

MASTER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2015-2016

I have served Cripplegate Ward Club as their 138th Master and it has been a privilege and honour to do so. Many Masters during their year focus on a particular theme, be it Sport, Military, Music, Wine, Food, etc, well I wanted all these things and bundled them up under the umbrella of FUN.

My installation took place at the March AGM in Guildhall's *Print Room*, after which I hosted our **CIVIC LUNCHEON** in the *Old Library* next door. It was appropriate that it should be in such rooms as my life has been spent in printing and publishing. Over 120 members and guests were honoured by the presence of Alderman & Sheriff Dr Andrew Parmley. He was particularly humorous and most entertaining. Other special guests included the Principle of the Guildhall School of Music, Prof Barry Ife, CBE and the Member of Parliament for the Cities of London and Westminster, the Rt Hon Mark Field MP.

In April we enjoyed a **TOUR OF THE BBC**. As it was my first event I was rather concerned as to whether we would get any members attending and whether those who came would enjoy it. As it turned out, we had a full complement of 50 at the BBC and even had 4 more come for just the Luncheon afterwards at the St Georges's Hotel next door to Broadcasting House. Perhaps the most amusing part of the Tour was when some members of Cripplegate, myself included, tried to read the 'green screen' Weather Forecast, but that is another story.

For May, we organised a Tour of **FREEMASONS' HALL** in Covent Garden. The Art Deco building was built as a memorial to all those Freemasons who died in the First World War. The Grand Temple was stunning, as was the Museum. After the Tour we had a private reception and dinner at The Kingsway Hall Hotel.

Our next event was a guided tour of the **GUILDHALL SCHOOL of MUSIC & DRAMA's** new building at *Milton Court*. We were delighted that past Chairman of Governors and Club President, Alderman David Graves joined us on this visit. The tour concluded with a delightful piano recital played by one of the students. I was particularly pleased to present a cheque to the school. We then walked across the road to the Barbican Members' Lounge to have a tapas-style luncheon.

In July we decided to try something totally different: a **BBQ!** This was held in the gardens of *Charterhouse* a Tudor monastery. It was in this building that Queen Elizabeth I held Court and where she prepared herself before her Coronation. On this day, the good Lord heard my prayers and the weather was excellent for outdoor activities. Over 50 of us were given a tour and afterwards a reception in the cloisters and then the BBQ in and around the grounds and flower beds of this wonderful building. Two students from the Guildhall School of Music played for us in the cloisters and around the Gardens.

Next we visited **THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM**. 45 members and guests were given a private introduction to the Museum by one of the Curators after which we had a quick look around the new exhibitions. The main problem was we really needed at least a week, or even more to appreciate what's there. After the Museum we had a Coach ready to take us the short distance to the Union Jack Club. A drinks reception was enjoyed in the huge and well-appointed members' bar, followed by an excellent lunch in our private dining room.

Our **ANNUAL BANQUET** was at Barber-Surgeons' Hall in October and I was delighted at the excellent turnout of 104 members and guests. Again the Guildhall School of Music provided a musician for our entertainment. Our special guest speaker was The Rt Hon Mark Field MP, who had been with us at the Civic Lunch back in March. He was most entertaining.

Guests included my very good friend and the President of Walbrook Ward Club, Alderman John Garbutt; the Master of Aldersgate Ward Club, Ron Wood; and the Chairman of the Royal Society of St

George, Joanna Cadman (now a member of Cripplegate Ward Club). I was particularly delighted that the Master of the Worshipful Company of Barbers, Mr Geoffrey Preston (also a member of Cripplegate Ward Club) and his Clerk were present during part of the evening to welcome us all to their Hall. It was a wonderful evening and good to be back at the only remaining Livery Hall in the Ward of Cripplegate.

There was some inclement weather for **THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW** in November, but after seeing the Golden Carriage being prepared and the horses harnessed, we enjoyed the Parade and then Luncheon. This year we secured 33 places in the Guildhall Club, but still had a waiting list.

For Christmas we decided on a **CHRISTMAS DINNER PARTY**. This proved exceptionally popular and although we had 54 for dinner, I was very sorry to disappoint 20 more who were left on the waiting list. We had a *Guess the Weight of the Christmas Pudding* competition during the reception, before sitting down with hats, crackers and streamers for the 3 course festive meal. A Pianist and a Soprano from the Guildhall School sang some lovely Carols and with a little more wine and port we all did our best to join in. A Prize Draw resulted in bottles of Champagne and Port to the lucky winners. Then a few more Carols from our musicians before everyone departed with an individual present from Santa.

If you weren't there you missed it, and if you were there you still missed it! Yes, in January we visited the **MAGIC CIRCLE**. After some arrival tea & biscuits we toured the Museum of Magic. This was followed by a close up show of magic and sleight of hand, with everybody asking how did he do that and where did it go? Finally, there was a magical 'stage show' held in their own small theatre. After a short, but cold walk to the nearby Thistle Hotel, we had a Prosecco Reception and a 3 course Buffet lunch in our private dining room. An excellent time was had by all and it was just a "Magical" day.

My final event was at the **NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB**. A formal piano recital, again by a student from the Guildhall School, was followed by a drinks reception and an excellent 3 course meal in our private dining room. The music covered a wide field including some improvisations and I am sure there was something for everybody. The evening gave me an opportunity to thank many people for their support over the year and also regale them with some of the fun and stories from the above events.

All of these functions are presented on the Cripplegate Ward Club website with a few pictures. So just pop into www.cripplegatewardclub.org and you will see what we have been doing and also what's planned for 2016-17.

My wife and I were really looking forward to this year, but in January 2015, just before I was elected Master, my wife died. It was a great loss and left me bereft, but the support and help I have had during this year has been wonderful and I owe a thank you to so many. My two main supporters during the year have been the Social Secretary, David Herbert and his wife Sandra who have held my hand throughout this term of office. I also thank my daughter Emma for being my escort at the Banquet and also attending the BBQ with my grandson Spencer aged 7 which really made my day.

In any organisation, no matter how good a programme or how good a Master, it is the background staff that keep it working year in and year out, whilst Masters come and go. I therefore thank the Secretary, Barbara Allan and the Treasurer, Sidney Morton who keep their hands on a steady tiller. I also thank the Committee and our President, Alderman David Graves for their support and wise counsel during the year.

Finally, it is the loyal members of Cripplegate Ward Club, that I would like to thank for supporting and attending my events. I have also been delighted to welcome so many new members into the Club. I look forward to seeing you all again very soon.

Thank you

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Master, Cripplegate Ward Club 2015-2016