spares not, keeps not, all outpours  
Ventures all, its all expends.

Drained is love in making full  
Bound in setting others free  
Poor in making many rich  
Weak in giving power to be.

Here is God: no monarch he,  
Throned in easy state to reign.  
Here is God, whose arms of love,  
Aching, spent, the world sustain.

Amen.



## Honorary Chaplain

The Master, Nigel Haig-Brown, is delighted to introduce The Reverend Christopher Trundle, as his Chaplain for 2022/23. Christopher is Vicar of the Parishes of Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Mark, Clerkenwell and Padre to 71st (City of London) Yeomanry Signal Regiment.

Christopher was born and brought up in Scotland and read Theology at Trinity College, Cambridge before training for ordination at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield in West Yorkshire. He was ordained in 2010 and has served curacies in Tottenham and Pimlico. He was appointed to his current post as Vicar of two parishes in Clerkenwell in November 2013, and was for a time the youngest incumbent in the Church of England. Holy Redeemer and Saint Mark's are thriving inner-city parishes which act not only as places of worship and prayer but also as important centres of community life, hosting a wide range of programmes and cultural events, and providing facilities for community organisations. Clerkenwell, being just outside the City, is an exciting and fast-changing place, and is conveniently-placed for Court Luncheons! Christopher also serves on the General Synod of the Church of England, as Chair of the House of Clergy in the Diocese of London, and as a trustee of a number of charities.

Christopher is married to Lucy, a university lecturer, and they have two young children. In his spare time, Christopher enjoys travelling, singing (he once backed the Rolling Stones at the O2), and cooking.

This is Christopher's second outing as Honorary Chaplain (the first was 2016/17), and he is greatly looking forward to returning to serve the varied membership of the Company. It is his hope to provide spiritual and pastoral support, or simply a listening ear, to our community in the coming year. Please do not hesitate to approach him at Company events or to be in touch with him via the Clerk.





# FREEDOM, LIVERY AND COURT NEWS

FREEDOM, LIVERY AND COURT NEWS

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW FREEMEN, ADMITTED SINCE 25 AUGUST 2022

Antonia Mary Willes Chitty  
Timothy James Clover  
Tom Davies  
Leonard Reade Fahs  
Ella Naomi Franci  
Jasmin Louise Glossop

Christopher Pybus Grey  
Stephen Peter Holland  
Georgina Marie-Lourdes Labonté  
Philip Andrew Lucas  
Nicholas John Parker  
Stuart William Place

Yashin Danjay Ramkissoon  
Frances Teresa Rus  
Karan Bhavesh Vyas  
Katherine Mary Williams

### LONG SERVICE

Congratulations to the following members who have reached significant anniversaries of their admission to the Freedom. The Master and Wardens thank them for their continuing support.

#### 70 YEARS+

Richard Bertram Thorpe

#### 60 YEARS

Clive Graham Stone

#### 50 YEARS

Brian Thomas Collison  
Selwyn Jones  
David Ralph Kirk  
Eileen Valerie Boud  
Anthony Round  
Geoffrey Alan Taylor  
John Edward Thomas  
Brian Allen Walker  
Brian Edward Whittenbury

#### 40 YEARS

Heather Deborah Jameson  
Christopher Richard Jeffery  
Roger Walter Rees

#### 25 YEARS

James Robert Cooper  
Richard Bruce Emile Cooper

### IN MEMORIAM

Ronald William Edwin Gosling

David Walter Harrison

Anne Christine Arnold Silk  
(Past Master)

Geoffrey Kelvin Watson



Jonathan Foreman



Josie Forte



Robert Kronman



Ian McDermott

### NEW LIVERYMEN CLOTHED ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2022

Jonathan Mark Foreman  
Josie Caitlin Forte  
Robert Alan Kronman  
Ian Arthur McDermott

#### Welcomed

Kwabena Nkansa Agyei  
Mark Christopher Westcott  
Sandrine Virginie Sophie Westcott



Kwabena Agyei



Mark Westcott



Sandrine Westcott

## ANNE CHRISTINE ARNOLD SILK FFDO, FBDO(HONS), FRSA, FRSM, HON DSC MASTER SPECTACLE MAKER 1990-1991



We are sorry to report the death of our first female Master, Dr Anne Silk, on 30 November 2022, just short of her 91st birthday.

Anne Silk was rightly proud of her progression within the Company at a time when Livery Company Masters and Wardens were assumed to be men. She was only the fourth woman in the City to become Master of a Livery Company and the only female appointed in her year of office, 1990-1991. She was delighted when a senior member of staff at the Mansion House told her that she was the first woman in history to have presided at two City ceremonial dinners involving royalty - in the 1970s at the Guildhall as President of the Association of Dispensing Opticians and in 1991, when the principal guest at her Mansion House Livery Dinner was His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester.

Anne wanted respect to be afforded equally in professional circles, on the basis of merit and knowledge. She advised others to follow her example in operating to the best of their ability without fuss. She believed there was no need to distinguish women from men in leadership settings. She was eloquent and authoritative when speaking in public, always demonstrating absolute command of her subject.

Anne showed exceptional ability as a child but circumstances meant that going to university was not possible. She went into advertising, working for Selfridges but really wanted a rewarding, lifelong career. She started training as a dispensing optician and progressed rapidly, becoming a member, and ultimately President, of the Association of Dispensing Opticians from 1971-1974, the first woman to take that position.

Anne turned her attention from spectacles to contact lenses and became a director of one of only four companies dispensing lenses at that time. She was trained by Dr Josef Dallos, the ophthalmologist who brought contact lenses to the UK from Hungary in 1937, with his brother-in-law, George Nissel. In the mid-1970s Anne set up her own practice with consulting rooms in Wimpole Street and from this base she developed an international contact lens consultancy.

This was the point when Anne started to become absorbed by the links between eye conditions, brain function and the external environment. She was in the forefront of research to find links between prolonged exposure to cathode ray tubes (a principal feature of early computer screens), eye conditions and persistent migraines. Although many of her UK contemporaries initially dismissed her ideas, she discovered that researchers in the US were asking similar questions. She worked very closely with late Liveryman Professor Sir Colin Blakemore, a world-renowned neurobiologist, and latterly with Professor Colin Pritchard at Bournemouth University, on the incidence of brain disease-related mortality.

On retiring from her optical practice to pursue her research agenda, Anne began a second career in neuroscience, producing numerous discussion papers and supporting innovative research. She made her mark through publications and conference papers and her work subsequently took her further into studies of the impact of radiation and magnetic fields on brain function, and the links between environmental factors, epidemiology and long term and degenerative conditions, including epilepsy and Motor Neurone Disease.

She took great pride in her election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine (an unusual accolade then for a non-medic), and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and she was delighted in 2014 to be awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Science by Bournemouth University, with whom she worked closely in recent years.



Past Master Anne Silk and Past Master Christine Tomkins at the installation of Felicity Harding as Master in 2017.

She sat on the General Optical Council, was a Member of the Institute of Physics and of the US Bio-electromagnetics Society and took on roles on national committees looking at brain disease. She was a member of the Department of Health SAGE II Science Forum and was co-opted onto the UK's Health Protection Agency.

She was still writing research papers and inspiring PhD students well into her late eighties. After one meeting with a young female author she wrote in an email: "There is so much that people don't know about my researches so it is good to talk about my experiences and help them understand that scholarship is so worthwhile. Just imagine! My published papers (on electromagnetic fields, magnetism and human effects) have been read by 9382 academics worldwide. Not bad for an elderly woman!"

Anne Silk was no ordinary woman. She takes her place in the Company's history as the first woman Master in more than 360 years, a pioneer and a formidable presence in optics.





# PRESENTATION CEREMONY

5 SEPTEMBER 2022

A high point of the Spectacle Maker calendar, the Presentation Ceremony never fails to demonstrate the diversity and breadth of skills, background and professions of our membership. Twenty new Freemen and seven Liverymen were admitted or welcomed to the Company in the presence of the Court, family and friends, sharing almost 30 different job titles between them.

The Spectacle Makers' Military Award was presented to Lance Corporal Harold Hawks of 31st (Middlesex Yeomanry & Princess Louise's Kensington) Signal Squadron. We also welcomed bursary winner and Journeyman Katherine Jerome, who is just starting her second year of study at ABDO College. Katherine trained as a violin teacher and worked in schools for 20 years before COVID caused her to re-evaluate and aim for an optical career. She self-funded her training as an optical assistant and then progressed to the FBDO Diploma Course.

Katherine said:  
"As a single parent of two, I am working full time across two practices and also teaching violin and piano lessons part-time. I couldn't have afforded the extra expenses associated with the course (books/hotels during block release weeks/membership fees) and was so worried about filling up a credit card with these extra course costs. I have been so grateful for this help".



2021-22 Bursary winner Katherine Jerome



Freemen being welcomed by the Master



Lance Corporal Harold Hawks, Military Award Winner 2022

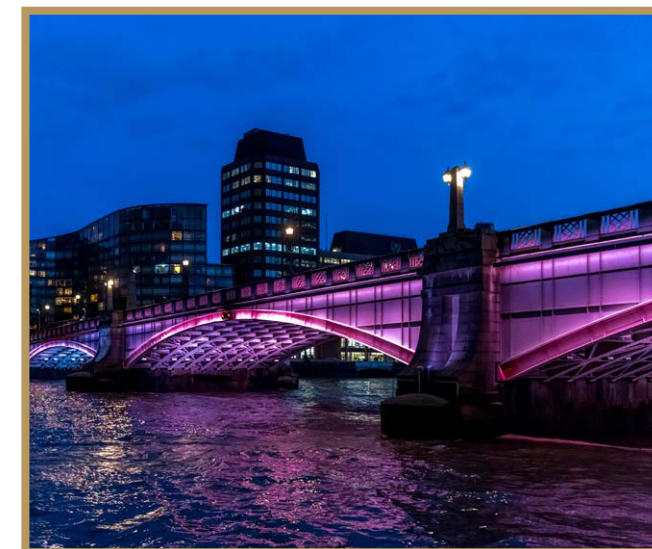


# THE FOUR LIVERIES EVENT, 13 October 2022

## The Worshipful Company of Lightmongers Illuminated River Cruise

In its first evolution from lecture to event, the Four Liveries Event was hosted by the Worshipful Company of Lightmongers. The Lightmongers organised an Illuminated River Cruise to take around a hundred members from the Spectacle Makers, Clockmakers, Scientific Instrument Makers and their own members on an atmospheric tour of the nine newly illuminated bridges along the Thames. Spanning the 3.2 miles between London and Lambeth Bridge, the Illuminated River Foundation is the longest public art commission in the world.

We were given an insightful tour by Past Master Lightmonger Mike Simpson, one of the design leads of the project's partners, as the MV Golden Salamander glided under each lit bridge. Mike revealed that the lighting patterns were generated by programmed algorithms making each flow of light unique and never to be repeated. The displays were designed with careful consideration of the river's environment and aquatic life to ensure that fish were not confused by direct shafts of light during the night. This was then repeated to those of us on the top deck who couldn't quite hear the Past Master by Abbie, the newly installed Assistant to the Lightmongers' Clerk, who was just as knowledgeable! A balmy October evening accompanied by stunning views of the capital made for the ideal setting to catch up with friends and to meet the members of the other Companies.



The Spectacle Makers will host the next Four Liveries Event, an evening that will explore the past, present and future of cataracts with the guidance of three experts in the field.

Set your watches for Thursday 12 June when we will be casting light on vision science.







## HAVE YOU “HERD”? Spectacle Makers at the Sheep Drive, 2022

Once you have witnessed a Spectacle Maker dressed as Bo Peep herding sheep across London Bridge, you can truly say you’ve seen everything.



Caroline Sheldrick & Master, ‘Two Beaus’

In what I hope continues as a Company tradition, Spectacle Makers took part in the Sheep Drive as a Company. It was a joy to watch members taking part in one of the more bizarre City traditions, whether firm friends, meeting for the first time or recognising one another from their graduation in 1974 – as was the case for two of our sheep drovers!

We had members travelling far and wide to exercise their right as Freemen of the City, a tradition which began in medieval times; it was the privilege of Freemen of the City of London to trade within the ‘square mile’ without having to pay the bridge toll to get there. With the bustling food and Livery market in Monument Square, along with the baying and shearing of sheep, we felt transported back in time. The day was organised seamlessly by the Worshipful Company of Woolmen and the Guild of Young Freemen.

The register for 2023 has already begun, so don’t hesitate to get in touch with the office ([administrator@spectaclemakers.com](mailto:administrator@spectaclemakers.com)) to make sure you don’t miss out on this ever popular – and utterly strange – event!

Jenny Tracey



Spectacle Makers at the Sheep Drive 2022



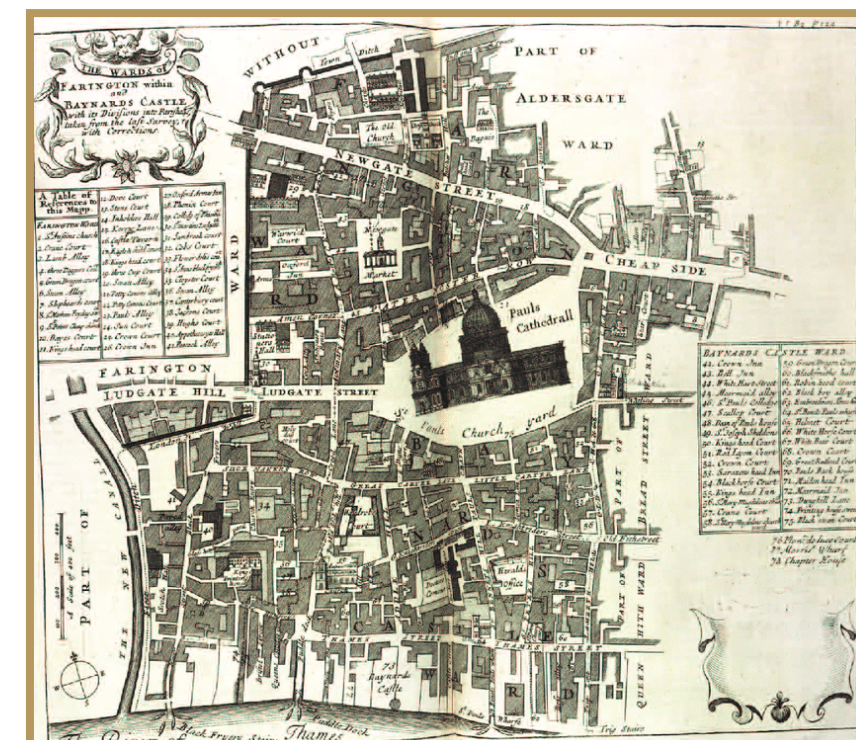
On the move

## CLUBBING TOGETHER

There are 25 electoral wards with the City of London and our office is located in the ward of Farringdon Within. The City of London Corporation is the only local authority in the country that enables businesses to vote alongside residents but in this Ward the residents have a strong and active voice, in everything from planning applications and extension of licensing for restaurants and bars around the Barbican, to the provision of mental health support services and libraries and, traffic management and reduction in air pollution.

The Company has close connections with the electoral ward. The Ward’s Alderman and recent Lord Mayor, Vincent Keaveny, is, of course, a Liveryman and our own Clerk takes on the role of Honorary Ward Clerk for the Ward once a year for the Annual Meeting (Wardmote) and every time there is an election of officers, whether that be for the Alderman or the 8 Common Councillors who represent local residents and businesses.

The Ward used to be one large area. It was split into two, Farringdon Within (inside the old London Wall) and Farringdon Without (outside the Wall) at a time of considerable growth in the City, back in the 14th Century. But togetherness is still evident in the Farringdon Ward Club, an organisation designed to bring together Freemen, Liverymen, residents, parishioners, workers and business owners. Such clubs exist in almost all of the City’s wards and they are open to members of all backgrounds, usually by recommendation of one or two existing members.



Antique map of Farringdon Within and Castle Baynard Wards  
‘Who can spot the site of Apothecaries’ Hall?’

We have good connections with both the Farringdon Ward Club and the neighbouring Castle Baynard Ward Club. Liverymen are also active in the Aldgate, Broad Street, Langbourn and Queenhithe Ward Clubs. If you would like to get involved, please email [clerk@spectaclemakers.com](mailto:clerk@spectaclemakers.com) and we will put you in touch.



Vincent & Amanda Keaveny with Nigel & Sue Haig-Brown at the Farringdon Ward club



## REPRESENTING THE COMPANY WITHIN THE CITY

Several of the set-piece events which characterise the City take place in early November, at the beginning of the Master's year in office.

On Monday 7 November the Master planted a cross in the St Paul's Garden of Remembrance, taking his place in the column of Masters ranked by order of precedence in the City (we are number 60). Later that evening he attended the Service of Thanksgiving for the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress at the church of St Stephen, Walbrook, next door to Mansion House and then on Friday 11 November, the Master and Mistress Spectacle Maker joined a list of invited guests at Guildhall to see the exchange of power in the City, from one Lord Mayor to the next.

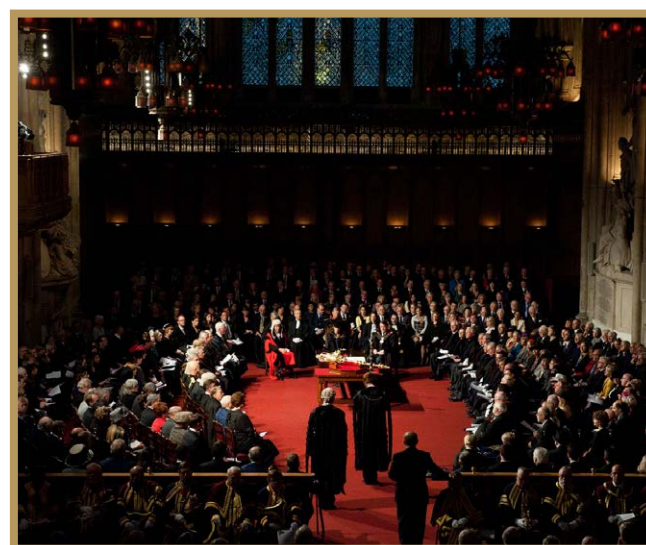
The Silent Ceremony happens almost entirely in silence, the transfer of authority evident in the beautifully-synchronised removal of one tricorne hat, by the outgoing Lord Mayor, and the new Lord Mayor putting on his own tricorne for the first time.

Later, in the car transporting the new Lord Mayor from Guildhall to Mansion House, the keys to the seal of Christ's Hospital Seal are taken from a special pocket in the Sword Bearer's "Muscovy" Hat. From this tradition springs the expression "to keep it under your hat".

The following day, Saturday 12 November, saw the warmest Lord Mayor's Show Day for 50 years. Our special "eye" umbrellas will wait for a future Show!



*The Master and Mistress at the Silent Ceremony*



*The Silent Ceremony*



*The Lord Mayor's Gold Coach on Ludgate Hill*



*Gog & Magog at the Lord Mayor's Show*



Registered Charity No 1186122  
(England & Wales)

The Spectacle Makers' Charity awarded its second 3-year grant to Vision 2020 Links for an innovative project which aims to tackle glaucoma in Nigeria. Glaucoma is the second most common cause of blindness worldwide and in 2021, Vision 2020 Links established the 'Glaucoma-NET' with the purpose of preserving the sight of people with glaucoma in low-income countries. The network connects patients, clinicians, researchers, NGOs and Ministries of Health, with a lasting and sustainable impact. The Network is led by Fatima Kyari, a leading glaucoma specialist based in Abuja, Nigeria together



*Dr Fatima Kyari*

with eye health experts at the International Centre for Eye Health, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

The 3-year grant will enable a dedicated website to be established through which glaucoma practitioners from Nigeria and other African countries will discuss cases and share learning in all aspects of glaucoma care and management, including nurses, optometrists and counsellors. The new Network will build on the International Centre

for Eye Health's experience establishing similar international partnership networks and toolkits across sub-Saharan Africa in the specialist areas of diabetic retinopathy (DR-NET) and childhood eye cancer retinoblastoma (Rb-NET). It will also kickstart use of a new Toolkit for the management of glaucoma across Nigeria. The Toolkit provides a framework and a 'how to' guide for glaucoma teams in low-income countries to improve their services and offer 'best practice' to their patients. The funding will enable cascade training of glaucoma specialists to implement the Toolkit in their own hospitals across Nigeria over the next three years.



*A patient in Nigeria undergoes testing for intraocular pressure*

## CHARITY GRANTS

### LATEST GRANTS AWARDED

Four grants were recently awarded in November 2022 to World Sight Foundation, Retina UK, Blind in Business and Extant.

**World Sight Foundation** are launching a new training programme at an academy in India, where the money granted by the Spectacle Makers' Charity will go towards training 300 primary care workers at the HV Desai Hospital in Pune. This programme will focus particularly on training ophthalmic officers, who are often the first health professionals on site, helping the poorest and those in greatest need.



*World Sight Foundation primary care workers in India*

Research being conducted by **Retina UK** hopes to develop a gene therapy that could improve defects in the retina that cause inherited conditions such as retinitis pigmentosa. As the research project "Retina in a Dish", moves into its second year of three the Spectacle Makers' Charity has made this grant to ensure their work can continue.

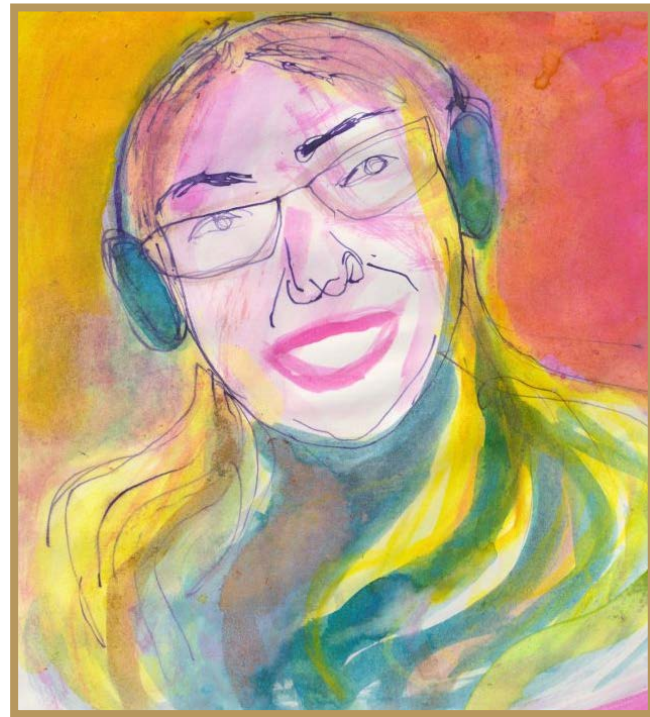


*Retina UK Gene Therapy research*

**Blind in Business** run 'Education to Employment' courses for blind graduates. These courses include active team building exercises and offer the chance to meet with potential employers, which gives new graduates the confidence to compete with their sighted peers.



**Extant's** Pathways programme has now provided opportunities for blind and low vision talent in the theatre industry for four years. The grant from the Spectacle Makers' Charity will enable the training of 8 crew & design artists from across the UK and provide them with additional support as they work towards a showcase set to open in February 2023.



Extant 'Pathways' programme is supporting 8 participants to build backstage theatre skills

## International Efforts

Freeman and Liverymen are involved in many charitable and volunteering roles carried out around the world. Here are just a couple of reports.

### Focus on Malawi

Freeman and retired ophthalmologist Caroline Sheldrick reflects on her volunteering experience in Malawi.

Last month I returned from a trip to Malawi (Central Africa). I visited this country – beautiful, but the eighth poorest in the world - with a group of eye care volunteers from Colchester, as part of a project named Focus on Malawi which is run by The Raven Trust. The Raven Trust is a small, low-income charity and run solely by volunteers who have a big heart for the work they do! I was joined by Susan Kevan, retired orthoptist, and Emma Hewson, a hospital optometrist. I have been out to Malawi three times previously with the project, which began when Susan first visited in 2005 and found there was no eye care in the rural north of the country.

In the past 15 years there have been many success stories and much to celebrate with regard to improving eye care. On this trip the Trust sponsored a conference in Mzuzu bringing together eye care providers from ten hospitals, six of which we had helped in the past. Staff were able to meet, network, share ideas and discuss the challenges ahead. A WhatsApp group has now been formed so these formative discussions can continue.



Equipment in action

However, I would like to share a shocking situation with you.



This clinic chair is the only piece of equipment in the eye clinic of Mzimba North Hospital, Mzuzu. Patients are examined in this chair by trained staff (optometrists and an ophthalmic clinical officer) who use the torches on their own mobile phones to examine the patient's eyes. They see 600+ patients a month. As most of us know, with experience it is possible to see a lot of the anterior segment of the eye using a good light source but without magnification and specialist

lenses, most of the rest of the eye cannot be viewed. The staff were performing an admirable job but without appropriate resources. This is not a unique situation.



Eye care staff in Malawi

We did have some pen torches, eye occluders with pinholes and a Snellen Chart with us that we were able to give them but they obviously need other essential pieces of equipment. If you can help, please contact the office and we will put you in touch.

You can find out more about the project at its website <https://www.theraventrust.org>

## Remembering Karen Sparrow

At a memorial event held for the friends and family of Karen Sparrow at Apothecaries' Hall in November, Peek Vision announced they would be extending the 3 Year scholarship programme in Karen's name, as a way of commemorating and celebrating her commitment to optometry and the training of eye health professionals world wide. This scholarship will continue to support aspiring optometrists and ophthalmologists from low and middle income countries to attend courses (in person or online) at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Vision Aid Overseas (now called Vision Action), with whom Karen volunteered for many years, have also established The Karen Sparrow Training and Education Fund. Contact [judith.trigg@visionaction.org.uk](mailto:judith.trigg@visionaction.org.uk) for more information.



Karen Sparrow spent much of her time training eye health professionals as a volunteer

## Order of St. John event in Houston



HRH The Duke of Gloucester  
The Grand Prior of the Order  
of St. John

In October Liveryman Dr Robert J. Devine attended the Sixty-First Service of Investiture and Rededication of the Priory in the United States of America of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in the City of Houston and the Diocese of Texas.

Grand Prior HRH the Duke of Gloucester was present for the Investiture of Dames and Knights and other Grades of the Order as well as for the presentation of the St. John

Volunteer Corps (SJVC) flag to the Priory in the USA for its expanding volunteer activities. While many Priories throughout the world support their St. John Ambulance Associations, the Priory in the USA is primarily supports the Jerusalem Eye Hospital and is responsible for over two-thirds of the hospital's operating budget. Under challenging circumstances, the Eye Hospital also provides essential eye care through its mobile units, clinics and hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank.

Several Liverymen have strong connections with the Order of St. John in England, Wales, Canada and the U.S. As a Spectacle Maker it was also an enjoyable opportunity to meet with members of other Livery Companies.

## SeeAbility at Buckingham Palace



SeeAbility reception at  
Buckingham Palace,  
October 2022

SeeAbility's CEO, Lisa Hopkins, is one of our Court Assistants and Liverymen Mo and Tim Webb, Peter Reeve and Paul Ursell were also present.



Mo and Tim Webb



## The Spectacle Makers' Charity appeal to members

As we approach the 400th anniversary of the Company, the Spectacle Makers' Charity hopes to have 400 registered donations per year being committed by 2029. The trustees are inviting all Liverymen to pledge at least £20 a month and all Freemen to pledge £10 a month. You can find the form to set up a standing order, or give via a debit or credit card in less than 2 minutes, at:

[www.spectaclemakers.com/charity/how-to-give-to-the-spectacle-makers-charity/](http://www.spectaclemakers.com/charity/how-to-give-to-the-spectacle-makers-charity/)

This small regular donation to the Spectacle Makers' Charity enables us to support the charities that help visually impaired people improve the quality of their lives; by building confidence at work, helping with difficult daily tasks, playing sport, enjoying the theatre or ballet, making friends or just having fun. We have been able to give over £70,000 this year thanks to the commitment and support of members of The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers.

The Spectacle Makers' Charity is also unique in supporting the future of our craft of eye health by supporting the next generation of optical professionals - optometrists, dispensing opticians, ophthalmic nurses, orthoptists and ophthalmologists. This is done through bursaries or supporting travel and professional development fellowships. Your donations help us make a difference to all these people.

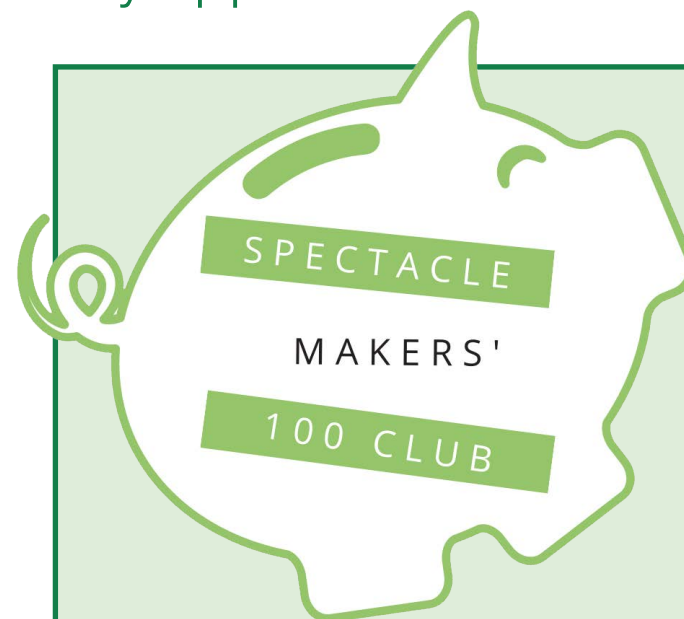
On the website and in the members' area you will also find information on leaving a legacy to the Spectacle Makers' Charity (which is tax free) and joining the 100 Club - a fun way to contribute to the Charity and maybe win a prize!

On behalf of all the Trustees and all those who will benefit from your kindness, thank you again.

With best wishes,

*Elizabeth A Shilling*

**Liz Shilling, Chair of the Spectacle Makers' Charity**



**Join for the Chance of winning £1000!**  
**With membership limited to 100 people, the chance of winning is well within reach. Each entry into the 'club' costs £100 and anyone over the age of 16 within the family of a Freeman or Liveryman can apply. By setting up a standing order, your subscription will roll forward automatically each year. There are 8 chances to win £250 and a Star Prize of £1000, spread over two draws per year, one in June and in December.**

**Join for the Chance of winning**  
**If you would like to book your place in the 100 Club for 2023 get in touch with [charity@spectaclemakers.com](mailto:charity@spectaclemakers.com). More details will be released in January.**



## GOD SAVE THE KING

The death of Queen Elizabeth II was announced on the evening of Thursday 8 September 2022. While the country fell into mourning, an unwanted but well-rehearsed series of ceremonies and events immediately sprang into action, the most important being the Proclamation of the new King in Westminster, in the City of London and across the country.

These Proclamations were the traditional means for relaying news and the wording and operation of the ceremonies long predate modern communications. For centuries, there simply was no other way to spread the news of the death of the old sovereign and the accession of the new one.

The Accession Council proclaimed the accession of Charles III as King at a meeting in St James' Palace in Westminster at 10am on 10 September. The Accession Council includes members of the Privy Council, officers of State, members of the House of Lords, Commonwealth High Commissioners and the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London. Past Alderman Alison Gowman recounted her feelings of awe at being whisked in a car, with blue lights flashing, from the City to Westminster, to take part in the ceremony which no-one had seen in the past 70 years. Many of us followed along on TV, this being also the first occasion when such an event could be filmed and broadcast, such was the length of the reign of the late Queen.



*The proclamation is made in the City*



*Proclamation of the King in York*



A Proclamation was then delivered to the public at 11am by the Garter King of Arms, the senior herald of the College of Arms, from the balcony of St James' Palace.

The College of Arms, located in Queen Victoria Street just around the corner from the Spectacle Makers' office, is the body that controls heraldry - the granting of coats of arms - in England. The ultimate head of the College is the Earl Marshal, a hereditary position occupied by the Duke of Norfolk, but the Garter King of Arms acts as its executive head. Officers of the College, known as heralds, assist the Earl Marshal in organising state ceremonies including state funerals and coronations.

The duty of reading out the Accession Proclamation in the City of London fell to the Clarenceux King of Arms, who was accompanied and hosted by the Lord Mayor of the City of London. The City is the second place for the Proclamation to be read out, after Westminster, reflecting its historic importance. Save for the reigning monarch, the Lord Mayor takes precedence at all events within the City of London (sharp-eyed observers may have noticed that the Lord Mayor, not the then Prince of Wales, was the last person in the procession into St Paul's Cathedral for the Platinum Jubilee Service in June, recognising this point of protocol).

The Proclamation took place on the steps of the Royal Exchange, the symbolic centre of the City of London and next door to both the Bank of England and the Lord Mayor's home at Mansion House. The Lord Mayor's ceremonial guard, the Pikemen and Musketeers of the Honourable Artillery Company, stood on guard around the forecourt of the Royal Exchange.

Representatives of the Court of Aldermen, in their scarlet gowns, and Common Councillors, in mazarine blue robes, took their places on the steps of the Royal Exchange, before the Mayoral party and heralds.

The Lord Mayor was led to the Royal Exchange by the three ceremonial officers of the City - the City Marshal in red uniform and jangling spurs, the Swordbearer, wearing his large 'Muscovy' Hat, and the Common Cryer and Serjeant-at-Arms,



*Proclamation of the new King in London*



*Councillor Ashley Mason and wife Danielle outside York's Mansion House*

who carries the Great Mace. The City Remembrancer, a lawyer who provides liaison between the City of London, the Crown and Westminster and determines all matters of ceremony and protocol in the City, stood behind the Lord Mayor. These are all historic offices. The position of Swordbearer of London dates back to the 14th Century, while the Common Cryer and Serjeant-at-Arms is possibly the oldest ceremonial office in the City, having been established well before 1338.

After the Proclamation had been read out, the Lord Mayor led three cheers for King Charles III and those present joined in the National Anthem, finding the words suddenly much less familiar as "her" turned to "him" and the final acclaim was "God Save The King!!"

Arrangements were made for accession proclamations to be made by local authorities right across the country. For Spectacle Makers who had travelled to the Master's Weekend, the opportunity came on Sunday morning to gather at the Mansion House in York and hear the proclamation made there, meeting again some of the dignitaries and guests who had attended a more subdued Company dinner, hosted by the Master, the previous evening.



# THE SPECTACLE MAKERS' SOCIETY



## SOCIETY VISIT TO LAYER MARNEY



*Grand view of Layer Marney Tower*

A fantastic day was had by all as the weather kindly gave us sunshine and blue skies giving a perfect backdrop to the beautiful Layer Marney Tower and the surrounding stunning countryside.

Sheila Charrington, the current owner, gave us an insightful tour of historical and architectural significance of the tower and grounds.

We were enlightened and entertained over a wide range of topics ranging from the correct way to build an alabaster tomb, renaissance influence and the introduction of terracotta, the influence of Catherine of Aragon in country architecture, Tudor furniture removal techniques, intricacies of lime painting and its maintenance and restoration and much, much more.

A wonderful private lunch was then shared by all in the restored stables tea room, after which there was then time to explore the gardens and estate.

For the hard core Spectacle Makers, the day continued at West Mersea Coast Inn where we enjoyed a good rest and early supper whilst watching the evening sun dance over the water, before making our tracks taking with us memories of a wonderful day shared with friends.

*James Sheldrick*





## SPECTACLE MAKERS RETURN TO THE DRESS MAKERS

The Society was back 'Behind the Seams' after a popular trip to the dress making warehouse last year, organised again by Liveryman Ian Anderson. Before touring the warehouse we heard all about the enormous amounts of time pressure the designers and dress makers are under, their relationship with the producers, dancers and celebrities - and all the other shows they work with! Vicky, award winning costume designer, told us every costume must be approved by the show's producers, who have the final say, by 9am on Friday before the show airs on Saturday night. It is not uncommon for producers to decide only a day before a dress may not be suitable, so the designers and sewers have work tirelessly to make amends in time - failure is not an option, even if it means stitching tulle on the night!

We were shown around the warehouse where we saw the progress for next Saturday's show (photos were strictly prohibited!) and watched how each sequin on every dress was hand sewn. Each fabric is hand dyed to specification unique to the warehouse. All fabrics are sourced in the UK where possible.

It was great fun admiring the glitz and sharing opinions on this year's crop of celebrity dancers - even better with such great company!



*Walking through the warehouse*



*Strictly Behind The Seams 2022 group tour*

## SPURS TOUR

On Saturday November 19th, members, friends and families of the Spectacle Makers, ranging from 9 to 90 years old, had a behind the scenes tour of Tottenham Hotspur's new £1.5 billion football stadium. After going through security we gathered together in the stadium shop foyer, put on our wristbands and were ready for the tour.

Our guide John was funny, enthusiastic, clearly loved his job, and was very knowledgeable. It eventually came to light that our own Master's great uncle had actually played for Tottenham Hotspur - perhaps there is a cosmic link between Spurs and Spectacle Makers?

John showed us every part of the stadium, the football changing rooms, NFL locker rooms, we even visited exclusive areas where only the directors are allowed. The tour also took us through the players' tunnel down to pitch side and we sat in the players' seats. Everyone agreed that the best part was when the group went underground to see how the grass football pitch retracts to allow NFL matches to be played on the surface underneath.

It was a very enjoyable afternoon and those of us that were not "footie" fans before certainly are now.

*Gaynor Foulkes-Taylor, Society Chair*



*Spectacle Makers emerge from the tunnel*

## SPECTACLE MAKERS NEAR YOU!

Spectacle Makers can be found all over the UK - and globally - which has prompted the 'local gatherings' initiative, where members have organised relaxed get togethers around the country for other members and friends wanting to know a bit more about the Company living nearby.

The most recent of these was hosted by Society Chair and Liveryman Gaynor Foulkes-Taylor in her home town of Newmarket. After booking a table in a local restaurant, Gaynor and Past Master Huntly were joined by more Past Masters, Liverymen, Freemen and a Past Chaplain. With a free flow of conversation and laughter the casual drinks and nibbles turned into a full two course meal! It was a brilliant opportunity to catch up with members, old and new, without the formalities (and some travel difficulties!) expected of larger events in London.



*Past Masters, Past Chaplain, Liverymen and Freemen at the Pantry.*

Liveryman Pretty Jetwani hosted a small gathering of members in Guildford, including the current Master and Mistress Spectacle Maker, where they had a similar experience of bubbling conversation and laughter, learning all about how they came to the Company.

Pretty was so keen for other members to organise their own gathering that she has put together a short guide that shows how easy it is!



*Local meet up in Guildford hosted by Pretty*

The process of organising the event could not have been simpler, far from time-consuming, and was very worthwhile.

These are the steps I took:

- Found a diary date and time that suited me. An early evening event fitted in with my work commitments so I opted for a two-hour slot from 6pm.
- Decided on a local venue ideal for our needs. I made a booking for a table in the hotel's 'Bar & Grill' section which catered for drinks and meals if required; it suited me to have the option of a meal because I was going to the meeting after work. Not knowing the numbers attending, I requested a table for up to a dozen people
- Next was to confirm that there was no double-booking with the WCSM's calendar by informing Jenny, the Administrator. A prompt email response informed me that there were no clashes with other events and so all I had to do was wait to see if anyone contacted me or who would turn up at the event!
- Went to the event and had an enjoyable gathering with sociable Spectacle Makers.

Once the event was publicised in the WCSM's email newsletter, I was delighted to receive communication from a local member the following day.

*Pretty Jetwani*



Other gatherings have been hosted in Warwick organised by Freeman Craig Hastilow and in Wiltshire by Liveryman David Hutchfield, who both also thoroughly enjoyed the chance to meet members in a relaxed, local setting.



WCSM Wiltshire Social

If you would like to organise your own informal social near you, follow Pretty's advice and get in touch with Jenny on [administrator@spectaclemakers.com](mailto:administrator@spectaclemakers.com).

## IN PLAIN SIGHT

For anyone with an hour or two to spare we can highly recommend this free exhibition running until 12th February 2023 at Wellcome Collection 183 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BE.

This a fantastic visual and tactile exhibition which explores the different way we see and are seen by others. From 11th century optical books to 18th century spectacles and lots more, it is a must for anyone interested in vision and all things optical.

Opening times: - 10.00-18.00 every day except Monday.  
There is also a café on site.

More info can be found on their website:  
[wellcomecollection.org/exhibitions](http://wellcomecollection.org/exhibitions)



The Wellcome Collection



Artwork by Mary Bishop at the exhibition: Guilt / Self-Portrait (aged 10) / A Pair of Eyes

## THE MASTER'S WEEKEND IN YORK, SEPTEMBER 2022

As a proud Freeman of the City of York, Ian Davies had no doubt as to where his Master's Weekend should be held. The weekend had been planned more than two years ahead, venues and caterers secured even before we even knew what Covid was all about. Spectacle Makers were already heading to York at the moment the BBC announced the death of the Queen Elizabeth II on Thursday 8 September 2022. Most of the world knows now that plans had been laid many years ahead as to what should happen when such a sad event occurred – but it seemed that, in fact, the plan was not as firm as it had seemed. The monarch had died in Scotland, the standard timetable of events needed to be adjusted to allow for the Royal Family to gather and mourn together, and the mood of the nation was rather different than it had been at the time of the death of King George VI. By Friday morning, advice had been issued that the Royal Family did not expect all events to be cancelled but asked simply that appropriate time be allowed for respect and reflection.

After much discussion, it was decided to proceed with the Master's Weekend, with an adjusted programme. York Minster closed its doors but accepted floral tributes. Afternoon tea at Betty's had as its soundtrack the public broadcast by the



Tea at Betty's in York



A historic City, with plenty of coffee stops



Clifford's Tower in York



The final resting place of a highwayman



Spectacle Makers in Merchant Adventurers' Hall, York

new King, played via 3 or 4 hastily assembled laptops to those assembled in the Belmont Room, and the planned celebratory Gregorie Dinner at the Mansion House became a Company dinner, at which we could welcome the Governor and Clerk of the Merchant Adventurers' Company of the City of York in the same way that members of a family would gather together, with sympathy and in consolation.

York provided a wonderful historic backdrop and the Master's "Yorvik Yomp" took us around and through the City to places visitors would never have found without such local knowledge. The number of visitors to Holy Trinity Church prompted them to Tweet about the lovely conversations they had had, and the welcome and tea and scones provided by the Clerk and staff at Merchant Adventurers' Hall brought historic livery friendships right up to the present day.

We are very grateful to Ian and Gillian for all the hard work they put in to making the weekend such a success - a real comfort at a time of national sadness and an experience many of us will remember for years to come.





*A surprise discovery in a park in York*



*The Master receives a gift, as a Freeman of the City of York*



*Bobby and Joan Braunstein bringing New York to York, UK*



*The Governor, Dr Delma Tomlin MBE, speaks to guests.*



*All set at the Mansion House*



*The Master and Mistress host dinner at the Mansion House, York.*

## WORKS OF ART

It was one of those quiet days in the office when the phone rang. "Hello – is that the Spectacle Makers? We have a tapestry and think you might like to display it in your office". Images of a work as long as Bayeux or as rich as the Lady with the Unicorn began to fill my brain. How would we preserve such a historic objet d'art and keep it away from dust? Even more importantly, where on earth would we put it? Our office really is very small and we have to turn down many offers of historic objects because we have no room to display them and no way of doing so properly.

Thankfully, we quickly established that the tapestry was a very manageable size – and came with a complete family history. It was lovingly made just after the war by Mrs M Hantman, whose husband Henry, son David and several brothers and uncles were all members of the Company. David retired from practice and moved away from the UK just before COVID stopped all travel. This was the first opportunity he had had to return to the family home to clear the last effects – and to rescue and present the artwork to the Company for safekeeping.



*The Arms in pewter, commissioned by Richard Campbell*

Talking about this piece of work on social media generated a further discovery of more beautiful pieces in the ownership of Liveryman Richard Campbell. Richard is a fine craftsman in his own right, having made a beautiful Tree of Life in wood for a local memorial garden. He tells his story below...

My admission to the Livery was in 1979. I was privileged to be holding the SMC banner for the Lord Mayor's procession that year – probably because it was rather heavy and a little unwieldy in the wintry wind – and I was deemed "fit and strong" by the then Master and Wardens.

Being delighted at this honour, I was keen to purchase various items of Livery regalia for personal use; a tie, cuff links etc. Colin Eldridge, the Clerk at that time, explained that the last embroidery sample of the SMC coat of arms was available. I believe it had been commissioned by the SMC to be created by



*Embroidered Achievement of Arms, donated by David Hantman*

the Worshipful Company of Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers. This framed embroidery was displayed beside my dispensing desk throughout my career and received many admiring comments.

A year later I commissioned a colleague whose hobby was making pewter items, to use the SMC coat of arms as a pattern for a framed wall hanging.

As I have since retired, I am pleased to say that both items now hang in my study – along with the framed Freedom Certificate (and red wallet). Great to have such SMC memorabilia!



*SMC embroidery*





# COMPANY AND SOCIETY CALENDAR 2022 - 2023

Please keep an eye on the home page of the website and the members' area for more information as dates, titles and timings may be subject to change.

Thursday 22 December	Office closed for Christmas and New Year.
Tuesday 3 January	Office reopens after Christmas Holidays.
Wednesday 11 January, 2.30pm	Society outing to Jack & the Beanstalk pantomime at the London Palladium
Tuesday 17 January, 6.30-7.30pm	Eye-to-Eye: "Something in the City" - meet modern people who hold historical offices.
Tuesday 24 January 5.45-7pm	Local gathering, Cannon Street, City of London.
Tuesday 7 February, 6.30-7.30pm	Eye-to-Eye: Beyond the Dark Room – careers post qualification
Thursday 16 February 6.30-7.30pm	Society Chocolate "Call my Bluff" on Zoom.
Sunday 26 February, 5pm	WCSM at 100% Optical - Main Stage presentation on Myopia by our Master's Medal Winner, 5pm
Monday 6 March, 5-10.30pm	Inter-Livery Bridge Tournament. More details to come in early January 2023.
Thursday 9 March, 12.30-3.30pm	Clothing of New Liverymen and Court Luncheon at Apothecaries' Hall. Booking will be available from late December (Liverymen only).
Tuesday 14 March, 6.30-7.30pm	Eye-to-Eye: A Day in my Life.
Friday 17 March	United Guilds Service – limited tickets available
Wednesday 22 March, 10am	Society tour of the Garrick Club, Covent Garden.
Tuesday 11 April, 6.30-7.30pm	Eye-to-Eye: Optical Treasures at the British Optical Association Museum at the College of Optometrists
Wednesday 26 April	Livery Dinner at Drapers' Hall. Booking will be available from January (Liverymen only).
Saturday 20 May	Society weekend away in Cardiff
Wednesday 14 June, 12.30-3.30pm	Clothing of new Liverymen and Court Lunch at Apothecaries' Hall (Liverymen only).
Wednesday 21 June	Society tour of the Honourable Artillery Company, City of London.
Monday 26 June	Election of Sheriffs at Guildhall (only Liverymen eligible to vote).
Friday 8 - Sunday 10 September	The Master's Weekend, Kingston upon Thames/Richmond.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** - The Editor would like to thank all those who have written articles and contributed photos to this edition, including Robert Devine, Clive Hanley for his photos on page 15, Gaynor Foulkes-Taylor, Sheila Hope, Lisa Hopkins, Pretty Jetwani, Caroline and James Sheldrick, Andy Sillett (for his photo of the Lord Mayor on page 6), Jenny Tracey, and our Company photographer, Mark Witter.

The Master, Wardens and Court of Assistants would like to thank all our corporate supporters:

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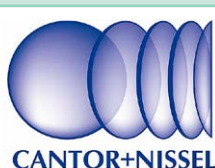
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