



The Worshipful Company of Needlemakers

The Master - Malcolm S. Samuels FCA

Senior Warden - Roger G Staines

Junior Warden - Pamela J Goldberg

Immediate Past Master - Michael G Cook

Needle News Autumn 2010

The Master's Column



Photo courtesy of Gerald Sharp Photography

Now that we are approaching the end of my year as Master it has given me time to reflect and to think back upon what has been a truly momentous year for both Jane and me, and one which we shall both cherish forever.

It was a great honour for me, one of which I am immensely proud, to have been elected as Master Needlemaker, and to follow the illustrious footsteps of my forebears of this office, going back to the times of Oliver Cromwell who, as Lord Protector, granted the Letters Patent in 1656, by which our Company was incorporated; following the restoration of the monarchy we applied for, and were granted our Royal Charter some eight years later in 1664.

Our Company has a long history and we have a reputation for being both very active and friendly. Sadly there is little needlemaking trade carried out in this country any longer but

our continued existence and survival, and that of our fellow Livery Companies, depends to a very large extent on fostering and developing the trades from which we were derived and in serving the wider community. I believe that the overriding common factor attributable to all liverymen is that this movement should, and must, continue. In this connection we must not rest on our laurels as new membership is the lifeblood of any Livery Company and I am pleased and delighted that a number of high quality nominations have been received for admission to the Livery.

I am pleased to note that our Charitable Fund continues to flourish and we always welcome new bequests. We were delighted to have formed an alliance with the Royal College of Surgeons of England whereby we provide funding for Educational Bursaries for junior surgical trainees. When one first links the Needle-makers with the Royal College there does not appear to be any immediate connection but, on closer investigation the synergy is obvious! I know that the needlemaking industry continues to work very closely with surgeons in developing new and ever more sophisticated needles for use by the medical profession worldwide; long may this continue! It is very gratifying to see our resources being put to such good effect.

We have had a number of highlights during my year as Master,

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Programme of Events for 2010

Thursday 30th September

Annual Service – St James' Garlickhythe

Installation Dinner – Fishmongers' Hall

Thursday 14th October

White Table Dinner – Innholders' Hall

Wednesday 24th November

Festival of St Cecilia – Westminster Abbey

Lunch venue to be announced

Tuesday 7th December

Carol Service - St James' Garlickhythe

Supper venue to be announced

2011

Next year's dates to be announced

These will be available on the website in the Members' area.

New Liverymen

We would like to welcome the following into the Livery.

Charles Phillips is a legally trained business consultant specialising in joint ventures between the UK and the Orient, especially China. He has run several times in the London Marathon.

Hedley Goldberg is a graduate of the College of Law at Bristol and a solicitor by trade and now a leader in the finance industry. He is the son of Assistant Pamela Goldberg, the Junior Warden.

Paul Bartlett is a Chartered Accountant specializing in tax and finance on European property. He is a member of Ashford Borough Council and a keen follower of greyhound racing.

Ian Greenfield is an Honours Graduate in Business Management. He works as an information technology specialist in the travel industry.

John C Headley III is a Texan, a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a specialist in banking and insurance. He has business interests in UK, Scandinavia and the United States.

Compiled by
Past Master Henry Milward

Edited by
Jill Cook

Notices

Obituaries

We wish to remember the following who are no longer with us

Rena Amery, wife of Past Master Bruce Amery, and who was Mistress in 1996.

Senior Past Master Alan King-Hamilton who joined the Livery in 1945 and was Master in 1969 (see article).

Marriages

Assistant Colin Tiffin and Tiz.

Assistant Geoff Lewis and Angie, in Switzerland.

Births

Born to serving Liverymen.

Hector Cooper born to Liveryman Steven Borthwick and Nicola.

Harriet Ann born to Liveryman Alex Milward and Debbie.

Ties

The new design of the tie is available from the Clerk at a cost of £20



Thanks

Finance Committee

At the Court Meeting in October Past Master Derek Foster was thanked for serving on the Finance committee for 25 years – firstly as Treasurer and then as Chairman.

Court of Assistants Appointments

We welcomed Philip Law to the Court at the April meeting

History – 60 years ago



The Master Mr Leslie Robert Jepson, congratulating Mr Albert Edward Milward (left) and Mr Alfred Ernest Apperley on receiving their Honorary Freedom of the Company after a Court Meeting in Redditch on 29th May 1951.

The granting of the status of Honorary Freedom was a great honour and mainly reserved for long serving employees within the industry. Much of the industry was in Redditch, Worcestershire and the Court regularly travelled up there to visit the industry and to hold Court meetings.



A Tribute to Senior Past Master His Honour Alan King-Hamilton 1905-2010

Photo courtesy of Gerald Sharp Photography



Alan became a Liveryman in 1945 and joined the Court in 1959, becoming Master in 1969.

At the Court on 14th April Past Master Derek Foster gave the following tribute.

“It is my privilege to say a few words in recognition of all that Alan King-Hamilton meant to us and the Livery. My brother will be remembering Alan at the lunch and so these few words relate to Alan as a Court member – a Court that

he served for over 50 years and continued to attend past his one hundredth birthday.

The newspaper obituaries talked about Alan’s controversial judgements and judicial comments, but there was never anything controversial about his appearances in this Court. We will miss his sage advice and sound judgement – and we will also miss his impish sense of humour. His legal training meant that he was able to see the real issues that needed to be addressed and he frequently steered our deliberations, gently but very firmly, away from our own red herrings, and back to the matter under discussion. His excellent memory also helped us to recognise previous discussions and decisions and to know when we were trying to reinvent the wheel rather than decide something new.

Alan was responsible for changing one livery tradition. Until he became Junior Warden in 1967, when incidentally my father became Master and David Culling’s father became Senior Warden, Court meetings were always held in the morning followed by lunch. This frequently meant that Alan could not attend because of his Old Bailey duties and so it was decided to have some Courts in the afternoon followed by dinner – as we continue to do today.

It has been a delight in recent years, as the years have taken their toll on Senior Past Masters, to have found myself sitting

next to Alan at Court Meetings. I miss having him next to me and we will miss his presence at our meetings – his wise advice, his sense of fun and his unfailing courteous manner.”

This was followed at luncheon by a tribute paid by Past Master Alan Foster:

“The Master has given me an awesome responsibility, but I am very privileged to be given the task of paying tribute to His Honour Judge King-Hamilton. A similar privilege was accorded me when I was invited to propose his health at the Court Lunch to celebrate his one hundredth birthday, only then he was to speak after me.

For those who did not know him, Alan was one of the City’s great after-dinner speakers. Those at our 350th anniversary dinner at Guildhall, with 650 people present, will remember Alan speaking, aged 102, with just notes opening with the phrase “When I was in my 90s”.

Alan was an outstanding lawyer serving in high positions in Middle Temple. Having served as a judge on numerous Assize Circuits in the Midlands, he then went to the Old Bailey and sat for many years hearing many famous cases.

It was as a Liveryman that we all know Alan, having been our Senior Past Master for many years. My family and Alan have been closely linked, as Alan served as my father’s Junior Warden in 1967 before himself going on to become Master two years later.

It was his kindness, support and wit for which he will be remembered. Anyone who has been Master will testify to the unstinting support which was always forthcoming from Alan. Anyone who has sat with him at Court meetings will miss his regular “bons mots” which were hilarious and relevant. Anyone who met Alan could see at first hand his inherent kindness and interest in others. You always came away feeling better for having been with him.

We have all lost a good friend who has touched each of us.

Charity

The Hon Chaplain’s Charity

We have supported an imaginative landscaping scheme in Walworth at Surrey Square Infant School (see diagram). This has given the school a new grassy play area with a slide and other facilities on a tightly-packed campus.



St James’ Garlickhythe

As our Mother Church, we supported the building of a Parish Room with toilet facilities. This was opened by the

Bishop of London in December. Senior Warden Roger Staines attended on behalf of The Master, accompanied by Jenny Staines. The Clerk and Liveryman Lyn Stone were also present.

Old Palace School

We were pleased to be able to assist in the School’s trip to Gilwell Park. A request has been made for new readers to join our existing number. Please contact the Clerk if you can spare a little time to help the younger children.

City Dip

Seven swimmers from the Company took part and the Needlemakers contributed £990 to the Lord Mayor’s Appeal. The City Dip takes place in March each year and we are very grateful to those Liverymen and their families and friends who take part: more would be welcome. Please contact the Clerk if you would like to participate in 2011.

Lord Mayor's Charity

The Lord Mayor Alderman Nick Anstee has chosen as his charity this year "Pitch Perfect" which supports music and cricket for communities in the most challenging boroughs of London.

Quilts in the Garden



Our picture shows the winner of the Visitors' Choice prize, Jacque Harvey of Holt, Norfolk, whose lovely quilt was entitled "Wax Lyrical". The design was inspired by an 18th century pillow sham. For those interested in quilting or needlework, this exhibition is held every April at Uttoxeter in Staffordshire.

Willard Wigan Exhibition

In November the Master arranged a private visit to the "My Little Eye" Gallery of Willard Wigan MBE in Bloomsbury before his exhibition of micro-sculptures went on tour. Twenty one Liverymen attended and found the exhibits fascinating and enjoyed meeting Willard Wigan.

Willard Wigan makes the world's smallest sculptures, working between heartbeats to avoid hand tremors. He uses tiny blades to make sculptures out of rice, as well as from grains of sugar and sand, and mounts them on pin-heads. His materials include gold, nylon, dust fibre and spiders' webs.

One of his other tools is a hair from the back of a dead fly, which he uses as a paintbrush.



Past Events

Master's Court Dinner

This was held at Drapers' Hall on a balmy evening in September, when the Court had a delightful reception in the beautiful gardens behind the Hall.

Installation Dinner

This was held at Painters' Hall and was preceded by our annual service at St James' Garlickhythe, at which our Chaplain gave the oration. The installation of the new Master was followed by a musical programme given by Matthew Featherstone, a flautist, who was the Winner of the 2009 Needlemakers' Woodwind Competition at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Festival of St Cecilia

This was held in November at St Paul's Cathedral and was followed by lunch at Balls Brothers' restaurant.

Willard Wigan - Eye of the Needle

The Master arranged a private viewing of the exhibition "Eye of the Needle" by the artist Willard Wigan, at which we were privileged to meet the artist. (See report below).

Carol Service

This was well attended at St James' Garlickhythe, the Company's mother church, followed by dinner at the local Thai Square restaurant.

January Court Luncheon

This was held at Butchers' Hall and was well attended despite the heavy snow. The former Lord Mayor (1991) Sir Brian Jenkins was our Guest Speaker and gave a very entertaining and amusing talk.

Skiing Trip to St Anton

The Livery yet again had a successful skiing party. This year it was organized to St Anton in Austria (see page 12).

Mansion House Banquet

We were honoured to have The Lord Mayor Alderman Nick Anstee and the Lady Mayoress welcome us to Mansion House.

The health of the 'Guests' was proposed by Assistant Dame Elizabeth Fradd and the response was by Professor Graham Zellick, the Master Draper.



Photo courtesy of Gerald Sharp Photography



Woodwind Competition

This was held at the Guildhall School of Music in March. We entertained the performers afterwards at the Baracca Restaurant.

United Guilds Service

This took place at St Paul's Cathedral and we were again delighted to be guests of The Worshipful Company of Innholders at their Hall following the service.

April Court Luncheon

This was held at the delightful Stationers' Hall (prior to the fire in July). It is a splendid hall, built in 1673 after the Great Fire of London and is a Grade I Listed building. At the Court and Lunch tributes were paid to our late Senior Past Master Alan King-Hamilton (see [tribute page 3](#)).



The Guest speaker was Dr Katy Emck from the charity 'Fine Cell Work' which is supported by the Needle-makers'. She talked about the work of the charity, teaching prisoners to sew and giving them meaning to their lives in prison. She brought examples of the fine work they create.

Buckingham Palace Gardens

It was a privilege to be invited to the gardens on Easter Day and despite the short notice the event was well supported and was a delightful early morning visit.

Victoria & Albert Museum

'Quilts 1700-2010' Exhibition

Having sponsored the renovation of two quilts, the Livery was delighted to have a special tour of the exhibition under the guidance of the Curator, Sue Pritchard. It was a fascinating tour of history and craftsmanship. The exhibition was seen by over 140,000 visitors over the three months it was open.

Inter-Livery Shooting Competition

For the second year, Liveryman Alex Arthur arranged for a team to compete in this enjoyable day in May at Holland & Holland's grounds on the outskirts of London. The team comprised The Master Malcolm Samuels, Immediate Past Master Michael Cook and Liverymen Alex Arthur and Geoff Lewis. Despite their relative inexperience, the team finished in mid-field and enjoyed a superb lunch after the event.

July Court Dinner

This was held at Butchers' Hall, where the Honorary Archivist David Henshaw was able to display some of our prized silver possessions. At the dinner our Royal School of Needlework presentations were made to Denise Burling and Samantha Durant. The Needle-makers' Sword was presented to Lieutenant Jonathan Slegg of the 3rd Battalion The Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment, our sponsored regiment. The commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel David Mogg, gave us an update of the Regiment's current work programme and achievements.

Needle-makers' Lodge

no 4343

Michael Cordery

In 1921, the Master of the Worshipful Company of Needle-makers, Sir Frederick Hall, assembled a group of like-minded Needle-makers and petitioned the United Grand Lodge of England for a warrant to found a Freemasons' Lodge exclusively for Liverymen of the Company. In January 1922, Lt Col Sir Frederick Hall DSO, war hero, MP for Dulwich and a member of Lloyds and the Baltic Exchange, was elected the first Worshipful Master of Needle-makers' Lodge No 4343. The following year he was succeeded by another founder member, Major Richard Rigg OBE, first as Worshipful Master of the Lodge and later as Master of the Company. Since then, a further twenty Masters of the Company have succeeded him as Worshipful Masters of the Lodge.

Meetings are held at Innholders' Hall in January, April, June and October. The principles of Freemasonry and the Livery Companies are similar in that they both follow mediaeval traditions of Freemen and trade societies which were set up for mutual support and protection. Freemasonry has, from its earliest days, been concerned with the care of orphans, the sick and the aged. In the last 30 years more than £45 million, raised entirely from freemasons, has been donated to non-Masonic charities; for example £1m to the Institute of Cancer Research and an equal amount to Ovarian Cancer Action. Of particular interest to Needle-makers are grants totalling some £3.9m from the Grand Lodge of Freemasons 250th Anniversary Fund to the Royal College of Surgeons of England, providing more than 200 Research Fellowships for trainee surgeons.

In order to demystify the image of Freemasonry, Needle-makers' Lodge is holding an Open Evening followed by a Banquet at Innholders' Hall on Thursday 14th October. All Needle-makers, including family and friends, are invited to join the Worshipful Master and his Officers for an enjoyable, informal evening learning more about Freemasonry. More details of the Open Evening may be obtained from the Lodge Secretary, Dean Buchanan, via mail@buchananarchitects.co.uk

Needlemakers' Visit to the Holy Land

The trip to the Holy Land was fascinating. There are some very well researched articles covering this trip. Some of these have had to be shortened, but the main content is still intact.



The Wailing Wall, Jerusalem

Day 1 Jerusalem

Jenny Staines

We met Aaron, our Israeli guide. Aaron was born and brought up in Western Jerusalem and did National Service from the age of 18 for 3 years.

Our first stop was at Mount Scopus to see the Hebrew University which had been cut off from West Jerusalem before unification of the City.

We visited the Mount of Olives to see the iconic view of the Temple Mount and the Cemetery with 70,000 Holy Graves. We could see the Kidron Valley to the north with the water source, the Gorge and the Hinnon Valley to the East. We were shown Mount Moriah where Abraham took his son Isaac for sacrifice.

King David founded the first Temple 3000 years ago very close to the water at Kidron but King Solomon built above the rock establishing the first Temple on the Mount. He made the area flat and built to the west and north. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed

the Temple and the Jews were in exile for 50 years. We identified the Golden Gate where Jesus entered Jerusalem - it is no longer used and is covered in. It would have led straight up to the Temple Mount. The Temple was restored by Herod but destroyed by the Romans 37 years after Jesus' death.

The Garden of Gethsemane was a lovely peaceful place fenced off with an area of very old olive trees and some flower planting of roses, geraniums and antirrhinums. The 4th Century Church had been destroyed but The Church of all Nations with purple and beige alabaster windows was built by Antonio Barluzzi in 1926 to replace it. The Rock of Agony where Jesus prayed is exposed in front of the altar. The mosaic decoration was blue with golden highlights. We saw the Site of Jesus' betrayal by Judas and subsequent arrest by Herod's soldiers. From the high position we saw the 2000 yr old Tollus, the Tomb of Absalom, which in the past has been a target for stone throwers as he did not revere his father. We also saw burial caves, containing one or more rooms.

We entered the Old City of Jerusalem by the Dung Gate, named for obvious reasons; in ancient times this was considered lucky! The Temple area is now the Al-aqsa Mosque.



The Temple Mount is governed by Muslims but policed by Israel. No Jews or non-Muslims are allowed to visit, as decreed in the 1967 Peace Agreement between Palestine and Israel. The High Priest was allowed to visit the Temple once a year. The Jews regard the Wailing Wall as the nearest point to the Temple and feel that the spirit of God is at the top of the Wall, which is 180ft high. Old arches formed a bridge to the Temple Mount to give access to the High Priest. The Wailing Wall is divided into 2 sections, two thirds for men and one third for women. We visited the Wall separately and were able to place messages in the cracks. We also saw a joyful family party bringing a boy under a canopy to his Barmitzvah at the Wailing Wall.

The Old Quarter of Muslim Eastern Jerusalem is an ancient arched, cobbled narrow set of alleyways and souks rising through a myriad of local shops. Part of it was also the Via Dolorosa and the 5th Station of the Cross was identified, where Simon of Cyrene carried the cross, and where there is a Cyrene Chapel. Station 5 of the Cross was the House of Veronica who dried Christ's face with a towel and we saw Station 7 where Jesus fell for the second time. It was surprising to find this sad journey taking place through such a confined commercial backdrop.

We then left the Muslim Quarter and entered the smaller Christian Quarter to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with its 2 great domes. It is built on the site of the Crucifixion (now inside the ancient City Walls) where there were also burial caves. The place is called Golgotha as it was shaped like a skull. Helena, Mother of Constantine, was purported to have found the remains of the Cross and, funded by her son, built the Church above the crucifixion and burial sites. It was destroyed by the Muslims in the 7th Century and rebuilt by the Crusaders in the 12th Century; six Christian Religions co-exist in it. We saw the 10th Station of the Cross where Christ was stripped and the 11th Station where he was nailed to the Cross. The 12th Station was his Crucifixion and Death. We saw the Stone of Anointment for burial, and under the Rotunda of the Church there was a Necropolis made of wood to cover Joseph of Arimethea's Tomb.

In 1948 synagogues and homes were lost to Jordan and the Jews left their homes to go from East to West Jerusalem. Synagogues were destroyed and the area was occupied by Arabs for 19 years. In 1967 Jews came back to rebuild their homes. The Synagogue was rebuilt, causing controversy, as the dome was visible on the skyline and the Muslims did not want it to detract from the Golden Dome, so it was adjusted to be acceptable. We then saw ruins of the Cardo (Heart Street), built by the Romans, paved and colonnaded and running from South to North. We went through the Zion Gate, dating from the 3-4th century, which was damaged by bullet holes from the Six Days' War.

Lastly, we went to Mount Zion to visit the Tomb of King David. The building was erected in the 12th century to celebrate King David and in the 16th century the Ottomans turned it into a Mosque. It was opened again in 1948 and we visited King David's Tomb, segregated into male and female sides. The Upper Room of the building is said to be on the site of a house where the Last Supper took place. This room was also where the Visitation of the Holy Spirit to the Disciples took place on the Feast of Pentecost 50 days after Easter and so is the point from which the Christian Church started. Pictures painted by Leonardo da Vinci depict this room as it is today.

Day 2

Masada and the Dead Sea

Assistant Dame Liz Fradd

Our travels on Day 2 took us south down to the stark Judean desert, the lowest place on earth, through the West Bank, which has 400 miles of wall surrounding it. We passed a number of Kibbutz growing dates and pomegranates. Our first stop was Quarum which is the site of the most important discovery in the history of the Jewish people. In 1947 the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered inside earthen jars in a high cliffside cave by a Bedouin shepherd boy searching for a stray goat. We walked around the excavations of the settlement of the Essenes, the Jewish sect that wrote the scrolls including books of the Old Testament and Essenes' own texts.



Cave at Qumran

The Essenes (who were celibate) were a breakaway sect who believed they were the chosen people of Israel. They moved to the desert in about 150 BC to escape the liberalism of their fellow Jews. They were disbanded by Roman invaders in AD 68.

We walked through a small museum and watched a short film about their life.

We continued our journey south to Masada, (not to be confused with Asda) a desert mesa which rises high above the Dead Sea. We ascended, via a cable car, to the UNESCO World Heritage fortification of King Herod. The fortification was built on the sheer-sided plateau sometime between 103 and 76 BC before passing into the hands of Herod the Great in 43 BC. He saw the fortress as a potential refuge from his increasing foes. He strengthened the defences and added barracks and storehouses to the 14 water cisterns (filled, as they were in Quarum, by flash flooding and capable of holding 40,000 cubic meters of water, in other words enough to last 10 years). His private apartments on three levels had the best views and a breeze – “Location, Location, Location”! It was an amazing achievement given that they had no modern technology to assist them, only slaves to demonstrate the ambition of Herod. He died without needing to use his hideaway.

In AD 66 the Jews rose up against the Romans in the first revolt.

A group called the Zealots captured the lightly guarded Masada. After four years the uprising was finally suppressed and the Romans turned their attention to the mountain-top stronghold.

The sole account of the siege comes from Flavius Josephus, a 1st century historian.

He records how the Romans, under the command of Flavius Silva, set up 8,000 men in eight camps around the mountain base, hoping to starve the Jews out. They waited six months without success so built an enormous earthen ramp up the fortress wall to gain access. The Jews, recognizing they were likely to be defeated, realised they had two options: namely either to fight it out resulting in slavery if they survived, or to determine their own destiny. They decided on the latter and set fire to their homes and possessions. That done, ten men were chosen by lot and given the task of killing the remainder. Nine of the ten were then executed by their last companion before he fell on his own sword. Before doing so he set light to half of the food stores in order to show the Romans they had made their decision. "Victory over the enemy" was therefore assured.

We saw the stones which bore the names of the last ten men from whom they had drawn lots. Only two women and five children remained alive. When the Romans broke into the fortress they were astonished and even admired the course of action taken. A total of 916 people had died and the mass suicide marked the end of the Jewish presence in Palestine. Our guide related this haunting story as we stood in the shade, on a boiling hot day, imagining what it must have been like to have carried out such a terrible task and reminding ourselves of the importance of peace.

We left Masada for a late lunch at Kibbutz Elin Gedi, one of the country's most attractive oases. Elin Gedi is a lush area of fresh springs and waterfalls, pools and tropical vegetation nestling in an arid desert landscape. It also has a spa and beach where we tried floating in the unsinkable salty water of the Dead Sea, and covered ourselves with mud. Floating was easier for some than others! A few were determined to turn over, in spite of being warned not to put their faces in the water. Some kept losing their balance, but

others calmly drifted until the call for a graceful synchronized float. This was captured on film and is possible to be viewed if the price is right.

Day 3

Bethlehem

Carolyn Ezekiel

In the morning we had the chance to shop, walk, and swim - or all three. At 12.30pm our bus set off to take us for lunch to nearby Ramat Rachel on the way to Bethlehem. This is a kibbutz on a large and attractive campus near the site of the tomb of Rachel, mother of Joseph and Benjamin. It had suffered badly at the hands of Arabs when Israel was newly formed and had withstood fighting when Jerusalem was attacked in her War of Independence after 1948.

Only a few yards separate Jerusalem from Bethlehem but the contrast between the two could not be greater. We moved from a modern, sophisticated and dynamic city to an Arab town with narrow, precipitous streets, lined chaotically with

dilapidated or unfinished buildings. According to a ruling by the Israeli Government, we had to swap driver and guide at the check-point in the concrete wall protecting Jerusalem from would-be suicide bombers. So - Israeli to Arab, Motti to Youssef and Aaron to Ibrahim.

Street vendors besought us on all sides and we felt mean ignoring them. But we'd already had our fill of shopping at Hussein's gift shop! There, we'd had plenty of time to browse and buy before it was time to proceed to Manger Square. Appropriately for a group of Needlemakers, we threaded ourselves gingerly through "the eye of a needle" - which was the door half-blocked defensively by the Crusaders into the Church of the Nativity. This, re-built in the 6th century by the Emperor Justinian, is the oldest Christian church in Israel. It is an impressive building, roofed with massive cedar beams and hung about with an array of gleaming sanctuary lamps. The original mosaic floor can be seen through a trap door. We looked at this and watched the Greek Orthodox Mass taking place while we, with several hundred others, waited patiently in a queue to see Jesus's birthplace. This is marked by a large silver star set in the marble floor of a small crypt. The position of the manger was also indicated and the small area was approached and exited by 14 steep and slippery marble steps. It was quite a relief from the feeling of slight claustrophobia to move up and out into the serene and peaceful cloister of the Roman Catholic church of St Catherine, next door.



Church of the Nativity

Our Bethlehem visit concluded with a visit to Beit al Liqua. This is a Christian centre set up and run by Lutheran evangelicals. Their representative, Pastor Johnny, spoke to us for almost an hour and showed us round. It was an impressive place - a calm and quiet oasis in an anything but calm and quiet town. There was an elegant, large meeting room, a grassy playground outside and imaginatively equipped kindergarten rooms. There was space for welcoming pre-school children, teenagers and housewives. As far as we could gather, anyone in the 65% Christian and 35% Muslim population of Bethlehem could attend, and a new guest house and indoor play area was being



built. We were all very moved and impressed by the dedication we saw and this visit left us feeling a little more comfortable about ignoring the beggars outside.

Then it was back to the bus and through the check-point, where a very black Ethiopian Israeli armed with a large gun came inside the bus to check us out. We weren't sure who was more frightened!

Our evening concluded with dinner at an Israeli-Arab restaurant called "Naurah", a 30 minute drive westward in Abu-Gosh. This is a suburban village whose population consists of Christians and Muslims but which is, nonetheless, completely integrated within Israel. It was another delicious meal of many salads, meat kebabs and chips.

Day 4

Nazareth and Galilee

Jackie Foster

We were all up in time for breakfast at 6.30am – what a disciplined group! The coach left for Nazareth and Galilee at 7.30am, with Aaron keen to put us straight over what he called "media distortion" with regard to the present situation in Israel - we had to constantly remind ourselves that we were being shown things through his Israeli lens. As we drove out of Jerusalem the 400 mile-long wall erected in 2004 was very much in evidence. He emphasized that its purpose was to protect Israeli citizens from suicide bombers coming from the West Bank and to make Jerusalem safe for tourism. In 2000 it was decided to divide Israel into three zones. The Palestinian cities of Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus, Jericho and others were designated as Zone A, where security issues are the responsibility of the Palestinian Government. In Zone B, where Israelis and Palestinians live alongside each other, the responsibility is shared – civic is Palestinian and security Israeli. Zone C is Highway 90, with the exception of Hebron, which contains the tombs of the Patriarchs and has a full Israeli battalion to protect the Israeli minority. There is deep resentment among the Israelis that Hezbollah is stockpiling weapons in Lebanon supplied by Iran and Syria.

Aaron also told us about the "right of return", which is the legal instrument to allow any Jew to come to Israel and receive a passport and citizenship. Black Ethiopian Jews (descended from the two lost tribes of Israel) are included in this right.

He pointed how the Kibbutz had changed over the years from socialism to capitalism – it is now more a business than a way of life. Moshava settlements have also developed, consisting of various sized properties with small farms attached.

We learned that Nazareth is a city of 80,000 Arabs – 75% Muslim and 25% Christian. None are Jews but all are Israeli citizens. It was as we were on our way up to the Church of the Annunciation there that Yvonne Cannell accidentally tripped over a large bollard and fell heavily, damaging her face and breaking her left wrist and two bones in the other arm. Fortunately, Simon and Liz Fradd were on the spot and in no time she was in an ambulance and on her way to hospital in Tiberias (our lunch-time destination). There she was X-rayed and scanned – she remained there until we could pick her up at the end of the day.

Everyone was therefore in a state of shock by the time we

arrived at the Church of the Annunciation, built on the site of the Angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she was to be the Mother of God. We learned that the present church had been built between 1952 and 1969 by the Franciscans on the site of a 7th century Byzantine Church.



Church of the Annunciation

After spending some time in the church, we continued on our way to Galilee, where we lunched at the delightful Ein Gev Kibbutz Restaurant. Just above our table swallows had nested and proceeded to feed their insatiable chicks all through lunch – it was fascinating. We then took a boat from the nearby quay across the Sea of Galilee to Capernaum. As we set out the crew raised the Union Jack and we all sang "God Save the Queen", which felt somewhat strange as we were experiencing the beautiful, peaceful lake where Jesus spent three years of his ministry and performed many miracles – the price of tourism!

We landed at Capernaum and went up to the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus had preached the Sermon on the Mount. A beautiful octagonal church was built there by the Franciscans in the 1920s. It was interesting to learn that pilgrims had ignored this area since the 7th century until the 19th century, when excavations began and the Catholic Church built churches on the various identifiable holy sites. We visited Peter's house, which has been confirmed as 1st century by the



Mount of the Beatitudes

graffiti of pilgrims – there is also evidence of 4th and 5th century churches. Safed, Tiberias, Jerusalem and Hebron are known as the four holy cities of Israel.

We returned to Tiberias to pick up Yvonne from the hospital and tried to make her as comfortable as possible in the back of the coach for the long journey back to Jerusalem.

Day 5

Jerusalem

Liveryman Neil Loader



Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum

A short journey took us to Ammunition Hill, a stronghold of the Jordanian Army and scene of one of the fiercest battles of the Six Day War. On the way we passed through the ultra orthodox Jewish area, where the Jews have isolated themselves from the rest of the community. They have no regard for the State of Israel, but are happy to live on social security and encourage procreation to enlarge their community, currently 7% of the population.

Like so many others in Jerusalem, Ammunition Hill is a most impressive memorial site and along with the song “Jerusalem of Gold” and the Wailing Wall is regarded as one of the three key symbols telling the story of the 1967 Six Day War. We saw in the museum photographs, exhibits and a film of the War, before standing by the trenches which the Jordanians had dug to oversee the Israeli buildings. Aaron took time to explain the difficulty and cost of lives in regaining control of the Hill by the Israelis.

West of Jerusalem we visited the Yad Vashem - Holocaust Memorial Museum. The buildings were impressive and immaculately maintained. We visited the gardens, where Aaron explained the objectives of the memorial. He said that the main aim, rather than commemorating the dead, was to highlight the horror and catastrophic consequences of the anti-Semitic activity over such a long period and such a wide area, in the hope that such a vicious campaign would never again be contemplated. The Holocaust was responsible for the death of one third of the world population of Jews, due solely to German ideology. Non-Jews are also remembered for the part

they played in helping ameliorate the suffering, such as the well-known Oskar Schindler and Portuguese consul Aristades de Souza Mendes, who assisted many Jewish immigrants in their movement across Europe by issuing visas against regulations. He was punished and suffered ruin, but after the war he was quoted as saying “I’d rather be with God against man rather than be with man against God”.

The museum consisted of nine rooms, each of which emphasised different aspects of the horrors of the Holocaust, illustrated by a film, photographs and personal reminiscences. It was very moving and harrowing. A visit to the Hall of Remembrance and the Children’s Memorial completed the tour.

King David Hotel, Jerusalem



We moved on to the Israel Museum which includes an outdoor model of the City of Jerusalem during the Second Temple Period (66AD). This was the last year of its pride and beauty prior to the Roman invasion and total destruction in 67AD. The model was built in 1965 by an Israeli archaeologist and modified after a number of discoveries were uncovered during the Six Day War in 1967.

We then went on to the Shrine of Books to view the Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1947.

We dined that evening in a typical Moroccan restaurant, where we were joined by Simon and Liz, who had better news of Yvonne Cannell's progress after her accident.

Day 6

Tel Aviv

Liveryman Lynette Stone

A welcome more leisurely start to the day – we set off at 9am! Travelling west to Tel Aviv along Highway 1 we passed the armoured trucks along the roadside that remain of the convoy in 1948 to connect Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. As we crossed the Hyalon Valley we were surrounded by fields of sunflowers.

Tel Aviv (meaning new spring recognising a new life or season) is in complete contrast to Jerusalem – 40 miles away and a difference of 2000 years. A young, secular, cosmopolitan city with a variety of building styles, it is flat with a sandy beach. It is the second largest city in Israel with a population of 450,000 and is the commercial and financial centre of the country. Approaching the city, it seemed to have a skyline of a little Manhattan.

The tour of the city passed Bauhaus-style buildings in Rothschild Avenue, the centre of the café society, the Culture Centre, which is the home of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, City Hall and Rabin Square, with the memorial at the

assassination site. We then travelled through leafy streets to the sea shore, where most of the hotels are sited next to the beach, and along the beach road to Jaffa.

A magnificent clock tower marks the entrance to Jaffa, for 400 years an Arab Ottoman city, which has a mixed Arab and Jewish population. Jaffa has been a major port for 4000 years and thus is older than Jerusalem. From Old Jaffa there was a magnificent view back towards Tel Aviv. Jaffa has long been the gateway to the Holy Land and in 1887 the Jews built a new neighbourhood away from the Arab town. In 1909 Tel Aviv was established, with 66 families drawing lots for each of the 66 plots of land. It was in Tel Aviv, with Jerusalem isolated, that Ben Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel on 14 May 1948.

Walking through the old town we were fascinated by the old stone buildings, most of which have been converted into galleries – the Meisler Gallery drew much interest from the group – and a tree growing in a suspended round container. Carefully descending steep steps to the Old Port, we passed the house of Simon the Tanner where, it was recorded in the Acts of the Apostles Chapter 10, Peter stayed when he visited the church in Jaffa. Lunch was a wonderful experience at a restaurant on the quay side at the Old Port. We were provided with fantastic platters of absolutely delicious fresh fish, chicken and kebabs, excellent salads and juicy watermelon. Just right for such a hot sunny day. The afternoon was spent visiting the craft market, held each Tuesday and Friday, on Nachlat Benyamin Street, where some Needlemakers succumbed to the delights of jewellery and BIG artworks.

The Master and Jango welcomed us all to the Shabat meal which was another delicious repast. This was succeeded by a typical Needlemakers' gathering at which Past Master David Ezekiel thanked the Master and his Lady, Jane, for leading us on such a wonderful week's excursion. A thank-you presentation of a modern style menorah was made to the Master and Mistress. The Needlemakers' Troubadours were then led by Caroline Ezekiel in the rendition of a specially written holiday ditty of many verses with everyone joining in for the chorus. It was a grand finale to the week.



the first of which was being invited to participate in the Guard of Honour to welcome the Lord Mayor on his return to Mansion House. This is allocated amongst the smaller Livery Companies on a rotational basis and even the cold November rain could not dampen the enthusiasm or enjoyment of the occasion!

During this year we were pleased to have become associated with Fine Cell Work, the charity which has been harnessing the



latent skills of some of our most hardened criminals who now take pride in their stitching activities. The fact that their work demonstrates sufficient quality such that it is sold generating income for this charity and for themselves is truly amazing, as is the encouragement that they derive for new skills and the hope for a better future when they are released. We were pleased to support the "1700-2010 Quilts Exhibition" organised by the Victoria & Albert Museum, where a quilt produced under the auspices of Fine Cell Work was exhibited and where we also sponsored two of the splendid quilts on display.

Following the precedent set in previous years of an organised overseas trip for members of the Livery we were pleased that this year an intrepid group of Needlemakers completed a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. For many of our party, this was their first visit and Jane and I were thrilled and delighted at their collective reactions when experiencing at first-hand the venues about which we had all learned during our childhood Bible studies.

Finally, my thanks go to the Members of the Court, the Wardens and all members of the Company for their support and encouragement during this past year and I take this opportunity to wish my successor, Roger Staines, and his wife, Jenny, an equally enjoyable and exciting year.



Master, Mistress, Wardens, Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress and The Master Draper

Needlemakers' ski trip 2010 – St Anton

Angie Lewis

You were missed if you were not able to join the happy band of skiers at the end of January in St Anton, Austria.

Picture the scene... a wonderfully warm, comfortable, friendly hotel cocooned us from the chilly cold and snow outside. Imagine the blazing fire, mouth-watering selection of food, wine and beverages which sustained us. The conviviality of fellow Needlemakers, friends new and old. Our comfy slippers and cuddly clothes for the evenings, when the conversations varied from the excitement and explorations of the day to politics, high finance, knitting patterns, sewing skills, books yet to read and playing team quizzes with other guests in the hotel (we came second).

We ventured out in the evenings to the centre of the village, discovering highlights of music and dance with groups from all corners of the world, bars and a beautifully illuminated church with paintings on the exterior walls so typical of Austria. We spent one evening in a beautiful old mountain restaurant, eating the house speciality of huge platters of pork, joining in singing and dancing and finishing with an exhilarating toboggan ride back down to the village.



During the day we were protected from the snow, fog, cold, winds and sunshine in our warm waterproof technical equipment, tanning our faces and warming our toes. Some days were particularly challenging, with snow and fog hampering our visibility; we explored not only the area directly above St Anton but also visited Lech and Zurs, where we met up with friends and enjoyed lunch together in a cosy mountain hut, with much singing and jollity, including sliding down banisters to the loo (yes really).

Planning for 2011's trip is in the early stages. Are there any keen skiers out there who would like to join us?

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