

THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

freemen

MAGAZINE



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Contents

- 4-5 Remembrance Sunday 2018
- 6-7 Hoppings 2018
- 8 The Tyne Bridge at 90
- 9 Breaking New Ground
- 10-11 Interview with Helen Birkett
- 12-13 Estate Management
- 14-15 Grazing of the Town Moor Herd
- 16 Famous Freemen
- 17 Visit to Lit & Phil
- 18-19 Spotlight on Derek Lowdon
- 19 Parks Trust
- 20-21 Nuns Moor Update
- 22 St Mary Magdalene & Holy Jesus Trust
- 23 Mary Magdalene Christmas Fayre
- 23 TMMC Summer Outing
- 24 Michaelmas Guild
- 25 Visitors Tales
- 26 Town Moor Act 1988
- 27 Notice Board



4



14



22



Front Cover photograph courtesy of Steve Brock Photography
Guild Swearing in, Remembrance Sunday, Town Moor, Hoppings, photographs taken by Steve Brock.
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Foreword



We can reflect on a most positive year as our inherent responsibility of ensuring the much-treasured environmental asset of Newcastle Town Moors (referred to by many as the 'city lung') was not only effectively sustained, but improved upon.

Having said that, there are some rather distinct ongoing challenges that demand enhanced momentum to resolve and thus primarily involves the environmental reinstatement of an area of Nuns Moor abounding Barrack Road and Brighton Grove in the west end of the City.

All in all, the most prominent and overriding statutory commitment i.e. the safe and effective grazing of the Town Moor Herd was undertaken in a truly professional manner, thereby serving to give confidence to the future.

May I express on behalf of the Freeman of the City, an appreciation in relation to the positive dynamics of our partnership working and all this entails with Newcastle City Council.

So much can be achieved as a result of common purpose.

Sir Leonard Fenwick CBE

Chairman of the Stewards Committee

Editorial

It is our great pleasure to bring you the 23rd issue of the Freeman Magazine which we hope, brings you an interesting, informative and often entertaining look at the very important work of the Freeman of the City of Newcastle. In this issue, we commemorate 30 years of the Town Moor Act 1988; we also remember 100 years since the WW1 ceasefire and celebrate the 90th birthday of the iconic Tyne Bridge.

In 2010, the first lady was sworn in as a Freeman, fast forward eight years and we now have the first woman in the 800 year history of the Freeman of Newcastle serving on the Stewards Committee.

Also in this issue, we begin to explore famous Freeman of the past and we

acknowledge the work and dedication of our current members and "unsung heroes" in a "Spotlight on...." feature. If you want this to be a regular feature, do not hesitate to contact us with your stories, anecdotes, memories and dedications.

If you would like to be part of the Editorial Team or simply send us a Freeman related story, article or photograph, then we'd love to hear from you. Details of how to contact us are on the back cover, additionally you could take a look at our revised website.

www.freemenofnewcastle.org – In the meantime, have a Merry Christmas and a bright and happy 2019.

Remembrance Sunday 2018

100 years since the guns fell silent



2018 marks 100 years since the signing of the Armistice between the Allies and Germany, bringing an end to World War I.



On Remembrance Sunday, 11 November 2018, the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Councillor David Down led an especially poignant service of remembrance at the war memorial in Old Eldon Square. A parade of serving, veteran and cadet forces and support services then followed.

The Remembrance Sunday Service honours military and civilian servicemen and women who died in the Great War and in all later conflicts.

This year, a blanket of woollen poppies knitted and crocheted by volunteers was laid and swept across the square around the Memorial.



Every year, The Freemen of the City of Newcastle join scores of serving personnel, veterans and their families to pay their respects. Representatives of the Stewards Committee accompanied Sir Leonard Fenwick as he laid a wreath on behalf of the Freemen of Newcastle upon Tyne.



HOPPINGS 2018



Hoppings 2018 was viewed as one of the best events for many years, no doubt helped by the exceptional weather and good visitor numbers enjoying various new attractions.

The opening ceremony reverted back to the traditional day of Friday at 1.30pm when Lord Mayor Councillor



David Down rang the Fair bells to open the Fair, he and the Lady Mayoress then took a tour of the event with members of the Stewards Committee and representatives of the Showmen's Guild Northern Section, the Lord Mayor enthusiastically entered into the spirit of the event often stopping to chat to showmen and sample the rides and games.







THE TYNE BRIDGE AT 90

Without a doubt, Newcastle upon Tyne boasts some of the most impressive bridges in the world. None more so than our iconic Tyne Bridge, instantly recognisable and a sign for many that we're "home"

The Tyne Bridge links Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead. It was designed by the engineering firm Mott, Hay and Anderson, who later designed the Forth

Road Bridge, and was built by Dorman Long and Co. of Middlesbrough. The bridge was officially opened on 10 October 1928 by King George V and has since become a defining symbol of Tyneside. It is ranked as the tenth tallest structure in the city and is by far one of the most graceful 90 year-olds we've ever seen!





BREAKING NEW GROUND

In 2009 the Freemen of Newcastle with the support of the City Council Legal Department, and Newcastle MPs Nicholas Brown and Jim Cousins, supported a last minute amendment to the Local Democracy, Development and Construction Bill which was at the third reading in Parliament.

The original clause gave a provision for Freemen to vote as to whether or not women could be admitted into a Freedom, the Newcastle upon Tyne amendment "Schedule 28A" of the bill read ' (1) to provide for a woman to have the same right to be admitted to a Freedom of a city or town in any or all circumstances where a man has the right', the amendment received cross party support and was included in the bill which parliament subsequently passed into statute.

In 2010 the first lady was sworn in as a Freeman of Newcastle. Since then,

our ranks have been boosted by the admission of women, with many becoming active members of their Companies and for the first time in 800 years, at Michaelmas Guild 2018, the first woman Steward was elected onto the Stewards Committee of the Freemen of Newcastle, Helen Birkett, a Steward of the Cordwainers took her seat on the Stewards Committee at Open Guild on 8th October 2018.

Helen's background is in Project Management which can only be an asset to the Freemen of Newcastle starting with her first project of taking the lead in developing and refreshing this and future issues of the Freemen Magazine.

Helen would be delighted to hear directly any suggestions on the content or structure of future magazines, mark communications "Magazine" using the contact details at the back of the magazine.

INTERVIEW WITH OUR NEWEST MEMBER OF THE STEWARDS COMMITTEE HELEN BIRKETT



How do you feel about being the first ever woman to take a seat on the Stewards Committee?

Privileged, excited and just a little bit scared!

For me, it has far less to do with being a woman and more to do with being the right person for the job. The Freeman work in a far more political arena than our ancestors ever did. We can no longer agree complex issues on a handshake, we have to negotiate the minefield of rules, regulations and legislation and make sure all bases are covered.

What qualities do you bring to the role?

I have a business background, mainly in the Civil Service, so I know how the government "machine" works. I have a Masters' degree in Business Strategy from the fabulous Northumbria University at Newcastle and I spent 15 years as a Project and Programme Manager with a hugely diverse set of projects.

The Freeman do an enormous amount of great work in the City that goes way above and beyond the guardianship of the Moors. I'm sure my Business Strategy and Project Management skills and experience will stand me in good stead to make a positive impact.

Why do you think it has taken so long for a woman to be elected onto the Committee?

I really have no idea!

When women were first introduced as Freeman in 2010 they became eligible to apply for Company Stewards roles. We have many very fine women Stewards – some are Senior Stewards of their respective Companies and they take an active role at the Guild meetings. So, women stewards have been eligible to apply for Stewards Committee vacancies for the last 8 years.

Stewards Committee is hugely demanding and very diverse, so anyone applying must commit a significant amount of time and effort. In today's

increasingly demanding world, I expect that might be a bit impractical for many of our members, regardless of gender.

How will you influence Freeman business going forward?

I'd love to see more of our young people getting involved. Being a Freeman is a privilege; it's hereditary, you can't buy your way in and it must be protected and preserved for the good of the City. We need to safeguard our history and heritage by making more of our young folk "bothered" about what happens in our City. In this day and age, living away from Newcastle shouldn't be a barrier to being involved in its welfare. I would like to introduce more digital media interaction and get the younger generations involved, to find out what would make them take a more active role in the Freeman.

The Freeman of Newcastle have an illustrious 800 year history, what do you think needs to be done to preserve this?

Continued collaboration with the City Council and Lord Mayor's Office. The Committee have built a highly effective network with their official government counterparts and they connect extensively with influential business leaders. Good working relationships have to be maintained by all sides and that's not easy in an increasingly commercial world.

I love the traditions of the Freeman, such as the Swearing In ceremonies, Lord Mayor's Parade and the Opening Day of the Hoppings to name a few, and I would expect to see these preserved and upheld. I firmly believe that these things can all remain as part and

parcel of the fabric of the Freeman of Newcastle whilst at the same time, moving with the times, adopting new ideas and ways of working and being open to change. There is strong evidence to support a progressive attitude within the Freeman and especially in the Stewards Committee and a steadfast desire to continue for at least another 800 years.

On a more personal level, tell us a little about what makes you tick?

I live on the beautiful Northumbrian Coast with my husband Steve and our very spoilt Border Collie Fizz. For relaxation, we walk for miles along our stunning beaches. We are staunch animal lovers and support many animal rescue centres including some overseas. We recently adopted an Egyptian Streetdog who took no time at all discovering we had soft, squishy sofas and she has installed herself firmly within our family as if she was born here.

I am a published author and am hoping to repeat that experience with tails (sorry, tales) of our rescue dog's adventures in order to raise funds for her rescue centre in Dahab, Egypt.

I'm really excited to be joining the Stewards Committee and being able to make a difference, I hope that people will feel free to talk to me about ideas and solutions and look forward to rolling my sleeves up and getting stuck in!

ESTATE MANAGEMENT



FLY TIPPING

During 2018 we have witnessed a significant increase in fly-tipping across our Town Moors. This behaviour is having a vast detrimental effect on the public right of air and exercise on the Moors, is putting the health and welfare of grazing cattle at risk and is taking a substantial amount of time and effort to rectify. Our staff are clearing all manner of detritus, such as glass, TVs, fridges, household rubbish and garden on an ongoing basis.



EVENTS

I can report that once again our Town Moors are proving more and more popular with many organisations. The calendar is again full for the coming year with several new proposals having to be assessed and considered.

With the sun shining and no rain the Moors were in perfect condition to host all the events that we had this year, which meant that there was no environmental impact on the Moors and no reinstatement works had to be carried out. All Agencies have reported back to say they had enjoyed a fantastic turn out and all will be returning next year.



The Pride relocated to Nuns Moor, Walter Terrace this July and although they experienced the largest parade ever and numbers of attendees had risen there were one or two operational issues with the site layout which has led the Pride to apply for next year's event to return to the Main Town Moor. Their plans are to incorporate more of the Exhibition Park which will assist in accommodating their infrastructure. Discussions are on-going between the Stewards Committee of the Freemen, the City Council and the Pride organisers to reach the optimum solution.

The word Mela means "to meet" and originates from the Indian sub-continent. It is commonly used to describe a large gathering of people celebrating artistic, religious or political events – a fair or a festival.



In the same way that many fairs or holidays in Europe would begin on the feast days of saints. Mela's in south Asia have their origins in religious gatherings such as, Eid, Vaisakhi or Diwali.

Established in 1993 the Newcastle MELA celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. The Stewards Committee continue to have a close working relationship with the organisers and the event where many local people have the opportunity to enjoy the Asian culture and food.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

The Stewards Committee have given permission for some 800 metres of fencing (pig net and wooden posts) to be replaced with 1.2-metre-high metal palisade fencing with rounded tops in powder coated green. This will give greater security to the grazing herd and it will be more aesthetically appealing. The works are due to commence in the New Year and weather permitting, will be completed before the cattle return at the end of March.

Winter works programme

An extensive programme of work has been discussed and approved by the Stewards Committee and includes:

- Claremont Road bridge and Grandstand Road entrance gates to be removed, rubbed down, repainted and rehung.
- Both tractor trailers to be rubbed down and repainted.
- Removal of post and pig net fence around Town Moor hills plantation prior to the installation of new palisade

fencing.

- All trees and shrubbery to be cut back to allow access for the contractor.
- Four new water troughs and bases to be installed, 2 on the main Town Moor 1 on Nuns Moor South and 1 on Hunters Moor.
- General garden maintenance and tree work to continue at Moor Bank.
- Approximately 80 timber tree guards to be removed to enable the fenced off areas to be returned to the grazing sward at Hunters Moor and Castle Leazes.
- The timber palisade fence that separates Nuns Moor South and the former Allotment site is to be removed. The removed timber is to be donated to Benwell Allotment Association to recycle for their internal fencing.

Kevin Batey

Town Moor Superintendent.

GRAZING OF THE TOWN MOOR HERD



COURTESY OF NEWCASTLE CITY LIBRARY, LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTION

Having experienced the wettest Spring in over a decade, we took the decision to postpone the start of our grazing season. This was to protect the early Spring and Summer grass growth which contains the best nutrients for the cattle. The Moors were monitored on a weekly basis, and as the weather improved, the grass began to flourish. The season finally opened, some three weeks late but as we moved into the Summer, we found ourselves within one of the longest periods of drought in decades. Protecting the Spring grass proved invaluable for Summer grazing.

As the cattle graze over the Summer months, the Town Moor Herd numbers fluctuate; the cattle selected for sale are moved, some of which become "Town Moor Beef" sold in some of our local High Street retailers.

We ensure the Town Moors have a varied mix of grass species, which enables us to offer a continuous sward which sustains around 700 cattle, including the Town Moor Herd from 31st March through to 31st October and beyond, every year.





The Moors have endured the best and worst of the prevailing weather conditions this year but with excellent preparation, have provided yet another year of excellent grazing and a lush green landscape complimented by the general public.

A significant investment in time, effort and money is made to ensure the grazing conditions are optimised every year. We employ the expert services of an ecologist to take soil samples every 5 to 8 years to ensure we keep the sward in the best condition.

Before the fertilizer is applied, we remove all the dead grass to allow fresh grass to grow and to maintain growth to the end of the season.



FAMOUS FREEMEN JOHN AND BENJAMIN GREEN

Barbara Nesbit

John and Benjamin Green were the architects responsible for some of Newcastle's most important buildings. They were father and son and were Freemen of Newcastle, members of the Bricklayers Company.

John Green was born near Ovington in the Tyne Valley in 1787, the son of a carpenter who manufactured agricultural machinery. The business started to take on building work and John joined it, specialising in architecture, with no formal training. In the 1820s he set up on his own as an architect and civil engineer in Newcastle. One of his first major projects was the Lit and Phil Building on Westgate Road in 1822, built in the neo-classical style then in fashion and which the Greens continued to adopt. He also designed a number of bridges including the Scotswood Suspension Bridge, built in 1831 and demolished in 1967, and Whorlton Bridge over the Tees.

Benjamin Green was born in Newcastle in 1811. He studied under Augustus Pugin who was an architect and draughtsman and father of the more famous Augustus Pugin who designed the Palace of Westminster. Benjamin joined his father in partnership in the mid-1830s and, although they worked on individual projects, they always took joint credit. They were said at the time to differ in that John was "a plain, practical, shrewd man of business" with a "plain severe and economical" style whereas Benjamin was "an artistic, dashing sort of fellow" with a style that was "ornamental, florid and costly"

The 1830s was a great time to be in the building trade in Newcastle. The Lit and Phil had been built and there had been some redevelopment of the north side of the city centre such as Eldon Square and St Mary's Place but in 1834 Richard Grainger produced his plan to redevelop the area now known as Grainger Town. This was put to the Town Council which at the time consisted of Freemen; the Municipal Corporation Act bringing democracy to local Government wasn't passed until 1835. The Council accepted the plan



and no time was lost putting it into action. This included the acquisition and demolition of many buildings including the Theatre Royal which had only been built in 1788.

John and Benjamin were responsible for the design of the current Theatre Royal, although it was probably Benjamin's work. Richard Grainger's plan for the area had been agreed in 1834 and the theatre was built and open in early 1837; how things have changed, but I don't suppose the locals got the chance to object. The Greens were also responsible for the column of Grey's Monument which was added to Grainger's scheme in 1837 when the money was raised by popular subscription following the passing of the Great Reform Act on his watch.

The Greens continued to design many buildings in the area; railway stations, houses, viaducts and monuments including Penshaw Monument in Co Durham.

John died aged 70 in 1852 and Benjamin died six years later aged only 47. Their business did not appear to carry on after their deaths but they left a substantial legacy that we can continue to enjoy in our lovely city.





VISIT TO LIT & PHIL

Barbara Nesbit

On 20 October, Ian Miller of the Shipwrights, organised a visit to the Lit & Phil in Newcastle.

The Lit & Phil, properly known as the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne was founded in 1793 as a "conversation club". In 1825 it moved into its current building on Westgate Road, near the Central Station. In the early days, George Stephenson demonstrated his miner's safety lamp and Joseph Swan the newly invented electric light bulb. Sir William Armstrong and Sir Charles Parsons each had a spell as President of the Society in the 19th century. Earl Grey, Thomas Bewick and other local luminaries were members. The current president is another Armstrong, Alexander of the quiz show *Pointless*.

The Lit and Phil still hosts lectures and concerts and has rooms available for hire. A number of clubs and societies meet there regularly. However, its main function now is to host the largest independent library outside London containing around 170,000 books, including fiction, non-fiction and children's books. It also has a vast collection of musical CDs and DVDs.

After a very interesting introductory talk our visit comprised a tour around the building and a chance to browse the books. There is certainly a broad collection, some a long way off the ground; apparently intrepid

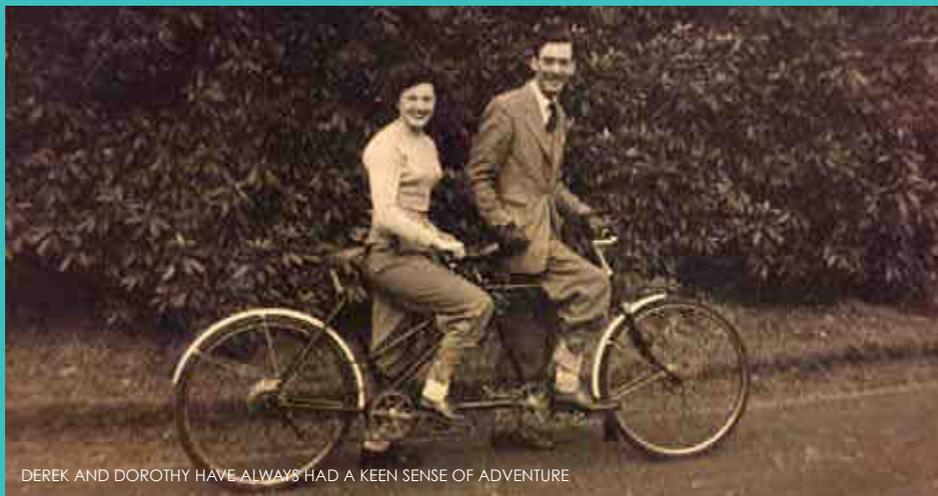
volunteers will fetch them for you. Most of us had no idea the library was there so it was quite a revelation.

The Lit & Phil is open to anyone who wants to look around, chat to a volunteer or have a coffee. You need to be a member to borrow books. There are around 2,000 members now and they would welcome more.

Full details are available on the website www.litandphil.org.uk. This also gives details of forthcoming events and how to book a room. Or you can just pop in and pick up a leaflet. The building is open from 09:30 until 17:00 or later, Monday to Friday and on Saturday mornings.



SPOTLIGHT ON... DEREK LOWDON



DEREK AND DOROTHY HAVE ALWAYS HAD A KEEN SENSE OF ADVENTURE

Each issue, we hope to bring you stories about Freemen who are shining examples and who go above and beyond the call of duty. In this issue we would like to introduce you to Cordwainer, Derek Lowdon.

Derek was born on the 11th November 1928 in Newcastle, and has always been very proud that his birthday falls on Armistice Day. The youngest of three sons, to John Henry and Winifred Milton Lowdon, Derek followed in his father's footsteps, as well as his brothers Milton and Arthur, to become a Freeman of Newcastle upon Tyne, in the Company of Cordwainers, and has taken an active role for the last 70 years.

Derek left school at 14 and entered the world of work at the Income Tax office in Newcastle. He was also a messenger for the ARP at nights during WWII.

At 17 Derek joined the RAF for his two years of military service, then did an extra eight months due to the Berlin Airlift. After the RAF, Derek trained as a sales representative, destined for a life on the road, yet in his 50 years in employment, he rarely missed a Company meeting.

Derek became a Freeman of the City of Newcastle at the Guildhall in February 1949. He was made a Cordwainer in June 1949 in the original Cordwainers Hall. He was Auditor for the Books of the Cordwainers 1964-1993 and from June 1993 to 2011 Derek was Senior Steward of the Company of Cordwainers.

Derek married his darling Dorothy in 1955 and they enjoyed a wonderful married life together until Dorothy sadly passed in November 2017. They have four children, Janice, Joanne, Tracey and Jason. Despite being the youngest, only Jason was eligible to become a Freeman and Cordwainer at the age of 20 in 1991.

Derek was delighted when the Freemen of Newcastle rules changed and he was able to introduce his three daughters to the Freelage in July 2010 and to the Cordwainer Company in June 2011. He now also has four grandchildren who are Freemen of the City.

Derek is the Cordwainer "Ancient" and presides in the Ancient's chair at all meetings. He takes the lead when voting of officials takes place and has an amazing memory and capacity for detail



of the First World War, he continues to be an active member of the Freemen. On his birthday, he attended a very moving Armistice Day service at his church, St Andrews in Monkseaton, where he also enjoyed birthday cake and wine with his fellow parishioners. This was followed by a family birthday party with his own children, grand-children, and great grand-children....and more cake and wine!!

Derek finally feels he deserves the title of 'Ancient' !

when issues are discussed and debated. Derek can always be relied upon to help and has mentored all of the Company Stewards since he stepped down in 2011. Ronnie Elliott, current Senior Steward said "Derek is a highly respected and esteemed member of the Cordwainer Company, his support for this Company and its members is invaluable"

Even though Derek turned 90 on Sunday 11th November 2018, which, of course, coincided with the Centenary of the end



A PROUD DAY FOR DEREK AND DOROTHY WHEN THEIR GIRLS COULD JOIN SON JASON AS FREEMEN OF THE CITY

PARKS TRUST

The Newcastle Parks Trust is the City Council's innovative response to budget cuts following a 90% reduction in funding over the last 7 years.

The City Council values all of its parks and allotments and decided to create the new body in November 2017 to ensure they continue to flourish and to protect them from further cuts.

They also engaged with the Freemen of the City as several allotments sites are part of the Town Moor and come under our responsibility hence, these allotments will not be included in the transfer to the trust and will be managed directly by

the Freemen. We shall work closely with the new Trust whenever events overlap with Town Moor land for instance, the proposed 2019 'This is Tomorrow Festival' on Exhibition Park which will require our joint co-operation. The Council has worked closely with partner organisations, including the National Trust and Heritage Lottery Fund and has developed the Trust following extensive engagement with the public across the City.

The charitable trust, the first of its kind in the UK, will take over the running of parks and allotments in 2019.

NUNS MOOR UPDATE



NUNS MOOR SITE NOW

In Issue 22, we explained the outstanding issues with transfer of sub-soil and drainage.

In November, following numerous and extensive surveys we received confirmation from the City Council that they have found an outlet that will give us the right conditions for our drainage to work to the standards that will satisfy Northumbria Water. However, there is a major gas pipe that runs up Barrack Road and we are awaiting the Specialist Engineers report which will hopefully provide the evidence required to prove that the depth of the gas main does not interfere with the depth of our pipe work from the site.



NUNS MOOR BEFORE THE CLEARANCE WORK TOOK PLACE





Works to be completed

Phase 1

- Determine drainage connection into Barrack Road infrastructure.
- Complete thorough stone pick and remove other foreign material from site.
- Re grade the sub soil to a more acceptable profile.
- Re model the swale on the eastern boundary.
- Install field drainage scheme.
- Import top soil, to a minimum depth of 150mm and maximum of 200mm cover across the site.
- Grade top soil and seed.

Phase 2

- Install new 1.8 metre high palisade fencing in powder coated green along the Nuns Moor Park boundary.
- Plant 44 new trees, species and scheme agreed with the Forestry Commission.
- Fence off tree planting scheme.

We envisage the phase 1 works to be completed by the end of 2019, enabling phase 2 to commence during 2020 and all going well the site will be open for the grazing of the Town Moor herd by the spring of 2021, hence enabling the right of air and exercise for all to enjoy.

Kevin Batey

Town Moor Superintendent.

Breaking News

It has recently come to our attention that the Town Moor Estate has once again been targeted by vandals. In this instance, a sizeable ditch was discovered and seven public footpath lighting columns were damaged, presenting a danger to the general public and pedestrians in particular. We continue to be vigilant and we are working with the City Council to tackle this structured vandalism.



ST MARY MAGDALENE AND HOLY JESUS TRUST UPDATE



In October of this Year the contract to build 49 new bungalows was completed. Once the compound and access roads, temporarily based on Hunters Moor were removed, our contractor entered the site and reinstatement works were carried out. Although still mild prevailing weather, we had concerns about grass seeding this late in the year but decided to

go-ahead on the basis the contractor would bear the cost of re-seeding in Spring 2019 if the grass seed failed to germinate.

All being well and if the seeding successfully germinates we envisage that this site will return as part of Hunters Moor grazing sward to facilitate the 2020 grazing season.

Kevin Batey
Town Moor Superintendent

MARY MAGDALENE CHRISTMAS FAYRE

On 27th November I popped along to the Mary Magdalene Christmas Fayre. I had arranged to meet Jessie Atkinson, one of the first Freeman tenants of the new Holy Jesus Bungalows for coffee and a chat.

General Manager Sharon Hepple and her team did an amazing job of dressing the dining room and entertaining the tenants with tombola, Christmas goodies, name the reindeer, bottle draw and fabulous Christmas tunes.

Jessie, whose late husband was a Cordwainer, introduced me to a group of her friends and neighbours. Whilst they've had some upheaval over recent months with temporary accommodation, building works, snagging and the like, they are a lively, friendly and supportive group of friends and neighbours. They've seen a number of changes over the years and agree they all enjoy living in the Holy Jesus and Mary Magdalene bungalows.

I visited a few of their beautiful homes and



SHARON AND HER TEAM GETTING INTO THE FESTIVE SPIRIT. THE CHRISTMAS "BLUES BROTHER" IS THE ACCOUNTANT NEIL!

met 103 year-old Chris Jackson from the Goldsmiths Company; an amazing woman who still lives independently with a little help from Jessie, who does some shopping for her.

Sharon has invited me back for the Carol Service on 21st December and I can't wait to meet up with my new friends for a catch up.

TOWN MOOR MONEY CHARITY (TMMC) SUMMER OUTING

Summer seems a very long way back, but in June, we enjoyed the last of the TMMC outings. After 40 years, changes to the format of TMMC means summer outings and pantomimes can no longer be provided for those receiving grants from the Town Moor Money Charity. Consequently, we had our final outing to our favourite hotel, the Shepherds, Carlisle for lunch and tea, spending the afternoon hunting for bargains at Keswick Market. Though we knew it was our last outing it was not a sad occasion, as the sun shone on us and we all had a thoroughly good day out to remember with pleasure.



MICHAELMAS GUILD 8TH OCTOBER 2018



Following Open Guild, the following 14 new Freeman were sworn in by Lord Mayor Councillor David Down.

Philip James Kitchen, Sophie Kitchen, Emily Simpson; Matthew Simpson, **Bricklayers.**

Suzanne Potter, **Colliers.**

Amy Marie Kirkup, **Cordwainers.**

James Andrew Charlton, Ian Charlton, **House Carpenters.**

Raymond John Taylor. **Joiners.**

Emily Thompson, Ryan Thompson, Jason Thompson, **Shipwrights.**

Richard Stephen Waugh, Lee Jason Waugh, **Upholsterers.**

Special thanks to Philip James Kitchen and Sophie Kitchen who travelled from Austria and to Richard Stephen Waugh who travelled all the way from South Australia to maintain this wonderful tradition.

Guildhall

Following the restoration of the external fabric of this Grade I listed building where the stonework was cleaned and bird netting installed, now that the work is complete this iconic building can be seen in all its glory.

We will be working closely with the City Council to review how best to preserve and enhance the interior of which most understandably we have a particular interest.

With regard to the proposed Licensed (late night) Café Bar on the ground floor, there have been no plans submitted by the leaseholder for any alterations, hence we continue to liaise with the City Council who are aware of our interest in any design reconfiguration which may be submitted.

Visitor's Tales

Peggy was very plump with a round bespectacled face and at first I visited her mother, a slim attractive old lady. Peggy told me that at a very early age, when out with her mother, folks would say "She doesn't take after you" and Peggy said to me I'd think "just my luck to look like my Dad!" At 90, her mother was briefly in a respite home in Whitley Bay where I visited her and she offered me 2/- for my bus fare! The old lady died a month later, shortly followed by Peggy's husband, leaving Peggy on her own with the onset of macular degeneration, such that when I called she could just make out that there was a man at the door.

I would take advantage of this and when she answered the door I would say nothing and she would say "Well, who is it?" and I'd reply "It's the man from Littlewoods with your money!" to which she'd say "Oh, it's you, you B, come in". Sometimes I'd say that I had come to make a convenience of her and she'd say "You know where it is, top of the stairs and leave your penny on the window sill." On coming downstairs I'd get a bunch of envelopes thrust at me asking if they are all junk mail. In her working life Peggy had been a barmaid apart from during the war when she was in the ATS. She said all the other girls liked her to read out her mother's letters and when it was hinted that she may be posted abroad, her mother forbade her, saying "Churchill can send his own daughter instead, you're not going!" Every other sentence contained a B word as a matter of course.

When I was 65 I told her I had a bus pass and she asked me how I'd got one as I wasn't old enough or I didn't look it – a fine compliment from one who can't see properly! Peggy's daughter and son-in-law had their own business and ran it from a large house in the country. They had some outbuildings modified to make two units for Peggy and her cousin and I called when she was settled in, her cousin had left

after a week as it was too quiet for her. Peggy said at first she couldn't settle in the big house but now she was at home in her wee cottage, which apparently had been a cow byre. I said "No wonder you were at home" and she said she didn't need insults from me as her daughter gave her plenty.

A year or two later she started ringing me up asking about a Freeman's bungalow but her health had declined such that she wouldn't be able to look after herself and in those days we were fortunate to have a care wing at Mary Mag. She said that she wanted to die in Newcastle not in the country where all you could hear was the damned birds! When she was installed, I took her a chocolate drink container with a slot cut in the lid and I'd wrapped paper around it bearing the words "Peggy's Swear Box, to be emptied daily (or sooner if full)". During another visit, and she introduced me to her priest as "the cheeky B who gave me that swear box!"

Her favourite tippie was whiskey and once she had a few drops too much and staff had a problem getting her off the floor, so the bottle was confiscated! Once while I was there the staff brought the bottle to give her the daily ration and I said "I see her name is on the bottle" and the girl said "Yes, we've written Peggy on it" and I said "No, I meant the other name on it, Famous Old Grouse!"

Prince Charles was due to visit and declare the new bungalows officially open, I was a trustee at the time and had the job of drawing residents names from a bowl to plan who would sit on a table beside him – one seat was left empty on each table so that he could sit there and have a few words with the occupants. Peggy was one of the lucky ones, so I asked her later how she had enjoyed sitting beside the Prince, she said she had been so overwhelmed that she just blubbered and made a complete fool of herself! Sadly, Peggy died before the law was passed for daughters to be eligible to become Freeman and pass it on to her daughter and grandsons.



30 years since the Newcastle Upon Tyne Town Moor Act 1988

On 20th December 1988, the Newcastle Upon Tyne Town

Moor Act came into force and repealed and modernised a number of previous Acts of Parliament relating to the management and handling of the Town Moor, amongst other things.

It's a most distinctive read – and is available on the internet should anyone want a copy. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of the City Council and the Freemen of the City via their official representatives, The Stewards Committee.

The Act sets out the way the Freemen manage their herbage rights and the associated environment in the heart of this great City, **often referred to as the "City Lung"** as well as setting out responsibilities to their respective charitable organisations.

Any changes to legislation are long and arduous and this Act would most certainly not



have been possible without the integrity and tenacity of our Stewards Committee under the effective leadership of Chairman, Sir Leonard Fenwick and the commitment of the then Vice Chairman Stephen Alderson, Val Dodds and Tony Flynn from the City Council, and our MPs Nick Brown and Jim Cousins.

One of the most important provisions of the Newcastle upon Tyne Town Moor Act 1988 is the grazing of cattle on the Town Moor. This right has existed for centuries and is administered on behalf of the Freemen by the Stewards Committee. In 2018, circa 600 cattle grazed on the Moors.

Where were you in 1988?

- Summer Olympics were held in Seoul, South Korea and were boycotted by North Korea. GB wins 3 gold medals
- 1988 was the year of the Dragon which brings Luck and Romance
- Lockerbie Pan Am flight 103 air disaster
- Edwina Currie resigns over "Salmonella in eggs" statement.
- Red Nose day raises £15m
- Eddie THE EAGLE takes flight in the Calgary Winter Olympics.

It is Amazing how time flies by!

SUPPORTING CITY PRIORITIES 30 YEARS ON

The Freemen continue to provide significant support to the City in key priority areas;

Newcastle City Council has centred its three-year plan around five priorities: Employment; Education & Skills; Environment; Health & Social Care; Housing.

The Freemen are a major contributor to key areas, in particular relating to the Environment and Health, through protection

and maintenance of our green spaces and enabling air and exercise.

Additionally, the Freemen are co-operating with the City Council on their plans for road infrastructure enhancements, specifically in relation to the Blue House roundabout junction.



Notice Board

Bereavements

Roy Blenkinsop
Coopers



Robyn Maule
Barber Surgeons



Ian James Hogarth
Barber Surgeons



James Burrell
Hostmen



Thomas Alexander
Tanners



David Sutherland
Tanners



Brian Foggin
Tailors



Norman Brian Atkinson
Ropemakers



Paul Taylor
Shipwrights



Vera Marshall
House Carpenters



Penelope Hawkes
Cordwainers



Eric Bell
Smiths



Company Notices



Hostmen's

Hostmen's meeting 12pm at the Merchant Venturer's Hall, Guildhall on 7th January 2019.

Goldsmiths and Colliers



Joint Head meeting between and Colliers will take place on 24th April at 7pm in the Dining Room of Mary Magdalene & Holy Jesus Hospital. Light refreshments will be served.



Forward Look to 2019

Christmas Guild will take place on 14th January 2019 in Newcastle Guildhall. Closed Guild for Company Stewards only, begins at 10.00am. Open Court of Guild for all Freemen begins prompt at 12 noon.

Easter Guild will take place on 29th April 2019 in Newcastle Guildhall. Closed Guild for Company Stewards only, begins at 10.30am. Open Court of Guild for all Freemen begins prompt at 12 noon.

The Lord Mayor's Parade and Church Service will be on Sunday 12th May. Robing at the Cathedral 9.30am with the Parade at 9.45am. There will be no bus this year, parking is easily accessible in the City centre.

Hoppings - 21st - 30th June.

Cancer Research UK Race for life
13th - 14th July.

Northern Pride - 19th - 21st July.

Moscow State Circus - 8th - 18th August.

Mela - 25th - 26th August.

Great North Run 8th September.

Michaelmas Guild will take place on 7th October 2019 in Newcastle Guildhall. Closed Guild for Company Stewards only, begins at 10am. Open Court of Guild for all Freemen begins prompt at 12 noon.

Remembrance Sunday Parade will take place on 10th November.



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