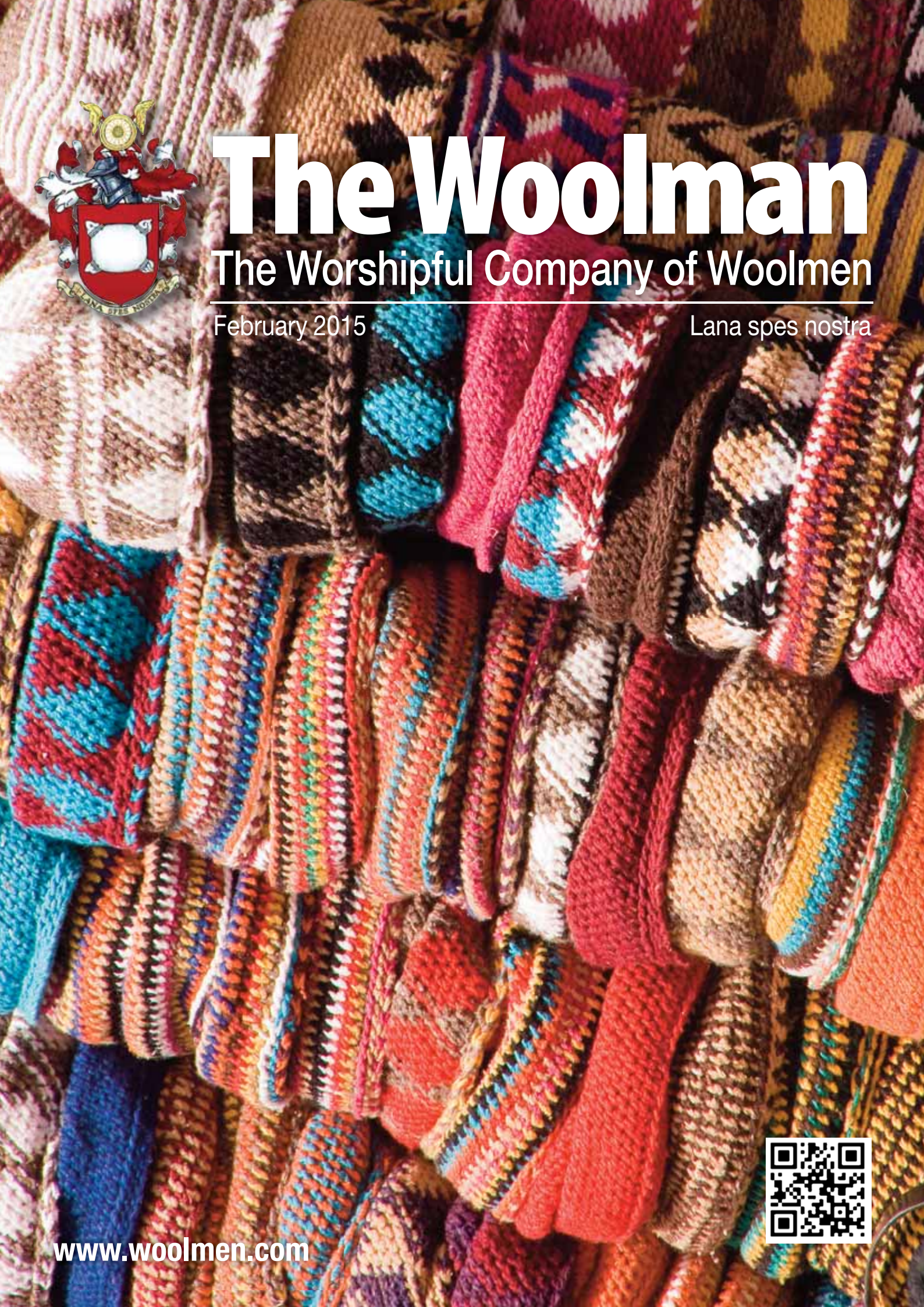

The Woolman

The Worshipful Company of Woolmen

February 2015

Lana spes nostra

www.woolmen.com

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Livery Schools Link Showcase
Barber Surgeons' Hall
4th March

United Guilds Service
St Paul's Cathedral
20th March

The Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch Guildhall
16th April

Installation Dinner
Skinners Hall
29th April

Summer Banquet
Middle Temple
26th June

Visit to Queen's Own Yeomanry, York
25th July

Master's Weekend
25th to 27th September

Sheep Drive
27th September

Civic Dinner
Stationers' Hall
6th November

Alms Court Dinner
Cutlers' Hall
13th Jan 2016

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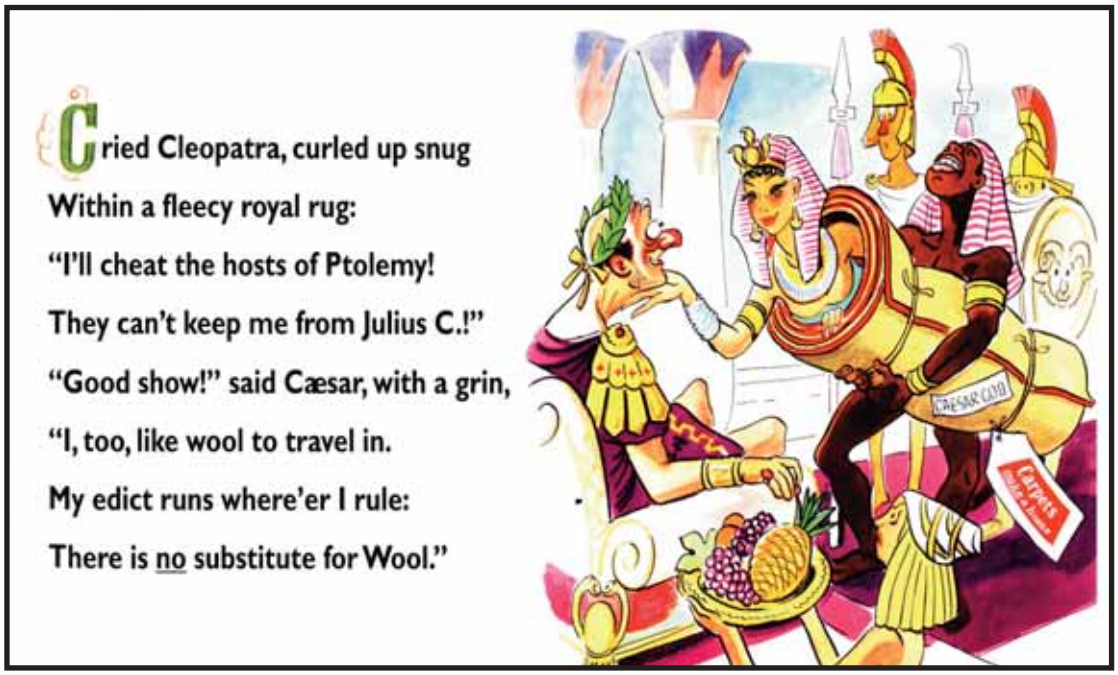


There is no substitute for wool…

We are delighted to implement the idea of Past Master Richard Proctor to serialise the cartoons and poems from the book he produced *There Is No Substitute For Wool*, with acknowledgement and thanks to The Woolmark Company who retain the copyright ownership of the poems. If you can't wait for the next instalment of these amusing advertisements, you can contact the Clerk to purchase your own copy of the collection.

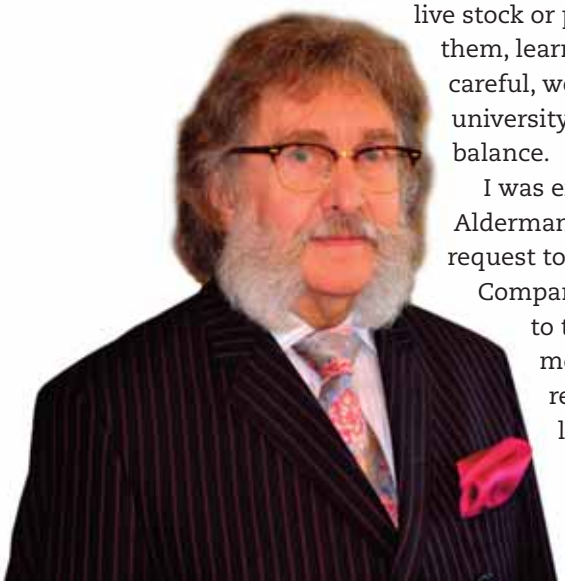
With acknowledgement and thanks to The Woolmark Company who retain the copyright ownership of the poem

Welcome

This issue focuses quite heavily on Education and the Livery's Charitable Giving. As well as the prizes and medals awarded to students at the Civic Dinner, several awards have been made to assist students conduct research for their MAs. Patricia Hopewell and Kirsty Brabin have produced reports for us which are included in this issue.

We are again promoting the Livery to secondary schools through a stand at the Livery Schools Link Exhibition and Liveryman Rev. Peter Hullah has been charged with heading up an education committee to see what other assistance we can give to secondary schools.

However, junior schools appear to have been left out of the present scheme. Many children do not know where the clothes they wear or food they eat comes from. Everything comes from the shop but the true source is not known or understood. I am sure many readers like myself saw a 'Country File' programme two months ago, which stated School Farms could be under threat. The presenter, Tom Heap, reported that due to recent educational reforms, these initiatives could soon disappear. This stems from the points system, where subjects taught are given status, and 'Rural Studies' are not considered important. Why not? Does all learning have to be in the classroom or examinable? Yet every day, more and more pressure is being put on the curriculum; what should we be teaching in schools? I fully understand the predicament facing schools... Ofsted results, league tables, but let us think about the wider issues; what is education for? School farms and City Farms can play an important role in education. It has been proved that children who grow their own produce e.g. vegetables are more likely to eat them. Children who look after live stock or pets, and learn how to care for them, learn responsibility. If we are not careful, we will become academic and university obsessed, but there should be a balance.



I was extremely pleased that Liveryman, Alderman Sir David Wootton, came at my request to give the first Worshipful Company of Woolmen sponsored lecture to the Bradford Textile Society last month. This was gratefully well received and it was good to see local Woolmen support the event.

Liveryman Bill Skidmore
Editor

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Master's Report

> We are incredibly lucky as a Livery Company to not only have such an ancient and important history from 1180 but to have such a vibrant global industry that is worth $80Bn at retail values.

The last three months have been exciting and interesting times representing you as your Master. Each week I have proudly attended as many as 8 events on your behalf. As I commented at the Alms Court Dinner this has had an adverse effect on my promise to Carolyn to try and eat a healthy diet – but I can start next week!

Whilst mentioning the Alms Court, can I thank all of you who attended and your kind messages of support. We filled Saddlers' Hall to capacity with a record 147 Liverymen and guests! I apologise that we were unable to accommodate some applications after the closure date.

Your Company continues to work hard to achieve the aims that we have in our Three Year Rolling Strategy. A strength over recent years is that your Court, Wardens and Masters have set long term goals for the Woolmen. We have stayed on that path as each year sees a new Master who works, in their own way, to achieve those long term ambitions.

The Lord Mayor, Alan Yarrow, set out his aims at the start of his year – 'Create Wealth, Give Time, Support People'. It closely reflects the Woolmen's longer term ambitions – 'Support our Industry, Give Time, Support People and become the 'Livery of Choice' for those wanting to join a vibrant, historic and innovative Livery Company.

I am delighted, through the efforts of all the Livery, that the number of people who want to know more about the Woolmen and join us continues to grow. Our new full time Clerk, Major Steve Wake is there to help you with any friends or family you think might be interested to know more about the Woolmen. We are fortunate, as one of the ancient Livery Companies, to unusually have been granted an additional limited number of Liverymen places, by the Court of Alderman, to expand our activities – but then wool continues to innovate!

It has struck me in talking to new Liverymen that they want to make a contribution and 'Give Time' as well as enjoying our splendid dinners and social events. It was always said that 'the more you put into something the more you get out of it' – something I have found to be very true when I consider the Woolmen. There are more and more ways you can 'Give Time' and enjoy the Livery!

Our City Wool Project initiative, which we launched in April 2014, continues to gain traction and support. Our aim is to 'Create Wealth' and use our individual Financial and Professional Service experience to help companies and individuals in our $80Bn global wool industry – whether that is assisting a large company or helping a start up. We have the expertise to 'Give Time' and make a difference by connecting wool companies with City expertise. I am delighted to see some of the interesting companies we are engaging with and helping them grow. Gill Wilson is now our City Wool Development Officer and Gill would be happy to talk to you about how you can help. The Lord Mayor fully supports the unique City Wool Project and you should expect to see it mentioned in his speeches – both here and abroad!

Talking about Lord Mayor's Speeches, I am sure you would be delighted to hear that our own Court Assistant and the Lord Mayor in 2012, Sir David Wootton, recently gave a lecture in Bradford entitled 'Why the Lord Mayor of London is all about Wool'! Quite right too!

We are blessed amongst the Liveries with a fantastic mother product. It is often taken for granted, but its usage is extraordinary. For example in the neo natal Unit of Chelsea and Westminster Hospital the only fibre allowed next to those incredibly delicate 26 week old skins is Merino Wool – and we want to see how we can help them with research to extend that use for all age groups.

Our aim of 'Supporting People' continues to widen its activities. We made a substantial contribution to the Lord Mayor's Charities from our annual London Bridge Sheep Drive, (Sept 27th this year), and that goes to help disadvantaged people. This year it will be focussed on disabled children.

Our efforts with helping young shearers learn a skill and develop a career has helped youngsters from seriously disadvantaged backgrounds.

We have just launched our Education Group under the leadership of the experienced educationalist Liveryman The Rt.

Photo: Gerald Sharp Photography

Reverend Peter Hullah. Our first meeting is planned for the 9th April. We are going to meet with the Livery Schools Link to see how we can help them by giving a little of our time and expertise. This is not all about teaching! One request was just helping six formers for their first interview for a job. So we all have something to offer! Please get in touch with the Clerk if you want to know more. As part of our support for LSL Liveryman Bill Skidmore and his wife Jean will fly the Woolmen flag on our great stand at the brilliant City Schools Careers exhibition at Barber Surgeons Hall on March 4th.

Finally on the theme of 'Giving Time, Support People', our Woolmen award- winning Journeymen aged between 20 and 30 want Mentors to give them some life experience advice as they go through this important ten years of their lives – and if they are like our sons they will probably listen to someone else other than their own parents! A cup of coffee twice a year is all that is required. I hope some of you feel you can make that small contribution.

I must finally mention the work of your Livery Committee. They have put together a full programme for the year, covering so many activities from specialist City tours to golf to inter livery clay shooting! Full details are on the website.

So I now continue for my last fully packed three months as Master. I hope my message on our ambitions above have stimulated you to get involved in some small way. I hope to see you at the wonderful Installation Service and Dinner on April 29th when I pass the baton to Master Elect John Brewer – but book early! ■

Richard and Carolyn Excell

Publications
available from The Clerk

A Short History of the Worshipful Company of Woolmen
by Gordon Huelin PhD FSA

The Woolmen's Tale
by David Buirski

"There Is No Substitute For…"
by Past Master Richard Proctor

A Layman's Commentary on The Register of Freedom Admissions of the Worshipful Company of Woolmen
by Lt Col (retd) WJH Clark

Woolmen's Umbrellas, Scarves and Ties

The Clerk has a stock of Woolman's umbrellas, scarves and ties for sale.

Woolmen's Scarves	£30
Woolmen's Umbrellas	£25
Woolmen's Ties	£30
Ladies silk scarves	£20
Silk bow ties	£15

Please make cheques payable to the Worshipful Company of Woolmen, and arrange collection with the Clerk from Painters' Hall; this is best achieved at the Installation Dinner. Telephone the Clerk for details: 01525 270116

Our new Clerk, Major Steven John Charles Wake

Steve joined the Royal Army Pay Corps on his 17th birthday directly from Shooters Hill Grammar School, and was trained as a Military Accountant.

As a young Pay Clerk he was assigned every couple of years to different parts of the Army. Units included: The Welsh Guards, Royal Artillery, Regimental Pay Office Chester, 5 Armoured Field Ambulance, 22 Engineers, Royal Corp of Transport, Surveyors, REME and 21 Special Air Service. Postings included Northern Ireland, Germany, Denmark, Greece, Romania, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, USA, Belize, Bosnia and London, to name but a few. He was later commissioned into the Royal Green Jackets before being transferred back to the Adjutants General Corps on promotion.

In 2003 he was appointed to the Queen's Body Guard, Yeoman of the Guard and is still active to this date, covering several Royal Duties including Investitures, State Openings of Parliament, State Visits, Ceremonies of the Garter and Bath, Garden Parties and more.

Married to Janette (Jan) they have 4 boys. The family home is in Bexleyheath, Kent, 35 minutes from the City. Jan is a Senior Administrator for Charles Stanley.

Steve enjoys most sports. He is an active member of Dartford Golf Club and has represented the Army at most levels at Golf, Football, Tennis, Hockey, Cricket, Swimming and Squash. He is a keen gardener and has an allotment across the road from his house. He has a keen sense of humour. Steve has worked with the reserves for the last decade, building and training teams to a high standard enabling them to be able to support personnel in areas of conflict.

Steve was awarded the Chief of The General Staff (CGS) Commendation in the New Year's Honours List for Distinguished Service. ■

Photo: Gerald Sharp Photography

Major Steven John Charles Wake

With Mo Farah MBE after his investiture

Civic Dinner

Our Civic dinner, this year, was celebrated at Painters' Hall with seventeen of our Tertiary Education Award Winners. What a glamorous occasion this was with these sparkling and very stylish young people from the world of design, fashion and manufacturing.

However, apparently this caused some confusion in the mind of one of the visiting Masters. He wrote, following the event, that it was his first away dinner as a new Master and for the first part of the dinner he was much flummoxed and confused looking around the Hall and trying to work out how so many of the rather elderly Woolmen, male and female, had such gorgeous young wives or good looking young husbands! All became clear, when after an excellent meal, entertainment by students from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the toasts, the Master presented the Academic Achievement Awards.

The Master urged the students to grasp with both hands the opportunities afforded by the contacts they had made that evening. He said it was important that the Livery is supporting students. The Woolmen have responded to their need for support and mentoring by creating the Journeyman category for the Livery. All our Award winners can become Journeymen and we aim to support them between 20 and 30 with a mentor Liveryman through the City Wool Project. It is an easy way to offer help within the Livery. In return they have volunteered to start our own Twitter and Facebook activity. I know the incoming Young Master is looking forward to that innovation. Rebecca Kelly from Woolmark, a past winner of a Woolman Prize, gave the vote of thanks from the students.

Peter Meredith proposed the toast to the guests who included the Masters of several other Livery companies, representatives from Woolmark and the Campaign for Wool, our student award winners and our guest speaker, Sir Alexander Lockwood Smith KNZM.

Sir Lockwood is the current High Commissioner of New Zealand to the United Kingdom. He served as a Member of Parliament from 1984 and among other government roles he served as Minister of Agriculture, Minister for International Trade, and Associate Minister of Finance until his retirement to pursue diplomatic roles in 2013

He told us things have changed in the New Zealand wool industry. Whereas there were 70 million sheep and 3 million people some years ago, the number of sheep have more than halved, to 30 million, while the number of people have increased to 4.5 million. The balance of trade has also changed: originally most came to Britain and Europe with only 22% going to China but now 55% goes to China. There is also more emphasis on the tractability of the wool. The 'Laneve', Wools of New Zealand, trade mark identifies products which are made from 100% natural fibres with all of the wool being traceable through transparent supply chains back to the farmers who grow it. However, there is also a need for more research and development and innovation if wool is to hold its place in the market. ■

"The Master urged the students to grasp with both hands the opportunities afforded by the contacts they had made that evening.

The Master and Prizewinners

Photo: Gerald Sharp Photography

New Liverymen

Chris Cardwell

John Hornby

Margaret Miller

Chris Cardwell

Chris was born in 1975 and grew up in Cobham in Surrey, with 4 years overseas in Singapore. He now lives in East Sheen, London with his wife Lucy and two children, Annabel and Clarissa. He went to Hampton School (1988–1993) and then onto Manchester University to read Pharmacology, graduating in 1997.

After university, Chris decided to change direction from Pharmacology and became a management consultant and is now Managing Director of BCS Consulting, a UK based firm focused on Financial Services clients. He holds a Diploma in Company Direction and is a member of the Institute of Directors.

Outside work, he enjoys living close to the open spaces of Richmond Park, is a keen cook and enjoys travel, shooting, good wine and watching the local rugby teams.

Chris is very pleased to become a Liveryman, and looks forward to meeting more members of the Company at future events.

John Hornby

John was born in Yorkshire, educated at Loretto School in Scotland, finishing with a diploma in printing management in Leeds. He joined the family jobbing printing company in 1970, which grew into the Lettershop Group, one of the leading printing and direct mail companies in Europe. They provided direct mail and sales promotion for most leading supermarkets and major retail groups in the UK. A European division of the business was developed in 1990, employing 30 people in France. This was sold in 2010. He retired in 2013 on the sale of The Lettershop Group to York Mailing Group.

John is a founder member of the Institute of Direct Marketing, Chairman of the Direct Marketing Association in the North of England, and President of Ben Rhydding Sports Club. He is currently Chairman of Redtag – a full service marketing agency based in Cirencester, The Leeds Wall – an indoor climbing centre based in Leeds and also Headland Multi Media – an internet design company based in Leeds and Nottingham.

He is an active member of Ilkley Golf Club, a keen gardener and fell walker: Married to Liz, with five children and four grandchildren.

Margaret Miller

Margaret Miller was born in 1936 and educated as a scholarship pupil at Bradford Girls Grammar School. She continued her education by gaining Company Secretarial and Marketing training and joined Knightsbridge Furniture in 1959 with the aim of developing a Contracts Division for the Company. Previously Knightsbridge had specialised in the manufacture of seating for the retail market, but due to the success of the contracts sector, made this their sole market, as it continues today.

In due course Margaret became Sales Director and Managing Director and today she is Chairman of Knightsbridge and the other companies in the Furniture Productions (Contracts) Ltd Group, which has interests in property as well as furniture.

Being "born and bred" in Bradford, Margaret has always been steeped in the textile industry, all her family having worked in various sectors.

Margaret became a Freeman of the Furniture Makers' Company in 1981 and, when Rules permitted females, was admitted to the Livery in May 1985. She has subsequently served on various Committees and was elected to the Court in 2005, becoming the first female Master on 12 May 2008.

From 1980 to 2001 Margaret was a Trustee of Bradford's War on Cancer, raising money to fund research at Bradford University and for the treatment of patients at Bradford Royal Infirmary. At the end of this period the Trust handed over some £4 million to Cancer UK.

She is a Director of the British Contracts Furnishing Association, a Council Member of the Furniture Industry Research Association and Joint Chairman of the Westminster Dining Club and splits her time between Yorkshire and London. When time allows, other interests include visiting art galleries and exhibitions and collecting works of art with a particular interest in Venice.

Paul Charmatz

Paul grew up in London and now lives in Chamonix, France with his wife Nathalie, where he spends his weekends, whilst working in London during the week.
He graduated from Loughborough with a Sports Science and Economics degree, and later attended Insead in Fontainebleau, where he completed an Executive MBA.

He has held senior executive jobs in the Business Information and Payments world, including SVP Europe at Dun and Bradstreet , Managing Director at Payzone and Managing Director at Camelot, where much of his time was spent in Africa. Paul is currently CEO of the RM Group and Mossack Fonseca UK, as well as various non executive directorships.

He is actively involved with the charity Kidsco. Weekends are spent in the mountains, skiing and mountain biking. He has a passion for great food, great restaurants ballet, art and opera.

Barry C Gasper

Graduated from Cranfield Institute of Technology with an MSc in mechanical engineering, is a European Engineer, Chartered Engineer, Fellow of the Energy Institute and Institution of Mechanical Engineers. Court Assistant and Almoner of the Worshipful Company of Engineers.

Founder and Managing Director of Kent Engineering Services Ltd, which is a technical consultancy working for the MOD and UK power generation industry. Owner of a Property Letting Business. Has forty-one years professional engineering experience and contributions in education, advanced engineering and research in aerospace, electricity generation, nuclear power, scientific instrument development and defence ordnance engineering. Principal advisor to the MOD Ordnance Board and the Defence Ordnance Safety Group, on weapon system safety and mechanical engineering issues, associated with the majority of the UK weapon systems. Author of technical publications including UK National, NATO and International Defence Standards. Founder and chairman of international conferences and the Dynamic Testing Agency.

Married to Gillian with two grown-up children and a keen supporter of rural and artistic life in Suffolk. Many years of community service, including Parish Councillor and Chairman for Luddesdowne and Burstall Villages for twenty eight years.

I am delighted to have been Clothed as a Woolman at the Alms Court.

David Gold

David Gold has been Head of Public Affairs for Royal Mail Group since 2010, and has seen the company through a fair few political challenges in that time. He was appointed to help steer the Postal Services Bill through Parliament and has grappled with complex regulatory challenges and the flotation in 2013.

Before joining the almost 500 year old postal service he was Director of Marketing for the Brighton College family of schools, but his early career always suggested that he would work in a political sphere. Starting out working for Backbench MPs in Parliament he was appointed to William Hague's Private Office when he became Conservative Party Leader. He left there to work in political consultancy and has stood for Parliament twice himself – though will be taking a back seat in 2015!

Away from work, David enjoys evenings at Saddler's Wells and regular theatre trips or walking his pug, Winston. David is involved in a number of charities as an Ambassador for Children's Air Ambulance and a Trustee of the British Postal Museum & Archive. He sits on the Advisory Board of Kids Count and is a keen supporter of Battersea Dogs & Cats Home.

Paul Charmatz

Barry C Gaspar

David Gold

David Wood has also been clothed since our last edition

Livery visit to the Fashion Textile Museum

Thea Porter. Maudie James modelling a multi-layered silk chiffon skyscraper print dress in 1970. Photograph by Patrick Hunt. Courtesy of the Venetia Porter collection / Image © V&A Photographic Studio

Following the Alms Court Dinner a group of Liverymen and guests took advantage of being in London to visit the Knitwear exhibition at the Fashion Textile Museum. For most people it was their first visit to this gem of a museum. For some, it brought back memories of sagging, wet wool swimsuits, and hand knitted jumpers, but all were amazed at the range of knitwear on display; early swimsuits, Channel twin sets, Fair Isle pullovers, glamorous cocktail wear, pop and punk influenced garments and intricate, form fitting garments by modern designers like Julien MacDonald.

Afterwards the group retired to Tanners for lunch and time to discuss the exhibition and the museum with Celia Joicey, the Head of the Museum, and learn a little about coming exhibitions and future plans. I was very pleased to be seated next to Liveryman Martin Olley's grand - daughter Beatrice and to discuss her future study options. I never get tired of discussing Textile Education with potential students. ■

Bill Skidmore

New Exhibitions 2015

Thea Porter, Bohemian Chic

6th February – 3rd May

From Syria to Soho, Thea Porter's (1927-2000) glamorous designs introduced 'Bohemian Chic' to 1960's London. Her shop, in Greek Street, opened in 1966 and instantly drew rock and film stars, from the Beetles to Pink Floyd; Elizabeth Taylor to Faye Dunaway; Barbara Streisand to Diana Ross and Princess Margaret to the Empress of Iran.

Rayne Title (Detail) Caradog Williams, British Vogue March 1958
© The Conde Nast Publications Ltd

Riviera Style. La Plage de Calvi, Corse 1928. Roger Broders/ Private Collection/ Photo © Christie's Images/Bridgeman Images

Riviera Style Resort and Swimwear since 1900

22nd May – 29th August

From the English seaside to the Côte d'Azure, Riviera style celebrates fashion at its most fun. With swimsuits and sarongs and brightly patterned beach cover-ups the exhibition brings together over 100 years of clothing worn in and near the sea. Exhibition highlights include Edwardian bathing dresses, knitted swimsuits, barely there lycra and a 21st century burkini. The exhibition also highlights the contribution of the UK's design education training and technology to today's global fashion industry.

Rayne Shoes for Stars

22nd May – 29th August

Explore a century of sensational British shoes made from extraordinary materials and worn by the world's most glamorous women including Vivien Leigh, Marlene Dietrich and Brigitte Bardot. Awarded three Royal Warrants, Rayne has made shoes for the Queen including her wedding shoes. Over 100 examples also reveal the talent of designers ranging from Norman Hartnell, Bruce Olfield and Mary Quant to current designer Laurence Decade.

Dyeing for blue

> In my experience wool dyed with woad, (Isatis Tinctoria), from Southern Europe gives a softer blue than the Asian indigo, the latter being richer and more vibrant.

Nottingham, where I was raised and began my working life as a lingerie designer, was the manufacturing centre for lacemaking from the early 19thC. Lace and lingerie were natural partners and made the city famous until the 1970's when, through economic expediency, lingerie manufacturing declined and production went overseas.

Through my work in lingerie design I was naturally drawn to the delicate, tactile qualities of silk. Later on I worked in the developing world and continued working with silk. Sometimes I used heavier textured silks for fashion products, for example noil, taken from the innermost part of the cocoon, with its short fibres and rough texture, or tussah silk from worms fed on leaves other than mulberry, which when woven has an uneven appearance.

Silk satin lined woven wool scarf in two greys with

Experience in Bangladesh, with an NGO training young people in fashion technology, stimulated a desire to make cloth. I subsequently returned to England and took a fast-track degree in textile design (Chelsea College of Art and Design, 1996-1998), specialising in weave. For many years I continued to use silk in my weaving, later on adding wool, preferring natural fibres to create soft, warm luxurious scarves and shawls.

I have been interested for some time in the Bronze Age; I am particularly drawn to the domestic pottery of the period and the simple marks made on the pots. I made several felt vessels inspired by prehistoric pottery in the British Museum. The felt pieces are made from the natural colours of the sheep – Gotland, Shetland and the coarse, dark fibres of the Black Welsh sheep.

The yarns used in Bronze Age weaving were wool and bast fibres such as flax and nettle. The amazing collection of woven textile fragment finds from the Hallstatt salt mines in Upper Austria give an insight to the sophistication of textile production at that time. During study for my MA I have researched the methods and tools used to spin, dye and weave the cloth.

Hence the change from using silk to wool as my favoured yarn for weaving, as its present day production within the agricultural cycle delivers food for sustenance, cloth for body covering and warmth, and nourishes the land for future generations.

Recently I have been using a fine 2/20's worsted wool, (usually used for suiting), where the short fibres are removed, and the long staple fibres lie in parallel. When spun the resulting yarn is smooth with a sheen. Using natural dyes, especially woad, (indigo blue), and weld, (brilliant yellow), the resulting woven cloth is extraordinarily soft and supple.

In my experience wool dyed with woad, (Isatis Tinctoria), from Southern Europe gives a softer blue than the Asian indigo, the latter being richer and more vibrant. Dyeing with woad has its problems; as with its Asian cousin,(Indigofera Tinctoria), it is insoluble in water. In ancient times a fermentation method using stale urine or madder roots would have been used to remove the oxygen from the vat but today chemicals are used. When taking a hank of wool out of the dye solution, initially pale yellow – green, it turns blue as it oxidises. Little wonder that in ancient times practitioners in natural dyeing were thought to have magical powers.

Dyeing with woad can be unpredictable and its preparation time consuming, as William Morris opined 'the art of dyeing is a difficult one … matching a colour by means of it is an agreeable but anxious game to play …' however, this has its own charm. If a perfectly uniform colour is expected and desired it can be very disappointing, but the very nature of natural dyeing is

Felt vessel inspired by Bronze Age pottery

special for its individuality. William Morris also felt strongly that mass production would ultimately result in the loss of the essence of small scale dyeing.

Fortunately, today this is not the case, woad production has not died out and the call for woad dye and related products are growing in popularity in a discerning market, reinforcing small-scale fabric production for knit and weave. Ian and Bernadette Howard diversified their farm into woad production and fields of woad can be seen growing at the Woad Centre in Dereham, Norfolk. www.thewoadcentre.co. uk

Although the market for fast fashion grows exponentially, there is a flourishing movement towards change. Recycling and resale, through the Internet, is booming and smart charity shops are increasingly savvier in their presentation. As global resources diminish a call for slower production is growing. Through education, a fresh look at how our clothes are made and the processes involved, responsible change will take place.

I would like to thank the Worshipful Company of Woolmen for their kind generosity enabling me to purchase wool yarns and materials towards my MA project. ■

Patricia Hopewell

2/20's worsted wool yarn resist-tied with cling film and thread in preparation for weaving (Editor I think Ms Hopewell means dying)

Since completing her MA Patricia has been invited by the Archaeological Department of Cambridge University to give a woad dyeing workshop as part of the prehistory day of the Festival of Ideas programme. Further to this she will be writing a paper at the suggestion of Susanna Harris, PhD, (ERC Research Associate, PROCON Project, Institute of Archaeology, University College London) and Dr. Margarita Gleba (ERC Senior Research Associate, McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge). She has also been asked by Margarita Gleba to give occasional demonstrations to MA students in the Archaeological Department at Cambridge.

Shuttle to Shetland: a weaver's journey

The Shetland Islands

Kirsty Jean Brabin

> Before I began to weave the collection, careful consideration was taken to create a truly authentic Shetland fabric.

Myself weaving my final master's degree collection on a 24 shaft AVL loom at Global Yell's studio in July 2014.

My fascination with Shetland began in May last year; I'd recently completed a bachelor's degree at Chelsea College of Art and Design and like many graduates, I set about discovering my next challenge. I began a four month post as Global Yell's Weaver in Residence and was leaving London for Shetland. As I've always lived in cities and didn't entirely know what to expect.

Arriving on the ferry in Lerwick, I was welcomed by a small but vibrant town, completely juxtaposing my premature thoughts of the rustic and wild. But as I drove north away from the town, I felt increasingly inspired by the fusion of colours and the beauty intertwined within the voes. I was instantly hooked. I admired the burnt reds and orange tones within the sunsets, reflectively glistening in the water, Basta Voe was a stones throw away from the little croft I called my home for the summer. My woven samples encapsulated tones of the hidden coast, the acid greens in the seaweed at Breckon and the wild pinks dotted along Hermaness's coastline.

Yet colour wasn't all that motivated me. I became interested in the history of the tweed industry and the patriotic locals trying to sustain it. I began to understand the importance of preserving the identity and traceability of tweed as an iconic Shetland fabric as I found cultural heritage provided an automatic sense of unity and belonging. In saying this, the weave industry in Shetland lives by this narrative and when discussing its past with the people of Yell, textile stories are shared and bonds reignited. I wanted to find a way to culminate my passion for Shetland's landscape, people and weave heritage into a woven collection.

I had caught the Shetland bug and although I returned to London to begin a master's degree, Shetland's tweed industry organically became the core of my research. A year after leaving Yell I returned three times, the first of which was kindly funded by the Worshipful Company of Woolmen. The sole purpose of this trip was to gather research for my academic paper entitled *"The Shetland Islands: Can the Tweed Industry be Revived and Sustained by Adopting Contemporary Paradigms?"* While there I conducted a series of personal interviews, documenting memoirs and opinions regarding the islands

Two of my final interior pieces photographed at Richmond Park, Surrey.

textile history. My most endearing interview was with retired Hillswick weaver Jackie Edwardson, the Uncle of a woman I became good friends with whilst living in Yell. Driving out to visit Jackie at his home in Haylor, following a meandering road which was new to me, I became galvanized all over again by my surroundings and completely understood where Jackie had gathered his artistic inspiration. A humble but amazingly interesting man told me tales of a once booming tweed trade, offering me a personal insight into the everyday life of a weaver. From the looms used, to the working conditions and of course the banter, my time with Jackie and other Shetlander's alike gave me glimpse of the past, which was poignant to my research. Recalling memories regarding pay, Jackie told me, "When we started weaving to begin with (1954) I was on two and six an hour which would be eight hours for a pound!" He continued, "Well then eventually they went over to piece work, paid by the length of tweed woven, which was a lot better but it still wasn't a good wage, there was nothing really in it, if you wanted a reasonable wage you'd be having to be going something I can tell you!"

My written explorations and studio practice were synchronal as my holistic approach to design was apparent in my final collection. Before I began to weave the collection, careful consideration was taken to create a truly authentic Shetland fabric. Using a palette inspired by unobvious tones, I created a unique, gradient, landscape inspired warp. Patterns used were enthused by forms from Nordic objects found at Shetland archaeological sites and aerial views of prehistoric Norse settlements. Ultimately, material use was extremely important and choice of yarn was a critical aspect of the designs as wool is such a dominant fibre in Shetland. All wool for the collection was sourced from the islands only mill, Jamieson's. Another supporting factor was the collection being hand-woven, by myself in the studio where my passion for the isles originally flourished.

The success of my degree show is indebted to the Worshipful Company of Woolmen as their support aided me immensely in gathering primary research thus building a strong foundation for my academic and practical research. ■

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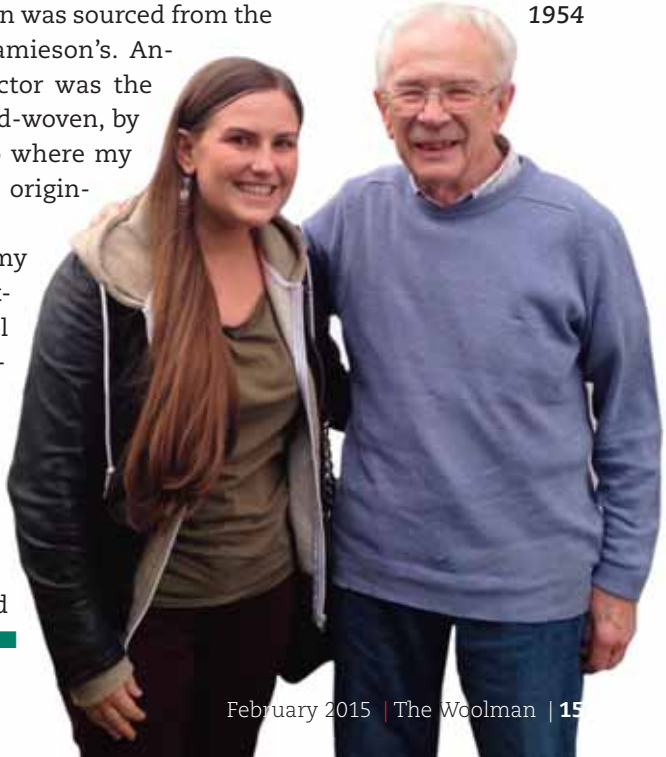

Myself and Jackie Edwardson, a retired Hillswick weaver who began working at the shed 1954

Alms Court Dinner

> The Hall stood on Westchepe, between Cheapside and Gutter Lane until 1666 when it was totally destroyed in the Great Fire of London.

The Alms Court Dinner this year was held at Sadlers' Hall in the heart of the City of London, a few yards from St Paul's Cathedral. A Sadlers' Hall has occupied this site for over 600 years.

The original Hall was built in the late 14th Century but over the centuries this site has been beset by disasters, including the Great Fire of London and the Blitzkrieg. William de Lincolne, who was one of the four Saddlers elected in 1362 to safeguard the ordinances of the Guild, bequeathed the sum of 10 marks to the Saddlers of London on condition that they built a common hall for their use. The Hall stood on Westchepe, between Cheapside and Gutter Lane until 1666 when it was totally destroyed in the Great Fire of London.

The second Hall was built on the same site in 1670, with much financial pain, as fire insurance was unknown then. It too was destroyed by fire, in 1821, due to an accident in a nearby building.

Photo: Gerald Sharp Photography

The Master and Wardens with Baroness Byford and Carolyn Excell

The third Hall rose from the ashes in 1822, thanks to the insurance cover provided by the Royal Exchange and Hand-in-Hand insurance companies. It survived until 29th December 1940, when it was one of a number of Halls destroyed as the result of large-scale air attacks on the City of London during the Nazi Blitz of the Second World War.

After the War the Corporation of London carried out extensive replanning. The Saddlers' lost much of its original medieval freehold through compulsory purchase orders. With the loss of its former frontage on Cheapside, the new Hall had to be built on what remained of the Company's land. Nevertheless, the magnificent mansion house, built in classical style between 1956/58, stands on part of the original site. The Hall is furnished with period furniture and paintings which provide an elegant background for the display of the Company's treasures, the earliest of which date from the 16th century.

After an excellent dinner we were entertained to a selection of Opera by, Eliza Safjan, Marie Bingham and Lukasz Klimczak from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Pieces included arias from Carmen, Don Giovanni and the Magic Flute.

The Rt. Rev Peter Hullah proposed the toast to the guests who included His Excellency, The Ambassador of Korea, S Lin, a number of Masters of other Liveries, Ian Hartley from the British Wool Marketing Board, John Thorley from the Campaign for Wool and Peter Lord CBE from Aardman Animations, Executive Producer of 'Shaun the Sheep'.

The Principal Guest was Baroness Hazel Byford DBE DL, a Conservative member of the House of Lords. Lady Byford is President of LEAF and Leicestershire Clubs for Young People and a Patron of several rural organisations; also immediate Past Master of the Farmers Company. She told the story of the rise of Byfords Knitwear, started by her father in law in 1919, when Donald Byford, the youngest of the family, set up his business making socks in Leicester in one room with two machines and a staff of two. In 1923 Donald Byford visited America and eventually the firm developed its own sales and distribution organization, maintaining stocks of socks in New York to service customers in the USA and Canada. In 1924 Byford built a factory on the fringe of the city. Backed by extensive advertising the firm enjoyed further success, selling under its own brand name *Byfords* in the UK and world wide. Following the war there was a shortage of workers in Leicester and in response a factory was set up in Maltby, Yorkshire. This was a joint enterprise with the famous Aristoc Company who made women's fine-gauge stockings. In 1952 the Byford organisation added another string to its bow when it began the manufacture of men's sweaters. In a comparatively few years Byfords became recognised as a leader in the field of well-designed, high quality leisurewear for men. The first fake boxes were

discovered in 1957 and live television reports provided the best bit of free advertising to the company. Although Byfords had their own brand, branding as a concept was not well developed at the time. However, the Byfords brand was recognized world wide and worn by Gary Player before celebrity endorsements became common. By 1959 they had a large export market; eventually over 50% to 64 countries. At their peak they employed about 2,000 in several factories in Leicester, Maltby, Louth and Immingham producing up to 20,000 pairs of sock a week.

In his final remarks the Master thanked Baroness Byford for her speech and for being a staunch supporter of all parts of the farming community and of course the provider of our own fibre.

He also announced to the Livery the results of the Court Election for the officers for the 2015/6 year commencing in April of this year:

- Court Assistant Chris Thierry is elected Under Warden.
- Deputy Kenneth Ayres is elected Upper Warden.
- John Brewer is elected as Master.

The Installation Ceremony will be at St Michael's, Cornhill, on April 29th. ■

Why the Lord Mayor of London is all about Wool

Sir David Wootton

The Bradford Textile Society together with the Livery hosted a recent event at the Bradford Club where Sir David Wootton, Court Assistant and Ex Lord Mayor of London (2012), had been invited to give this, the first Woolmen sponsored annual lecture.

Sir David is no stranger to Bradford having been bought up and educated here at Bradford Grammar School, and during his year in office he made a point of visiting the City on at least two occasions.

The evening and buffet was enjoyed by many members of the Livery, the Society and the Club, and Sir David's lecture, which followed, was much appreciated.

Sir David reminded us that Wool Trading was a more than significant business in earlier times and considerable emphasis was placed on the trade through both finance, transportation and warehousing. Wool provided the money to wage war for many of the early Kings of England… if not directly…. through the wealth of the City merchants. The Mansion House is situated on the site of one of the early markets in the City and close to the Wool Wharf. The King's Weigh House, "*where merchandize brought from beyond the Seas are to be weighed at the King's Beame*", was originally sited on Cornhill, but it was burned down in the Great Fire in 1666 and was rebuilt closer to the river.

During his year in office Sir David supported many wool and textile projects and held exhibitions both at the Mansion House and elsewhere in the City, reminding us of the very many textile related Livery Companies which are active in the city.

His address also covered the role of the Lord Mayor in relation to Greater London, the Regions and, most important of all, the World. He had travelled extensively and had promoted the work of the city and all its trades and business.

Answering questions he was able to clarify the distinct relationship between the Lord Mayor and the Mayor of London, and that of Lord Mayor with the Queen.

Sir David's address was warmly appreciated, and, in thanking him, the Textile Society President and Liveryman, Bill Skidmore presented him with the Society Shield as a memento of the evening. ■

Sir James Hill

Woolly bikes

As part of the Yorkshire Festival which preceded the Grand Depart of the Tour de France Cassandra Kilbride, a prolific yarn-stormer, created ten woolly bikes for a year-long trail connecting ten towns. In each town she worked with a team of about 20 volunteers of knitters and crocheters. The inspiration came from iconic Yorkshire themes including the landscape of the Dales, Yorkshire's textile mills, literary heroines and heroes, and the iconic flat cap. Each bike got a woolly makeover using local yarn. Most of the yarn was the produce of Yorkshire sheep, but one special batch came from a collection of reclaimed saris.

◀ Bike 1 **Off t' Coast, Scarborough Representing** Yorkshire's Beautiful coastline. Featuring the sandy beaches, sea life and seabirds of Yorkshire's coastal resorts. The puffin at the front of the bike represents Bempton Cliffs, considered one of the best places in Britain to see seabirds such as puffins, gannets, guillemots, kittiwakes and fulmars.

◀ Bike 2 **Historic Yorkshire, York.** The bike has a Viking theme as Yorkshire and York in particular were greatly influenced by the Vikings. The bike features classic Viking imagery such as the long boat, long bearded Viking warriors with horned helmets (though Vikings never had horns on their helmets) and shields. The sea serpent wrapped around the bike frame and the sun and moon are from Viking mythology.

▶ Bike 3 **Yorkshire Roses, Leeds** This woolly trail bike is decorated with a variety of white roses and includes the white Yorkshire rose emblem on the front wheel.

◀ Bike 4 **Yummy Yorkshire, Wakefield** A taste of some of Yorkshire's most famous exports: Liquorice; Rhubarb; Yorkshire Puddings; Ossett Brewery Real Ale; Henderson's Relish and Wensleydale, Yorkshires favourite cheese.

▶ Bike 5 **Landscape & Literature, Haworth.** Inspired by the literary greats for whom the Yorkshire landscape was muse: many authors have found inspiration in Yorkshire's beautiful and often bleak countryside and towns. The bike includes passages from the Secret Garden to Dracula and of course works of the Brontes. The bike was even created in the Bronte Parsonage.

◀ Bike 6 **The Green Goddess.** Designed to represent the beautiful rolling hills and lush green landscapes of the Dales.... and of course.... sheep.

▶ Bike 7 **Multicultural Yorkshire, Halifax.** With bright and beautiful colours and made with yarns made out of reclaimed saris and beautiful South Asian textiles, this bicycle celebrates Yorkshire's diversity. Yorkshire has become home to many people from a wide range of origins from the Romans and Vikings to Irish, southern Asian and more recently Europeans. Many of the migrants found work in the textile mills.

◀ Bike 8 **Industrial Heritage, Huddersfield Inspired** by the big Yorkshire stone mills and chimneys which are iconic features of Yorkshires wool towns like Bradford, Halifax and Huddersfield. The bike features the canal boats that carried the wool bales to the mills. There is also a coal mine, despite the decline of the mining industry.

▶ Bike 9 **Flat caps and whippets, Holmfirth.** This bike pays homage to two Yorkshire icons... . Transforming the racing bike into a racing whippet was relatively simple. The whippet was named Compo, a nod to 'The Last of the Summer Wine' which was filmed in the area. The wheel represents Compo's cap with a ferret hidden in it.

▲ Bike 10 **Yorkshires sporting glory, Sheffield** Emblazoned with 'go faster' stripes, team colours, club badges and the embroidered names of our sports icons. The bike was created as a tribute to Yorkshires Olympic and Paralympics' athletes. Jessica Ennis-Hill is featured running on the bike; other medal winners are featured on the front wheel using the jersey colours of the Tour de France. The bike also features some of the counties favourite sports, rugby, cricket and football.

> Most of the yarn was the produce of Yorkshire sheep, but one special batch came from a collection of reclaimed saris.

Photos: Bill Skidmore

Wyedean Weaving Company Ltd

Photo: Bill Skidmore

Royal Marine

Photo: Bill Skidmore

What do the Beatles, Michael Jackson, The Royal Family, Idi Amin, Tom Cruise and the United States 101st Airborne Division have in common? And what is more to the point; what do they know about the company featured in this article?
Answer at the end.

If you think of Haworth, near Bradford in West Yorkshire, you may think of the Bronte sisters and the parsonage where they were brought up. If you are a steam train buff, you automatically think of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. However, hidden away is another gem; a textile company and it shines in many ways, and not only for the gold thread it uses. Don't worry, being in the heart of textile country.... it uses wool as well.

Wyedean Weaving Company is situated in Haworth. However, the small town has been associated with weaving going back to the hand weaving days; before the Industrial Revolution there were 1,200 hand looms working in the area. The Fleece Inn is just down Main Street from the parsonage. Just a stone's throw away is the town of Keighley; synonymous with the name Hattersley the famous loom manufacturer, and Cliffe Castle, an excellent museum was once the home of a wealthy wool merchant.

I was invited to Wyedean Weavers, situated in Bridgehouse Mill, by their Managing Director, Robin Wright.

Robin's father, David, was brought up in nearby Keighley and initially trained as an apprentice textile designer at Bridgehouse Mill; little did he know then, that years later he would purchase the same mill. Also, his father, the present MD's grandfather, Frank Wright, invented an entirely new yarn spinning technique, called 'centrifugal spinning' for which he received the MBE.

David Wright served as a fighter pilot with The Fleet Air Arm in WW 11. After the war he continued his textile career by joining the company which preceded Wyedean, Dalton Barton, who were based in Coventry and was one of the largest haberdashery suppliers in the world. The post war era and the demand for more motor cars had made labour recruitment difficult in the Coventry area so the company moved to Coleford, between the river Wye and the Forest of Dean; hence the present name. The company was manufacturing narrow fabrics (ribbons), but decided to move into other textile areas. The range of products at that time ranged from carpet binding to curtain tapes and safety harness webbing to military braids and accoutrements.

The then owners of the company (Dalton Barton) decided to sell off the narrow fabric division to manufacture a smaller range of

fabrics. David saw the potential of developing the military uniform narrow fabrics and purchased the narrow fabric looms. He brought these to Bridgehouse Mill in Haworth, an imposing five story building which he purchased, and where he first started his textile apprenticeship. They are now into their fifty first year in Haworth.

In the early sixties, production and products in the company were relatively simple compared to fifty years later. From the outset worsted yarn was the main raw material used in the production of military webbing and sashes. Suppliers were mainly local; however in more recent times Acrylic fibres and natural/synthetic blends are used. However, there are still a few MOD products which specify wool.

When you enter the mill, it is a typical eighteenth century stone building, originally producing worsted overcoating. Like many mills (at that time) it relied on water which was supplied from the River Worth. Not only was water needed for power, but, many people do not realise that the quality of Yorkshire's woollen and worsted products was so because of the quality of the abundance of soft water. This was needed especially for the scouring and fine finishing.

In the entrance hall, you see examples of the merchandise, both in frames behind glass and the full size mannequin of a Royal Marine Bandsman; complete with drum and bugle cords, chin cord, tassels, chevrons, metal badges and buttons, gloves and cuff decoration.

Robin escorted us into his office, (it was like going back to the days of Waterloo), to explain details and the background of Wyedean. As in the entrance, there are examples of their products, grandfather's M.B.E and an interesting story relating to medal ribbons and His Majesty George V1. The office received a request for 2,100 yards of medal ribbon from HM. However, due to the war effort and the shortage of silk, (which went to the manufacture of parachutes), the company's technical department developed a medal ribbon out of the newly invented nylon, which was cheaper and more readily available. Prototypes were approved, all the way up to the King. He rejected them, because medals were awarded for acts of gallantry and for lengthy or outstanding service and therefore they should only be produced using the finest material. The King personally ensured that some silk was diverted to the mill for the manufacture of the medal ribbons.

Photo courtesy of Wyedean

We then started our tour of the mill, going into the showroom first. There were examples of every type of decoration one would see, in normal everyday street life, formal gathering of dignitaries, Royal and State occasions and on a parade or similar. The display featured service laces for the ministry of Defence, sashes for Crown Agents for the Colonies, duty armlets and head bands for the Metropolitan Police, shoulder boards and epaulettes for all the services in Britain and for many countries round the world. The company has also expanded into the supply of metal badges, belts and plumes as well as caps and even camouflage wear. The product range is over 10,000 items and their customer base stretches to 60 counties. Robin reminded us of his father's philosophy, which still applies today *"Our aim is to appear in every parade"*.

We went from one machine and operative to another, from one floor up to the next. I saw braiding machines that I had not seen for nearly forty years. Some of them were forming complex cords using a real gold coated metal yarn which was being interlaced to cover a cotton core; the same principle as a Maypole. Another was forming a flat khaki braid for soldier's ties. They still have over a hundred specialist textile machines and looms, though not all are in use at any one time as, each is used for a specialist job. However, all still make samples and prototypes together with small prod-

"The product range is over 10,000 items and their customer base stretches to 60 counties.

Photo: Bill Skidmore

Braiding with gold thread

uction runs and work of an intricate nature to handle every situation. Should off-shore inflation reverse competitive market trends Wyedean would be well placed to become a central figure once again in a renaissance of manufacturing in the UK.

The narrow fabric looms, weave on as series of individual warps, with each having their individual shuttles. There can be up to twelve sets of warps, in different colours, on one loom. Many people may remember when they went to school, it was compulsory for each of their garments to have a name tag sewn in. These were possibly manufactured in Coventry by a company called Cash. These used the same principle.

Photo courtesy of Wyedean

Michael Jackson

There were also muti-head embroidery machines, for everyday type badges, but some of the more exceptional ones are wired. Sleeve and shoulder curls are produced by tacking the flat braid over a template, then sewing it into place by hand.

One thing that was apparent; the work force was like a family, with different generations employed and all being able to operate all of the machines. There are also still three generations of the Wright family involved in the business. Robin's mother, Norma, is Chairman while Robin's daughter, Rosie, is very much involved with their newest venture in making trims for weddings, such as garters and favour boxes. She is also responsible for the marketing side of Wyedean.

Robin is very proud of where they are today. They have the expertise, knowledge and equipment that competitors do not. However, due to the modern day financial climate, not every product is manufactured in Haworth. They have a branch in Pakistan where many of their goods are produced, though special orders and short runs can be done in Howarth.

Jean and I cannot express our thanks enough to the staff at Wyedean and Robin Wright for devoting so much time to make our visit so enjoyable and informative.

One final thing, going back right to the beginning, where celebrity names were mentioned. All these and many others e.g. Leonardo di Caprio, Russelll Crowe, Tom Hanks – in fact virtually everyone who has required uniforms, or stage and film costumes have worn braids etc manufactured by Wyedean Weaving Company Ltd. However, I suspect very few have ever heard of Wyedean … except for Idi Amin … he actually sent personal cheques with his orders! ■

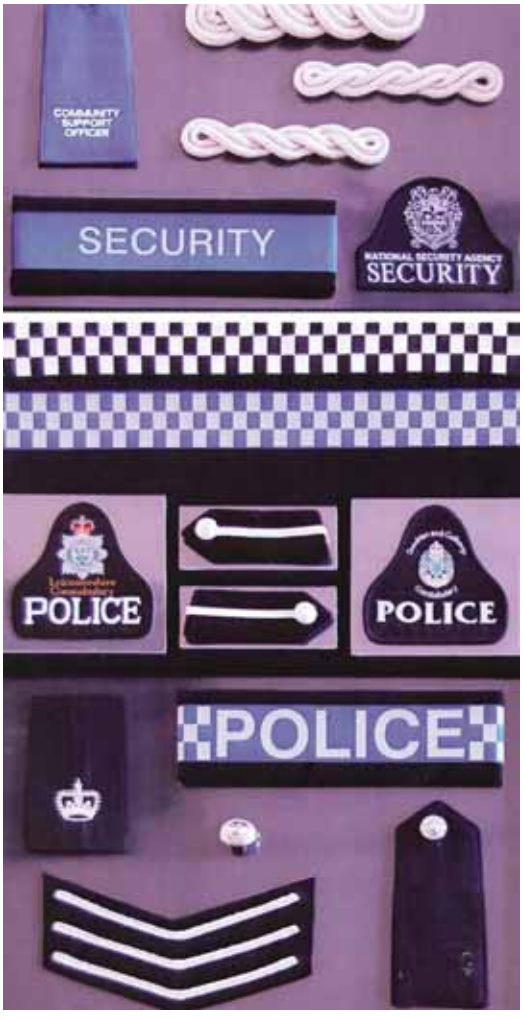

Photo courtesy of Wyedean

Education, Giving Time and the Livery Schools Link – and You!

The Master, Richard Excell, recently attended the Livery Schools Link Conference at The Actuaries Hall. The Livery Schools Link is an organisation funded by the Livery Companies to help us get closer to understanding the educational needs of schools.

The Conference was a gathering of some 30 Livery Companies with 50 Heads of primary and secondary schools. It focussed on gathering companies, like the Woolmen, who are engaged through their charity with educational Awards, but want to see if they can do more by using the life experience skills of individual Liverymen in a much wider way than teaching.

The Heads really valued our attendance and it was soon obvious we could, through our Livery, make a difference. We just need to organise ourselves to make it easy for individuals in the Livery to contribute.

Experience in education is not felt necessary to make a contribution. Their needs are much wider than the immediate classroom and teaching. This was particularly true of their school leavers where just listening to our experiences in careers was really valued – so it really is about giving a little time to talking to students. Yes, there are other needs such as Governors but there were many areas that only require an occasional visit, say once or twice a year to a school.

It was fascinating entering a world I knew little about and seeing the challenges these teachers face in their jobs. I think it is also true that they also enjoyed meeting a group of people who they would not normally meet. It was a really interesting experience!

A number of Liverymen have already approached me asking how they can learn more and make a contribution. Alison Truphet, the Livery Schools Coordinator, is keen to tell us more about how we might work with LSL. Firstly, we all have to learn more about Livery Schools Link (LSL) and their ambitions. I am delighted that Liveryman The Rt. Rev. Peter Hullah (hullahp@ gmail.com) has kindly offered to Chair a Woolmen's Educational Group to discuss LSL with Alison. Peter has a lifetime experience in education and I am grateful for his offer to lead us on this front. All Liverymen interested in learning more are welcome to contact Peter.

Photo credit Jean Skidmore

There are three important 2015 dates for those who want to see and learn more.

Firstly, we, the Woolmen, are at the fantastic LSL Showcase event at Barber Surgeons Hall on March 4th. There are super exhibits of about 30 Liveries showing students practical examples of career opportunities from Saddlery to computers – but last year the Woolmens stand with the working loom was the highlight – thanks to Bill Skidmore. I would encourage all Woolmen to visit and enjoy the Showcase and support him.

Secondly, on 9th April 2015, we are meeting Alison Truphet at 12.00 over a light lunch at the Livery Schools Link office in Little Trinity Lane, near St Paul's, next to Painters' Hall. All Liverymen are welcome, but please let me or the Clerk know you are attending – or else it will be an even lighter lunch!

Finally, we have the Annual Livery Schools Conference which this year will be on 17th June 2015 at Actuaries Hall. I am sure Peter and I would welcome your support to learn more.

I am looking forward to finding a way to give a little time to helping these schools, learning something new and making more use of being a Woolman – and having fun! I hope others feel the same way and join us! ■

The Master
Richard Excell

> Experience in education is not felt necessary to make a contribution. Their needs are much wider than the immediate classroom and teaching.

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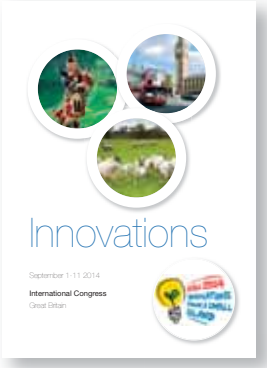

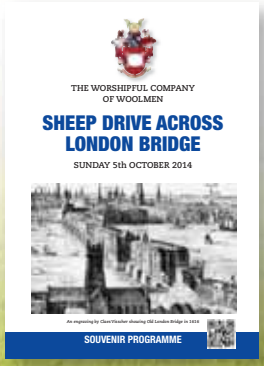

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