



# The Worshipful Company of Firefighters

Service, Fellowship, Harmony and Honour

*Summer 2010*



**HRH The Princess Royal receives a cheque from the (then) Master, Geoff Morgan on behalf of The Worshipful Company of Firefighters for the Firefighters Memorial Charitable Trust.**

**Visit our website at: [www.firefighterscompany.org](http://www.firefighterscompany.org)**

# Court In Motion



## Introducing our new Master — Professor David Bland OBE



Our new Master, Prof. David Bland, whilst delighted to be accepting the honour and privilege of being elected Master of the WCoFF is conscious that it is also by default.

2010 was to have been the year of Mastership of our beloved late Chaplain, The Rev David Rhodes whose tragic and shockingly rapid death by liver cancer, devastated our Company last year. Court decided to fill the vacancy with a Past-Master and David was selected.

After an academic career at the University of Sheffield, David was head-hunted to run the Chartered Insurance Institute in 1999. He was introduced to our Company as a guest at our inaugural Carol Service and learnt of the impending demolition of our original office in Aldersgate Street. Through his invaluable help and support we were able to establish our new office at Insurance Hall where David was CEO.

Thereafter, David joined our early Guild and became an active member of Court and was elected to become our Millennium Master. He has also served as a member of the Firefighters Memorial Trust.

David is currently Chair of the Consumer Council for Water, London and SE England and Chair of a couple of small companies. He is also a very active member of City Livery and has been Master of the Worshipful Company of Insurers and is currently the Master of Cripplegate Ward Club.

Outside of work, David, who lives in Wapping, has a retreat in central Slovakia, is a Blackburn Rovers supporter and is a Churchwarden of St. Michael's-in-Cornhill. We wish him a very successful and happy year of office.

## On Reflection - IPM Geoff Morgan reviews his year



This has been the 21<sup>st</sup> year since the Firefighters were first formed as a Guild and I have been privileged to be the 21<sup>st</sup> Master. I have enjoyed it enormously. During the year I have represented the Company or attended meetings on 110 occasions. So what have been the highlights?

The Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace; hosting the St Florian's Banquet and Massey Shaw Charity Dinner; the most successful Fire Industry Charity Ball; weekend visit to the Ironbridge Gorge Museums with 80 other Masters and partners; the trip to Portsmouth to "HMS Phoenix" the Navy's fire training school, then dinner on board "HMS Victory"; presenting our donation to the Firefighters Memorial Trust to The Princess Royal on "HMS Belfast"; attending white-tie Lord Mayor dinners at the Mansion House; installing 23 new Freemen and Liverymen. It has been wonderful to visit so many Livery Halls and to take part in the processions at the Guildhall and St Paul's, proudly dressed in the Master's gown and chain.

So what have we achieved on reaching the age of majority? The Management Board has been introduced and has been effective. Our formal and informal events have been splendid. Our membership has risen to 161, including 100 liverymen and 61 freemen. We have registered for VAT, arranged for payments by Direct Debit and our finances are improving. We are poised to support suitable education programmes in fire and firefighting. A largely new Board of Trustees has taken over from its diligent predecessors. A new initiative was launched with the successful PR and Marketing Working Group formed (responsible for this excellent newsletter).

At the beginning of the year I wanted to see celebration, enjoyment and fellowship. I want to thank the Wardens, Clerk, Chairs of Committees, Officers, members of the inaugural Management Board and the Court for all their contributions and for making it so enjoyable. The mood has been positive and constructive and I detect a renewed sense of purpose and direction. Thank you to all members and I wish the new Master and the Wardens every success for the future.

**Geoff Morgan**  
**Immediate Past Master**



## Court News

### All in a Knight's work. Sir Martin Bonham

It is with great pleasure that we can report that our Clerk has been elevated to the Bonham Baronetcy. It is a title in the Baronetage of the United Kingdom going back to 1852 created for George Bonham, the Governor of Hong Kong. We offer Martin our best wishes and sincere congratulations from all our Company.



### Peter Cowland elected Upper Warden

Peter joined the Middlesex Brigade in 1964, following his father into the Service. He progressed through the ranks to Divisional Officer in the London Fire Brigade before transferring to Hertfordshire in 1988 where he served in the roles of both Divisional Commander and County Senior Fire Safety Officer. He retired after 32 years service in 1996.

Never one to rest for too long, Peter became the Senior Training Officer for the Fire Protection Association (FPA) and then their National Fire Safety Co-ordinator. During that period, he was seconded to British Airways at Heathrow Airport where he trained Flight and Cabin Crew in fire fighting techniques.

Peter joined the WCoFF in 1997; became a Freeman of the City in 1999 and a Liveryman in 2002. He has been married to Lesley for over 40 years and they have 2 daughters and 2 grandchildren

### Michael Harper elected Renter Warden

Born in Barrow-in-Furness and educated at London University, Michael commenced his early career with Vickers Plc.

For over 20 years, Michael was involved in the supply of fire protection and safety equipment to the international market – latterly as Chief Executive of Kidde Plc.

Since retiring, Michael was appointed Chairman of BBA Aviation Plc (Flight Support and Systems for Business and General Aviation) and Vitec Plc (Equipment for the Broadcast and Photographic market). He also serves on the Boards of Ricardo Plc (Automotive Engineering Consultants) and Catlin Plc (Property and Casualty Insurer).



Michael became a Freeman of the WCoFF in 2002, a Liveryman in 2004 and has served on Court since that time. He is married with 5 children and his hobbies include most sports, opera and the ballet.

### Beryl Jeffries elected Under Warden



Beryl studied architecture and was a senior architect with London based practice T.P. Bennett for over 20 years. She was elected a councillor for the London Borough of Wandsworth in 1990 where she served as deputy chairman of the Planning Committee and was appointed one of Wandsworth's representatives on the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority. She was also a local government member on the London Arts Board.

Beryl was Mayor of Wandsworth during the year 1994/95. She retired from the council in 2002, but is still a trustee for a number of local charities. After joining the Company of Firefighters, Beryl became our "First Lady" liveryman in 2002 and subsequently served on the Court of Assistants, becoming Under Warden in Waiting in 2009.

Beryl is a widow with two sons and four grandchildren and, as well as enjoying her family, likes travelling, gardening and the theatre.

# The World of Firefighters

## A terrible fire tragedy

Lets never forget just how dangerous our profession can be. Since our last newsletter ,we have lost firefighters James Shears, 35, and Alan Bannon, 38, whilst tackling a blaze in Southampton at a high-rise block of flats. Both men were full-time firefighters at St. Mary's Station in Southampton. All the residents were rescued.

10 firefighters have died on duty in England between 1997 and the start of 2007, the worst case being in November 2007 when four members of Warwickshire Fire Service died at a burning vegetable packing plant at Atherstone-on-Stour.

Peter Holland, vice president of the Chief Fire Officers' Association said that the deaths in Southampton served as a tragic reminder that fire fighting remains a difficult and dangerous job. "Fire fighting in high-rise buildings particular challenges to fire and rescue services who work closely with housing authorities to help them provide adequate fire precautionary measures. After every serious incident it is imperative that lessons are learned to avoid similar tragedies in the future".



James Shears and Alan Bannon

James leaves two young sons.

Alan leaves a young daughter

*"Losing a colleague is something that touches everyone and something firefighters never get over"* Matt Wrack general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union

## Annual Memorial Service



The Master, Geoff Morgan, Renter Warden Peter Cowland and Beadle John Norris were among a number of Company Members who attended the Firefighter's Memorial Charitable Trust Service of Thanksgiving at their Monument at the National Arboretum in Alwras, Staffordshire.

This annual service, which is attended by representatives from UK Fire and Rescue Services, fire authorities, and the wider Fire Service community, is held to honour the work which UK firefighters undertake in the protection of the community on a daily basis.

The Band of the West Midlands Fire Service opened proceedings by marching to the Monument, followed shortly by a Pipe Band, Standard Bearers and Ceremonial Squads. The Chaplain of the Trust, the Reverend Canon Peter Mortimer MBE, who is also a Freeman of our Company, led the Service. He was supported by Nicholas Rutter, Secretary of the National Fire and Rescue Chaplains Association as well as a number of fire brigade Chaplains from the local area. Ron Singer of AJEX led the Jewish Prayers to help mark the multi-faith role in which firefighters have always served.

Fire and natural disaster do not observe national boundaries and so this year the Trust also recognized the international role played by firefighters. International Search and Rescue Teams (ISAR) from a number of UK Fire and Rescue Services had formed part of the urgent response to the earthquake in Haiti, which had resulted in the deaths of some 250, 000 people. Therefore members of the West Midlands ISAR team, some of whom had helped at the disaster, attended the service and as a special mark of respect 'La Dessalinienne,' the National Anthem of Haiti, was played in addition to our own. After the service floral tributes were laid whilst pipers played the lament "Flowers of the Forest". Coming so soon after the fire in Southampton, at which two firefighters had tragically lost their lives, this was a particularly poignant moment.

Next years service will be held on Sunday 8th May.

## Appeal from Ian Shakespeare running the North Run for Charity

I am a WCoFF Liveryman, aged 60 and am participating in the Great North Half Marathon Run in September. My goal is to raise money for both CLIC and RAFT. My wife is a nurse and we have both witnessed the results of people disfigured by fire.



My sister's eldest daughter was diagnosed with cancer in the mid 90's and CLIC (Malcolm Sargent cancer fund for children as they were formerly known) were absolutely wonderful in their care for the whole family. I always promised that one day I would try to raise some money for them and for RAFT, one of the WCoFF charities. Despite a dodgy knee and ankle, I am determined to complete this event.

May I ask for your support and sponsorship please. As the money raised will be split 50 / 50 between the charities. My fundraising site is:

[www.virginmoneygiving.com/IanShakespeare](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/IanShakespeare)

# Celebrating and Remembering our Firefighters

## Former fireman revisits his old station for his 100th birthday



Charlie Harwood, who served as a firefighter in Tooting during World War Two, recently visited Tooting Fire Station to celebrate his 100th birthday with firefighters from the station's green watch. Charlie was presented with a commemorative firefighter's axe by green watch's youngest firefighter, Mark Whittall, whilst excerpts from his war-time memoirs were read out. Also present in the picture is Station Manager John Day.

Charlie was born in Vauxhall and spent his early life in Balham. He enlisted with the Auxiliary Fire Service in 1939. "I went home from work, had my tea, said goodbye to my wife and reported to Tooting Fire Station".

Charlie spent the war years fighting fires in London, attending many of the major blazes and incidents, including those during the Blitz. Being a firefighter during the War was a tough job, Charlie said: "We worked 120 hours a week and our wages were £3 a week". Of his fire station visit, Charlie said: "I was surprised and delighted to be invited back to Tooting Fire Station, it was wonderful. It was good to meet old friends and present day firefighters and it

brought back many memories. "The gift of the firefighter's axe is very special and is something I had always wanted. I don't consider myself a hero. During the war I was just doing my job".

When asked about the secret of living to 100, Charlie said: "Just being happy".

## The Massey Shaw Fireboat Restoration Project



The Massey Shaw is one of London's un-sung heroes on the Thames. Built in 1935, the fireboat served the London Fire Brigade for many years and also took part in the WWII 'Operation Dynamo' to rescue soldiers from the beaches at Dunkirk. It ferried 500 men to the warships and brought over 100 men back to England.

The boat was named after Sir Eyre Massey Shaw, founder of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. It was built in 1935 on the Isle of Wight, and the powerful pumps were made in Greenwich. One of her last major jobs was the Tate & Lyle factory fire in Silvertown.

The Massey Shaw was designed to navigate all of the bridges along the Thames at any state of the tide. Her powerful pumps allowed her to pump 11 tonnes of water per hour straight from the river and is said to be the only surviving fireboat of her type in Europe.

David Rogers is the director of the Massey Shaw & Marine Preservation Society, a group of enthusiasts who now own and look after the vessel, currently moored at Deptford Creek in south east London. He is keen that the fire fighting community know about the project and although they have been given lottery funding for the restoration, volunteers and funding are always sought. This is one of the charities that the Worshipful Company Charitable Trust supports.

In the early 1900s, the River Thames was served by a fleet of approximately 40 steam fireboats, which were able to pump water directly from the river to fight a blaze. Fireboats were particularly useful for the large fires that broke out in the warehouses and factories along the Thames.

Today, the London Fire Brigade has just two working fireboats.



You can find more information about The Massey Shaw Fireboat by logging onto [www.masseyshaw.org.uk](http://www.masseyshaw.org.uk)



## Out & about with the Firefighters

### Tour of City Livery Halls

A very enjoyable afternoon in pleasant London sunshine saw a group of Firefighters and their friends tour some of the streets in the City, learning about the history and key events in their life and the development of City Livery Companies.

The highlight of our tour was the visit to the Painter-Stainers, where the Beadle invited our Group into their Hall and everyone was given a chance to see the glorious Painted Chamber and the fine works of art, silverware and ancient charters adorning the walls of the Great Hall.

The Beadle was very informative about Livery Companies generally as well as his knowledge on the history and foundation of the Painter-Stainers. We learnt that some of the most famous artists belonged to the company. He also revealed that one time he, inadvertently, mixed up replica silverware (for show) with the real ones and put the replicas into the bank - a fact not noticed for many months!

After departing from Painter-Stainers we were in the excellent hands of City of London Guide, Yasha Beresinger, who proceeded to point out a number of the other Livery Halls and some of the many interesting aspects of the City and its connections with Livery.

The evening was concluded with a supper at the Dr Butlers Head where we dined on Pan Fried Pork Fillet followed by Chef's Crumble, together with the odd glass or two! A most entertaining evening was had by all and it was felt that a repeat walk would be well worthwhile. The pictures above show the group outside the Mercers' Hall and in the Painter-Stainers Hall.



### Visits to HMS Phoenix and HMS Victory



The Company enjoyed a wonderful visit to the Portsmouth area on June 18th, with visits to the fire training establishment at HMS Phoenix and then to a dinner evening on board HMS Victory itself. Organised by Event Chairman Terry Baldwin, Past Master James Blott and Liveryman Karen Eves, who is a Warrant Officer in the Royal Navy, it was a day and a night to remember for those lucky enough to attend.

Our pictures show the group visiting Phoenix and Victory with the Master making presentations of a Company shield of the coat of arms as a thank-you to the key hosts.



# Activities

## Cover Story - The Master presents cheque to HR The Princess Royal



Geoff Morgan, The Master and a number of other members represented the Company of Firefighters at a Royal Reception on board “HMS Belfast” to celebrate the granting of a Royal Charter to the Firefighters Memorial Charitable Trust.

The Trust was founded 20 years ago by its Chairman, Gerry Clarkson, Founder Master of the WCoFF and Colin Livett, Past Master of the WCoFF, is the Deputy Chairman. There is a close association between the Company of Firefighters and the Memorial Trust as a further 7 members of the Company are also Trustees and many liverymen and freemen have become individual members of the Trust. A number were introduced to HRH The Princess Royal during the Reception.

Pictured is The Master presenting a cheque on behalf of the Company to HRH The Princess Royal who is the Patron of the Firefighters Memorial Trust. The donation was from the proceeds of the 2009 Fire Industry Charity Ball organised by Assistant, Bryan Spearman, Past Master, Viv Jones and the Ball Working Group.

## Interschutz 2010



Upper Warden Peter Cowland, acted on behalf of the Fire Industries Association (FIA) in the support of a number of UK exhibitors attending Interschutz 2010 in Leipzig this year. Interschutz has become the world’s largest international fire trade show and is held only every five years. The 2010 show was the largest yet, with over 1350 exhibitors on site, making it the world’s fire brigade capital for the week.

New innovations were on show to demonstrate the future “intervention” capabilities of fire brigades, as well as examples of equipment designed to increase the safety of firefighters and their communities.



The picture on the left shows Upper Warden Peter Cowland meeting Martin Jones of VimpeX who helped sponsor the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service “Extraction Competition Team” who are currently the European and North American Champions.

## Dates for your diary

*2nd September—Combined Golf Day*

*12th September - Firefighters Memorial Service , St. Bartholomew the Great*

*25th September—WCoFF Fire Industry Charity Ball*

*6th October—St. Florian’s Installation Banquet*

*13th November—Lord Mayor’s Show.*

*23rd November—WCoFF Liverymen Dinner.*

*10th December—Carol Service at St. Mary Le Bow.*

## Firex South

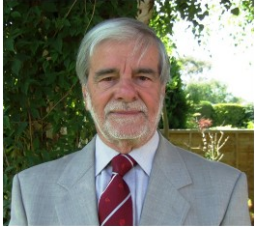


Brian Eves represented the WCoFF at the recent Firex South exhibition in March where he manned a stand promoting the activities and values of the Company.

Thanks to the organisers UBM, a sum of £370 was also raised for the Charitable Trust at a Quiz night.

## Pleased to Meet You

### Bryan Spearman - Under Warden in Waiting



Bryan was born in an Essex village called Pitsea, before it became swallowed up by Basildon New Town, and was educated at Municipal College Southend and Wimbledon Technical College.

Bryan started a career in electrical engineering with the Royal Dutch Shell Company and then into Electronics in the fields of Development, Applications Research, Product Marketing and Sales Management with Philips Electronics. The Company being a major supplier to the Fire, Safety and Communications Industries.

Over the past 20 years he has built and run a Conference Organiser and Event Management Company, operating both in the UK and world-wide. He was made a Freeman in 2004 and Liveryman in 2005. The Events Committee soon enlisted his expertise and he runs a number of events for the Company in particular the Annual Charity Ball, now in its 4th year under his stewardship.

Much of Bryan's time is now spent doing charity work including the Trout and Salmon Fishing Charity in Sussex which takes mentally and physically disabled children fly-fishing. Travel, sea and fly fishing, listening to classical music and cooking almost fill the spare time.

## A letter floods in!

Dear Mr Bonham –

Our Clerk, Colonel Mike Dudding, has circulated your recent newsletter to the Court of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators. As someone who, until relatively recently, lived near to Southwark Fire Station and who has been involved with the Livery for a number of years, may I just say how impressed I was with the report of the action of the LFB crews at the fire at the College of Heralds last year. I hadn't realised, until I read the report, how much consideration had to go into the decision to stop the flames or to minimise the water (and presumably, smoke) damage.

I'm grateful, (with due modesty, on behalf of all Livery Companies) for the work the LFB did that evening but also to the Firefighters' Company for recognising it through the presentation to Deputy Assistant Commissioner Steve Smith later in the year. It really is good to see the benefit the Livery Companies do, and not just in the straight charitable (cash) contributions they make to the City and the world. Please pass on my thanks to your Court.

With best wishes,

Ian Richardson, LL.B, FCIS, Junior Warden, The Worshipful Company of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators

## The 2010 Fire Industry Charity Ball

Saturday 25th September 2010



**£110 per head inclusive of the dinner dance, entertainment, sparkling wine reception and 1/2 bottle of wine**

For a table of 10 persons, and payment made before end of June, the total table cost will be £1000 instead of £1100.

In support of  
The Worshipful Company of Firefighters Charitable Trust

Contact Bryan Spearman on [brandy.promotions@virgin.net](mailto:brandy.promotions@virgin.net) or 01903 783344

Hotel room rates for overnight accommodation inclusive of breakfast have been negotiated at £145 for a standard double and £175 for an executive double  
The booking reference for rooms is 100924FIRE

I hope as many of you will come and support the Company's biggest fund raising event for our Charitable Trust.

**The Ball is co-promoted by the FIA and FIRESA; media partner and sponsor is [info4fire.com](http://info4fire.com)**