



## The Bowyers Company and St Nicholas Cole Abbey

“ *Every second year for ever after my decease upon the thursday next after the feast of St James the Apostle, being the day when they swear in their Master and Wardens, repair in their Livery gowns unto the Parish Church of St Nicholas Cole Abbey and to then give unto the Parson of the said Parish for his sermon then to be preached Twenty Shillings and to the Clerk and Sexton of the said Parish 18d a year and to the Churchwardens for the use of the poor of the said parish 10/-, to the Beadle of the said Company 2/- and to the poor people they meet coming and going 15/- in two pences* ”

This is an extract of the will of the Bowyers' great benefactor, James Wood, whose toast is traditionally drunk in silence at every Bowyers' Livery Dinner. James Wood was buried inside the church on 23rd July 1629. Coincidentally the feast of St James the apostle falls on 25th July each year.

It will be seen from this extract that the connection between St Nicholas Cole Abbey and the Bowyers is a very longstanding one. Our Chaplain, the Revd Prebendary Alan Tanner was the last rector of St Nicholas Cole Abbey before it was made “pastorally redundant” in the unlovely phrase the Church of England uses in these matters. When Alan moved to St Botolph Without, Bishopsgate, in 1978 the Bowyers moved with him and our relationship with that church was cemented with the installation of the Bowyers memorial window in 1997 following the IRA bomb damage.

Thus it was that St Nicholas Cole Abbey faded from the picture although there is one memorial plaque that can still be seen in the church, and it is the Bowyers' plaque placed on the chancel step in memory of James Wood.

During the 1939-45 war the church was heavily damaged in the 'Blitz' as can be seen in the picture above. During his time many members of the Livery were serving in the armed forces but never the less the connection with the church was maintained and at the time of St James's Day the Master, Wardens, Clerk and a few members of the Livery would gather in the ruins for a brief act of worship and thanksgiving for James Wood's life and benefaction.



*After bomb damage during World War II the church was left standing as a shell, as seen in this picture of the then King and Queen riding past on returning from The Guildhall on Thursday 15th May 1947. The church was eventually restored in 1962.*

Alan Tanner and I thought it would be a good idea to resurrect this tradition and accordingly, having sought and received the permission of the Archdeacon of London, a small group of Bowyers led by the Master and Wardens met at the church on 25th July - St James Day.

At a brief introduction to the service Alan explained the historical connection surrounding the Bowyers, St Nicholas Cole Abbey and his chaplaincy of our “goodly company”. The Master read the gospel for St James's day that was followed by prayers and before the Blessing the Master laid a small garland at the shrine. It was a short but moving act of remembrance to a great Bowyer.

Afterwards a post-service meeting convened at the City Pipe and it was universally agreed to have been a good thing. It looks like we have a new (old) tradition.

*John Hayton*

# Presentation of Certificates to Members of the Traditional Guild of Bowyers and Fletchers

On Saturday the 19th July 2003 the Master, Upper Warden, Renter Warden accompanied by their Ladies with the Clerk and Assistant Michael Wren in attendance attended the examination day for the presentation of silver and bronze Bowyers' Certificates to members of the Traditional Guild of Bowyers and Fletchers.

Due a change in the road layout the Clerk and Upper Warden missed the turn off from the motorway and ended up on the outskirts of Coventry!!!! Matters were quickly resolved and the party arrived at the Forest Hall Ground, the home of the Woodmen of Arden in time for the assessment which was to begin at 11 o'clock.

A total of 11 longbows were to be assessed against previously laid down criteria. They included a range of recreational bows and a warbow. The assessment team headed by the Warden, Mr Richard Head assessed the bows. Formal guidance notes had been produced for the judging which covered the following aspects of each bow were marked: the horn nocks, the bow limbs, the handle, the arrowplate the string and end tiller. The use of the tiller was of particular interest and the proceedings were watched in close detail by the Master and all those assembled.

During the assessment a demonstration of the firing of warbows and other recreational longbows was given. Of particular note was the performance of Mark Stretton, who holds the British Longbow Society record for distance shot with a standard arrow, shot a 150 draw/weight war bow replica in action. There was also an exhibition of various antique longbows from the Artemis Collection.



*Testing a bow at the tiller.*

After the assessment the Master presented Certificates to those bowyers who had reached the appropriate standard and delivered a short speech before everyone partook in a ploughman's lunch very kindly produced by the guild.

After Lunch Mr Alan Pritchard, Bowmaker to the Woodmen of Arden, showed Members of the Company around his workshop which was of great interest.

*Richard Wilkinson*

*Above: Certificate winners with the Master.*

*Left: Mark Stretton in action with his 'war bow'.*

# The Craft Guild of Traditional Bowyers and Fletchers

**O**n 28th September the Upper Warden, Mr Peter Seaton and his wife Carol attended the Annual General Meeting of the Craft Guild of Traditional Bowyers and Fletchers held at Warwick Castle.

It was clear from the meeting that the Craft Guild is very proud of its association with the Worshipful Company of Bowyers and most grateful of the support given by the Master and Wardens in attending various events throughout the year. Of particular interest was the fact that the Bowyers Company issuing of certificates for quality of workmanship was much appreciated and that the Fletchers Company were now investigating the possibility of doing the same for arrow making.

Following the meeting a talk was given by Master Fletcher Emeritus, Deryck Rowe on the making and technology involved in connection with presentation arrows. There is apparently a growing market for boxed sets of arrows especially in the United States and Mr Rowe explained a typical box of presentation arrows and their various features. This falls into three sections namely the 'footing', this is the joining of the business end of the arrow to the shaft using the particular skills required for such refined woodworking. Secondly there is the making of the knock that is traditionally made from ivory and as this is now a banned material old snooker balls are used and are most effective in decoration. The third category is the head and these are very often made from silver although brass is also used.

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## Bowyers Golf Day

**A**s with so many days this year the Bowyers Golf competition was blessed with wonderful weather when members and guests gathered at the excellent venue of the Addington Golf Club in Surrey in late June to compete for the Forrester Cup.

The Addington is renowned not only for its location being only 13 miles from the centre of London but for the superb Abercrombie designed course that is secluded within high ground of natural forest of silver birch, English oak, beech and cedar amid the orange tinted mountain ash. Henry Longhurst described the late J F Abercrombie as 'one whom posterity may well judge to have been the greatest of golf architects'.



*From left to right:  
Past Master, Peter Forrester, Tim West  
and the Master, Clive Arding.*

Competition as ever was strong and the winner on 34 Stapleford points was Tim West followed by Michael Sayer on 31 points with third place going to Jim Chester on 27 points. The guest prize was won by Peter Brooker who had 34 points, the same as his host for the day, Tim West.

It was good to see Past Master Peter Forrester keeping a watchful eye on proceedings at various locations around the course and also in joining us for lunch afterwards with the Master, Clive Arding.

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## 'News Update'

### **Our Regiment - The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters**

The 1st Battalion deployed to South Armagh in May of this year and they have fortunately enjoyed a relatively peaceful time during which a number of watch towers, landmarks well known to soldiers and terrorists alike, have been removed as the situation improves. A few officers and soldiers have been involved in Gulf War 11 and some 50 TA personnel have been deployed in Iraq on peace keeping duties.

### **Regimental Museum**

After some ten years of hard work the Regimental Gallery in Worcester Art Gallery and Museum has been refurbished and renamed 'The Worcestershire Soldier', this was opened by HRH The Princess Royal, Colonel in Chief, on 3rd September. Admission is free and is well worth a visit if you are in the area.

### **Our Ship - HMS Northumberland**

The Ship's Company have been involved in a busy and varied programme involving a training week at sea, the Affiliation Dinner in Portsmouth, Staff College Days and specific tactical training at sea for a group of officers. The highlight event was the dinner at which there were a number of distinguished guests including the Master of the Worshipful Company of Bowyers and Clerk among many others. The Ship had the good fortune to be able to enjoy the rare pleasure of hosting pre-dinner drinks on board HMS VICTORY where the Ships Officers greeted their guests on board and drinks were served in Captain Hardy's cabin with a backdrop of a floodlit HMS NORTHUMBERLAND to be seen from the window at the aft end. The major part of November will see the ship away on sea trials before heading towards Scotland on a two week exercise and then returning to Devonport prior to Christmas. In January she will be due to visit her home town of Newcastle during which many affiliations will be revived and old acquaintances made.



# Bowyers Longbow Day at Burnham

Bowyers' Longbow Plate day was held on 27th July at the Royal Toxophilite Society's Ground at Burnham Beeches when archers competed at this annual event for the perpetual trophies donated by the Worshipful Company of Bowyers'.

The salvers, for the highest scores were originally presented to commemorate the Royal Toxophilite Bi-Centenary in 1981 and the 'Most Hits' Coasters were presented by past masters of the Bowyers', Robert 'Tim' Hardy for the men and Christopher Ballenden for the ladies.



*Pictured from left to right at the Royal Toxophilite Society's ground at Burnham for Longbow Day on 27th July are: Miss P Edwards Secretary of the Royal Toxophilite Society, Mr C F Hope winner of the Hardy Coaster for most hits for men, Mr R J K Powell winner of the Bowyers' Plate for the highest score for men, Mr Clive Arding, Master of the Bowyers' Company, Mrs J R Medelin winner of the Bowyers' Plate for the highest score for women Miss E Wylie winner of the Ballenden Coaster for most hits for women, Mr R Gallop President of the Royal Toxophilite Society.*



*The Master Mr Clive Arding accompanied by past master Mr Christopher Ballenden and Mr Andrew Barnsdale at the memorial tree planting ceremony in Scotland on the estate of the late Past Master Major Sir Ralph Anstruther Bt GCVO MC DL.*

## Clerk's Corner

Work on the production of company standing orders is continuing. The new Members Directory was published in July and will be republished annually. To ensure that it is current all are asked to keep the clerk informed of their change of address, telephone numbers and e mail address. The preferred method of communicating to the Court and the Livery is by e mail. This will bring significant reductions in postal costs. However snail mail is not to be ignored and there will be four formal mailings a year in February, May, August and November.

### Future Events

- 20th November Joint Dinner with the Fletchers' Company - Tallow Chandlers' Hall.
  - 4th December Briefing by Presentation Team from HMS Northumberland, followed by supper at Mustard's Bistro, Smithfield.
  - 10th December Carol Service with the Actuaries Company - St Lawrence Jewry followed by supper at Barber Surgeons' Hall.
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- 19th February Pub evening with speaker.
  - 18th March Provisional date for Sons, Godsons and Godsons Lunch.
  - 23rd March Informal evening event, possibly a visit to the Gilbert Collection. Followed by supper.
  - 26th March United Guilds Service.
  - 23rd April Court Meeting and Civic Dinner, with Ladies.
  - 14th - 17th May Company weekend away - Lucca in Italy.
  - 24th June Election of Sheriffs and Lunch at Tallows Chandlers' Hall.
  - 3rd July Bowyers Prize Day at Burnham
  - 7th July Joint Shoot with the Fletchers Company the Tower of London.
  - 14th July Masters Day Service and Lunch
  - 25th July Longbow Day at Burnham

### Items for Sale

Single Motif Company Ties in blue silk at £17.50.  
Postcards depicting the Bowyers window in the church of St. Botolph without Bishopsgate in beautiful colour. 35p each, 3 for a £1.00 or 16 for £5.00  
History of the Company 'Such Goodly Company' a book written by Barbara Megson at £25.50.

*Please contact me with any queries, booking functions, buying from the Clerk's Superstore, application forms for the Freedom and Livery and any other information that you may require: Richard J Wilkinson, 5 Archer Close, Vicarage Crescent, London SW11 3LF • Tel and fax: 020 7223 5224 email: clerk@bowyers.com*