



The Worshipful Company of Bowyers

Newsletter

Issue 3/02

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Bowyers Charity

It has been reported to the Court that the Trustees have set their minds to visit the Charities to whom the Bowyers Trust donate funds to establish good contact and to ensure that all is well with the Charities.

A visit of particular note was made to the John Groom's Association and a report of that visit follows. It is even more important for the members of the Livery who donate to The Bowyers Charitable Trust to realise that there can never be enough donations into the Fund and now that a Capital base has been established inside that Fund all donations big and small are always welcome.

May the Trustees add as a gentle reminder that remembering the Charity in your will gives enormous benefit to those in need.

In January 2002, the Charity Committee of the Bowyers Company visited a number of centres run by the John Groom's Association, following the Company's support of the charity for a number of years.

John Groom was a Victorian philanthropist of deep Christian convictions, who was appalled by the living conditions of slum children, in particular blind and crippled girls. Groom devised a scheme for providing employment for such girls as flower sellers, but in his own words, Groom found that "the influences of the street were detrimental to the moral character of the girls". He therefore set up the Flower Girl's Mission to make artificial flowers at The Crippleage, Sekford Street, Clerkenwell, an adjoining district to his previous mission in Farringdon watercress market. The intention was to provide a home and work of a self-supporting character for disabled girls not merely from the district but from all parts of the Kingdom.

The experiment was successful and expanded to accommodate increasing numbers of people. A property was acquired at Clacton and used as an orphanage and a convalescent home. Further homes were built in London, the whole of the organisation being supported by the work of the inmates and patronage of supporters. The work carries on to this day, though not only through the manufacture of artificial flowers. Among many activities, the committee visited a garden centre where John Groom trainees have reverted to his original business plan of flower selling, and have created a visitor centre which demonstrates flora and fish from different regions of the world, including desert and tropical climates.

In one of the main residential homes, a photograph of the late Peter Begent and Peter Seaton is framed and hung in a prominent position in the entrance hall, commemorating an earlier visit of representatives of the Bowyers Company.

Due to the severe disability of some of the residents, expensive equipment is required to assist in most of the everyday activities of living which able bodied people take for granted, such as getting in and out of a bath or shower. The homes are fully provided with such equipment, but the cost of building, equipping and maintaining the properties is commensurately high, and the number of people needed to support the residents likewise numerous.

The atmosphere in the homes is that of a happy community. Besides work of whatever kind, sports and pastimes are organised, and the Bowyers Charity funds are contributed to buy archery equipment for those interested and active in the sport.

John Groom wrote a delightful short history of his life's mission called *The Romance of the John Groom's Crippleage and the Flower Girl's Mission*. At the conclusion of the work he writes, "My prayer is that this work may not simply be permanent, but extend and become more and more helpful in the uplifting of the afflicted and the purifying of child life. If you appreciate what has been done, do help my successors to do more."

John Groom amongst his Flower Girls.



The Bowyers Company has supported this Charity for a number of years according to its limited means and hopes to contribute to the success of Groom's prayer. The Association's strong City roots which it maintains, and the interest in archery exhibited by some of the inmates strengthens the ties between our two organisations. An essential element of membership of all Livery Companies has always been the philanthropic and charitable function. Though the Bowyer's Charitable funds are at present small, it is the Trustees' and the committee's hope that all members of the Livery will continue to contribute to enable further support to John Groom's Association and other charities.

Bowyers again invade

A fighting force of 24 henchmen and women square jawed and suitcased assembled at Heathrow hardly had the cock crowed on Thursday 9th May 2002. Not St Crispin's day but nevertheless an auspicious day for the assault on unsuspecting France and the vineyards of Burgundy.

What lay ahead? Who knew - not the driver at Lyons. He was on the low road and we were on the high road.

On board and determined, the trip was on. And so eventually to our base camp at Buxy, stopping only to eat and taste at Romaneche Thorins and play a little with the trains and marvel at the purchasing power of the Euro.

Bowyers and their ladies relaxing at The Hospice at Beaune

The next three days were an assault course of gastronomic delight, whether waiting for the bill at lunch time, feasting in the cellars on local ham, foie gras and cheese in Beaune or listening to Michael Stephens explain the intricacies of growing wine - the vieilles vignes, the new growth, the law which forbids you to water the vines.

It was at first difficult to take in. Names which heretofore had only appeared on labels at the dinner table were here for us to roll around the tongue. The wines were to taste and spit. The longed for beer was French indeed.

At base camp the Master kindly provided us with a reception complete with orange round things to eat and then we repaired to feast yet more at Buxy. The feeling was that the French were winning this skirmish by stealth as the waist line swelled visibly and the groans of delight persuaded us to roll over and capitulate.



France



Seems a pity to waste it.

Such memories. Each had their own to savour and cherish. There was the moment at dinner when the driver lifted his eyes from his steak to explain that he could not possibly drive us home as the magic hour had passed and he was not allowed to take the bus on the road. Gallic charm provided by our wonderful hostess covered this awkward situation as only the French regard for the law could show.

The Hospice at Beaune was a marvel as was Beaune itself and many, when purchasing the donkey sausages vowed to return and spend more time in this amazing area of France.

Finally all must conclude and with the strains of Sospan Fach and Flower of Scotland wafting strangely out of the bar into the afternoon air at Fleurie we departed victorious to Lyons airport, where the Master was overheard to mumble that he had picked up a bit of fluff. Sadly it was only on his jacket .



Perhaps the '82 may be better

A first class and educating trip, with wines to die for.

Bowyers Day 2002

The Master, John Burnett, pictured here with the winners at Archers Lodge.



Major Sir Ralph Anstruther.Bt. 13th June 1921-19 May 2002

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Sir Ralph Anstruther, aged 80. To give him his correct title - Major Sir Ralph Anstruther of that Ilk, 7th Baronet of Balcaskie and 12th Baronet of Anstruther, explains the era in which Sir Ralph grew up, explains the manners, the charm and the courtesy which Sir Ralph always showed. He was indeed a true courtier in the 19th century mould.

It was this upholding of tradition, this automatic display of manners and protocol which Sir Ralph brought to Clarence House where he was latterly Treasurer (Treasurer Emeritus) to the late Queen Mother, yet Sir Ralph also brought a sense of fun and style.

His father died in 1921 a month after Sir Ralph was born and Sir Ralph spent most of his childhood with his mother Madge, to whom he was devoted in Scotney Castle in Kent.

He succeeded to the 7th Baronetcy in 1934 at the age of 13 and in 1980 inherited the Baronetcy of the 11th Baronet and with it the title of Grand Carver to the Queen, an honour which had been in the family since 1585.

Sir Ralph was educated at Eton, obtained his degree at Magdalene College, Cambridge and entered the Army in the Coldstream Guards, where throughout his career he won the Military Medal in 1943 and was mentioned in despatches during the Malaysian Campaign in 1950.

He joined Clarence House in 1959 and was appointed CVO in 1967, KCVO in 1976 and GCVO in 1992. The family seat was in Fife at Balcaskie which belonged to the Anstruther family since 1698 and when not in Scotland, Sir Ralph had a home in Pratts Walk in South London.

Sir Ralph never married, yet during his Army days he cut a dash when out of uniform, dressed in a white planters suit and a Panama hat, driving his Rolls Royce. Sir Ralph was always in demand as a dancing partner and his name was linked romantically with many eligible ladies of the time.

He was a member of the Royal Company of Archers, the Queen's Body Guard for Scotland as well as being an active Bowyer, where he was admitted to the Livery in November 1942, became a Member of the Court in April 1962 and was Master in 1966/1968.

Sir Ralph always maintained strict sartorial standards, whatever the climate. In 1990 he joined the Queen Mother at a private view of mosaics in Sicily. He emerged from the Rolls Royce in a three piece suit, bowler hat in place, and clutching a tightly furled umbrella - the temperature was in the low 100's.

A junior equerry once was the recipient of a whispered admonishment through that immaculate white moustache that he was improperly dressed. The junior had forgotten his umbrella - but in his confusion the junior also probably missed the twinkle in Sir Ralph's eye.

Bowyers Golf Society

The threat of a Channel storm did not deter eight well clad worthies from striding down the first fairway at Brighton and Hove Golf Club on Monday 10th June 2002 to play for the Forrester Cup.

Wet inside and out, the winner Michael Sayer expressed himself delighted to receive the cup and champagne from the sponsor himself, Peter Forrester. Guest winner was Robert Bates and Ian Spring picked up the afternoon's accolades.

LOGVEC

Friday 3rd August saw the Bowyers team of Peter Harrow, Ian Spring, Michael Sayer and Michael Wren compete in the third LOGVEC Golf Competition at Milford Golf Club in Surrey.

Of the twenty seven teams taking part they came forth with 89 points to the winning team from the Brewers Company who scored 93 Stapleford points.

The Society is building up its fixture list and would all those interested in playing or indeed hosting at their clubs please contact Michael Wren or the Clerk.

Michael can be found at work on 020 8981 4430 and his email address is michaelwren@fastcolour.fsnet.co.uk

Annual Inter Livery Clay Pigeon Shoot

This event, organised by the Environmental Cleaners, was held, once again at Holland & Holland's shooting ground, and attracted over 300 Guns from 50 Livery Companies.

This is a Charity shoot and the event raised over £7500.

Our team consisted of Christopher Ballenden, Howard Mundy, Duncan Samuel and Miles Archibald.

This was our 8th year in the competition and since 1995 we have been steadily and gradually improving. Indeed in some years we have fielded two teams.

Christopher Ballenden reports that this year we came 4th - a truly outstanding result particularly as some teams could be regarded as semi-professional! Perhaps the presence of the Master spurred our team on to great things.

Here is a plea for all those shooters to note the date for next year being May 31st. It would be tremendous if we again could field two teams so would all those interested please note the date and contact Christopher or the Clerk.

Christopher can be found on 01892 740437 and his email address is ballenden@supanet.com

Gold Medal

Recognising that the Bowyers are bow makers, nevertheless it is great to record a Gold Medal for Ben Glazier in the sport of archery.

Ben - a novice to the sport - won a gold medal scoring 616 for a Gents Western, being four dozen arrows at 60 yards and four dozen at 50 yards (with a recurve bow).

Ben is a member of the London Archers Club which he joined in July, and it was at the Club that he won his Gold Medal competing against other novices.

Non novices, he says, shot a York to his Gents Western, being 6 dozen at 100 yards, 4 dozen at 80 yards and 2 dozen at 60 yards.

Congratulations to Ben and more power to your elbow.

Ben will be a great addition to the Bowyers "team" at the annual shoot at the Tower of London, where on Wednesday July 3rd 2002 amidst indifferent weather the Bowyers continued their tradition of winning the Trophy against the Fletchers.

Clerk's Corner

John Owen-Ward wishes to thank all Liverymen and Freeman for their support and co-operation over the years that he has been Clerk to the Company. With effect from 1st October 2002 your Clerk will be Richard J. Wilkinson. His details are shown below but please contact John if you need any information by no later than 30th September.

Address **Richard J Wilkinson**
5 Archer Close
Vicarage Crescent
London
SW11 3LF
Tel and Fax: 020 7223 5224
e-mail: clerk@bowyers.com

Please contact Richard 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.

Affiliations

Strong links and reciprocal hospitality have been a feature of the affiliation with The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment and it is progressing well.

A new affiliation with HMS Northumberland has been formed more recently. The Captain and two Officers attended the Civic Dinner and the Master and Deputy Master have sailed in the Northumberland. It is hoped to complete the formalities of affiliation before the end of the year.

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St. Dunstan's vs Sibbertswold bowmen

The Master and his lady, with the Upper Warden, attended the annual archery competition held between St. Dunstan's and Sibbertswold Bowmen at Sandwich in Kent on Bank Holiday Monday - 26th August 2002.

The event was held in the field which was interestingly part of the embarkation point for troops leaving for France at the time of Crecy and Agincourt.

The Bowyers Charitable Trust makes a grant each year in some form or other to St. Dunstan's. This year we made a grant of £380 for the purchase of archery equipment.

The archery event is a serious competition, the blind and the partially blind archers of St. Dunstan's compete with sighted archers on a handicap system. To make the event fair, any St. Dunstan's archers with residual sight have to wear dark glasses to make the competition equal!

The only concessions given to the St. Dunstan's archers are that they are allowed to have six sighting arrows before the start of the competition, compared with three arrows for the sighted archers.

The technique used by the St. Dunstan's archers is that they have pads on the ground for locating their feet, always in the same position. The form of the pads varies enormously, from horseshoes nailed into the ground through to garden aerated pads. They also have a tripod standing at their side with a horizontal pin, against which the back of the hand holding the bow is placed to give vertical and lateral location. Each St. Dunstan's archer is also allowed a marker to stand behind them to indicate where the arrows are landing, and they are not allowed to move the pin or the tripod once the competition has started.

One of the St. Dunstan's archers confided to the Upper Warden that he had a pretty good idea where the arrows were landing in the target area, as there was a different sound as to which part of the target was being hit, i.e. softer sound in the centre where most arrows land, compared to a harsher sound on the outer rim.

This was a most enjoyable and fascinating day out, and highly recommended to any other member of the Livery who may wish to attend in the future.