



# WATERMAN HOY

The Newsletter of The Company of Watermen and Lightermen of The River Thames

## Volume 4 – Issue 8 A Message from The Clerk

Where is Spring? It cannot come quickly enough. At least the early mornings and late afternoons are getting lighter for longer. Time to plan some outings to Watermen's Hall. If you have not tried the new 5 course taster menu with accompanying wine at River Thames Lunch Club for £57.50 then you should give it a go.

### Forthcoming Events

#### MARCH 2018

- 14th Freeman's Lunch
- 16th United Guilds Service and Luncheon
- 24th Cancer Research UK Oxford-Cambridge Boat Races

#### APRIL 2018

- 4th Quarterly Court and Luncheon
- 13th River Thames Lunch Club
- 26th Freeman's St. George's Day Lunch
- 29th Apprentice's Barge Driving Event

#### MAY 2018

- 3rd Ladies Dinner
- 10th Beating the Bounds Ceremony
- 11th River Thames Lunch Club
- 13th Tudor Pull
- 30th Examining Committee

*Colin C. Middlemiss*

Colin C. Middlemiss  
February 2018

## Doggett's Emblem & Rowing Awards Monday, 29th January 2018

*Winner of the 2017 Ben Woollacott Memorial Sculls at the Henley Sculling Weekend 2017, Joe Thompson, is presented with the trophy by Steve Woollacott.*



*The 2017 Doggett's Coat and Badge winner was Jack Keech – here he is beside the shield where the names of every winner since 1902 are engraved.*



*The award for Most Improved Apprentice at the Henley Sculling Weekend 2017 was Max Carter-Miller. The trophy is the original Doggett's Winners Cup won by George Saunders in 1959 and recently donated to the Company by his family.*

Unfortunately, we were unable to award the Company's fine pennant for the fastest apprentice at the Vesta Scullers Head in 2017. This year it will be held on 1st December so all apprentices who row, don't forget to enter.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Freemen's Lunch – 14th March 2018

This luncheon is open to all Freemen and their business guests. Dress is lounge suits. Lunch is £79 per person, including VAT. Booking information will be out imminently.

### United Guilds Service & Luncheon – 16th March 2018

This St Paul's Cathedral Service was introduced just after the last World War to lift the spirits of Livery Companies and Working Guilds. St Paul's is full and it is always an uplifting Service. A short stroll back to Watermen's for lunch. It is a lovely day out. Space is very limited in the Church and at the Hall so please indicate now if you want to attend. Court members have priority, then recently admitted Craft Owing Freemen.

### Freemen's St. George's Day Lunch – 26th April 2018

To celebrate our Patron Saint come to the St George's Luncheon. Open to Craft Owing Freemen and their business guests. Booking information will be available nearer the time.

### Apprentice's Barge Driving Event – 29th April 2018

This event is to allow apprentices to try barge driving with a couple of Freemen Lightermen aboard. The PV Pocahontas will follow the event and the Company's Barge "Apprentice Lighterman" will hopefully be under oar depending on the numbers of apprentices interested in trying Barge Driving. If you would like to watch the event call Honorary Court Assistant John Potter on 01732-353448.

### Ladies Dinner – 3rd May 2018

This event is for all Freemen and their wives or partners together with any guests you would like to bring as couples. This is a black tie event.

### Beating the Bounds Ceremony – All Hallows Church (Ascension Day) 10th May 2018

This is the traditional medieval marking of the parish bounds to show the children of the parish the limits of where they could go by beating each boundary mark with wands and praying for crops. For All Hallows one boundary mark is the centre of the River Thames. The present-day children are from St Dunstan's College, Catford. Those attending need to gather at All Hallows by the Tower Church in Byward Street by 14.45. The Master, Clerk, Bargemaster, Beadle and Doggett's Winners all take part along with other Masters and Clerks, parishioners, guests and the public at large. There is Festal Evensong at 17.30. All are welcome to witness this unusual ceremony. You are advised to dress anticipating inclement weather as the event is mostly outdoors.

### Tudor Pull – 13th May 2018

Starting with a delightful ceremony at 0900hrs at Hampton Court, the Stele (a piece of old London Water Pipe representing Crown Jewels) is handed to Her Majesty's Bargemaster to take aboard the "Gloriana" for the voyage down to the Tower of London. The procession passes Richmond at 1000hrs with a stop for refreshments and reaches the Tower around 1730hrs. If there is sufficient interest, then Court Assistant Richard Turk of Turks Launches will provide a following boat, phone 020 8546 2434

### Examining Committee – 30th May 2018

Any apprentices/trainees who have, or will shortly, complete their time and have their full BML with the appropriate endorsements, are invited to apply to be examined for the Freedom of the Company. Please contact our Training Administrator, Kelly Lesurf, on 020 7929 7452 (Mon-Wed) or [training@watermenshall.org](mailto:training@watermenshall.org) to make an appointment and request the application form and other requirements.

## Closure of Transport on Water (TOW) office - 11th November 2017



Journeyman Freeman Leonard Edward (Jack) Faram OBE and Journeyman and Craft Owing Freeman Professor Alan Lee Williams OBE, closing the Transport on Water (TOW) office following the merger of TOW with the Thames Barge Driving Trust. TOW had been in operation 42 years, promoting commercial traffic on the Thames. Jack was Honorary Director and Alan was Chairman throughout. The original site had been given to TOW by the LDDC. Past Master Emeritus Sir Christopher Benson DL was very helpful in unravelling the agreement. As a result, TOW was able to donate £25000 to the Thames Barge Driving Trust. The office was duly razed to the ground by the site developers who have impressive plans for the Royal Albert Dock.

*Photo: Ella Whitbread*

## Court of Bindings – 26th January 2018



New Apprentices and Trainees (in alphabetical order): Leon Britton, Ivan Chutorskich, Thomas Creasey, Louis de la Hoyde, Jack Dixon, William Doherty, Chloe Fisher, Jason Fisher, Jack Harper, Ted Jones, Paul Osborne, Alfie Page, Kieran Prentice, Dean Savage, Warren Smith, Harley Williams.

## The Late David S Dunsmore Passed away 19th June 2016 aged 94 years

The Company has recently been in receipt of a significant Bequest from the Estate of the above Craft Owing Freeman.

There must be many who may be wondering, who was David Dunsmore and why did he become involved with the Watermen and Lightermen?

In the early 1960's David was recruited by the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge Owners as Secretary to the organisation and was to serve in this capacity for more than twenty five years. Thus, he had been involved with the lighterage industry from its post war zenith through to the declining years leading up to the mid-80's. In his capacity as Secretary, attending nearly all trade meetings during this period, he amassed a unique knowledge of the month to month challenges facing the industry. He also knew so many of the characters who worked in it, be they Union Secretaries, company bosses or journeymen.

David was a retiring but erudite man, who had achieved an MA degree at Oxford. He found the spoken word difficult, however, as he suffered from a hesitant stammer but with pen in hand his writing flowed and his Minutes of even the most monotonous meetings were always meticulously drafted and invited reading. In addition, he produced all the Annual Reports, submissions to Government and other papers required of the organisation.

David's wife Erica, who pre-deceased him, was a force in local government and had been Mayor of Sutton. There were no children. For many years David commuted to the City on his powerful Norton motorbike. He was a vision to behold in his full leather gear and crash helmet, so different from the unassuming individual sitting at a committee table.

On him becoming a Craft Owing Freeman, David and Erica were great supporters of various company functions until they moved to the West Country and found travelling difficult.

Past Master Emeritus Andrew Howard  
February 2018

## Court Assistant Ted Gradosielski

was “clothed” as a Liveryman to the Wax Chandlers’ Company on Wednesday, 15th December 2017, having joined them in August 2016. Shaking his hand is the current Master of the Wax Chandlers’ Company, Mr. Arthur Davey.

*Photo: Stanley Liu, Beadle of the Wax Chandlers’ Company.*



## Hatches, Matches & Dispatches

*Craft Owing Freeman*, artist, author and naturalist **Nigel Snell** passed away 7th January 2018 aged 81 years. He was a former captain and president of Auriol Kensington rowing club and a member of Leander.

*Journeyman Freeman* **Alan Jennings** passed away 31st January 2018 aged 83 years. Alan was born in West Ham on 8th October 1934 and bound to the Company on 8th May 1951. His master was George Frederick William Jennings. Alan gained his Freedom on 8th May 1956.

*Journeyman Freeman* **Bernard George Spencer** passed away peacefully on 21st January 2018 aged 88 years.

Bernard George Spencer was born in Greenwich on 5th June 1929 in apprenticed on 9th April 1946 to his uncle Benjamin James Alf. Spencer and gained his Freedom on 10th April 1951. His father had been the foreman Lighterman for the Molyseum Lighter Company until his death in 1931. His grandfather had the first steam pleasure boat, the Greenwich Belle. The Spencer family can trace their history working on the River Thames back for over 400 years.

Bernard rowed Doggett's in 1951, which was the first year that all six competitors refused the £20 prize money. Thereafter the race became an amateur rowing event. It was the same year that the Tradesman Rowing Association was amalgamated into the National Amateur Rowing Association. Finally, river people and manual workers were allowed to compete against amateur rowing clubs.

Bernard rowed in the five seat of the famous 1956 crew that raced at the Henley Royal Regatta. Until 1951, professional watermen like this crew were barred from competing in amateur rowing events. The crew consisted of seven lightermen and one docker. Coached by Julius Beresford, father of 1936 Olympic Champion Jack, the crew attracted national press coverage until finally being beaten in the semi-final. This crew led the way for the many Lightermen and Watermen who followed in their footsteps and competed on equal terms with the upper Thames clubs at Henley and for international honours.

Bernard worked for W.J.R. Whitehair Ltd, Union Lighterage and, finally, F. T. Everard. He was a member of the Poplar, Blackwall & District Rowing Club for over 65 years and helped many others in their rowing careers and many to compete for and win the Doggett's Coat and Badge, including his nephew, Martin, and his two sons, Roger and Chris.



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