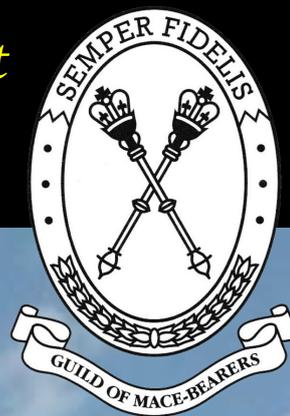


The Mace-Bearer

Celebrating one-hundred years since the first formal gathering of a group of Mace-Bearers



THE MAGAZINE OF THE GUILD OF MACE-BEARERS 2025

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Editorial

Welcome to this very special edition of *The Mace-Bearer*, celebrating one hundred years since the first formal gathering of a group of Mace-Bearers. Who knew, when they convened that meeting in Lancashire in 1925, that 100 years on there would be a thriving Guild bearing the name.

I hope that many of you reading this will have been able to join us for the conference at Liverpool University in July, and the extremely elegant dinner that evening at the Victoria Gallery and Museum. It was QUITE an occasion, and as you will see from the articles which follow, the Guild committee truly did us proud. On the day, our beautiful new Guild mace, (created by Goldsmith extraordinaire Ged Collins and Sam Semwayo), was presented to the Prime Warden by Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons Judith Cummins MP. During the evening, we had the honour of the company of The Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside as well as The Lord Mayor of Liverpool as our guests for dinner.

This issue is something of a souvenir, and we affectionately hear from Richard Strudwick, one of our most respected Freemen of the Guild, reflecting on his experiences, and from Alan Spencer (one of the Masters of the Guild and Southampton Town Crier.) A former editor of our magazine, Alan had a great deal to do with the ongoing process of having a new mace designed and created specifically for the Guild. We would also like to warmly congratulate Susan Spencer on 20 years with the Guild: Her contribution and impact on this magazine has been considerable, and I follow in their footsteps with no little respect.

Glenn Martin James, Guild Editor



Glenn Martin James editor@macebearer.com



Alan Spencer, Master of the Guild

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THE GUILD OF MACE-BEARERS

OBJECTS

To uphold and preserve the customs of the civic and corporate life of the country and Commonwealth and to advise thereon.

To collect and disseminate information that will assist members in the performance of their duties.

To uphold the position and dignity of the office of Mace-Bearer within the civic and corporate domain.

To promote the spirit of comradeship and co-operation amongst its members.

To encourage a degree of uniformity in civic and corporate ceremonial without infringing the peculiar and characteristics customs of individual towns and corporations.

To assemble its members periodically to discuss matters of professional interest.

IDEAL

The Guild shall be strictly non-sectarian and non-political and shall not seek the status of a trade union.

MOTTO

Semper Fidelis (Ever Faithful)

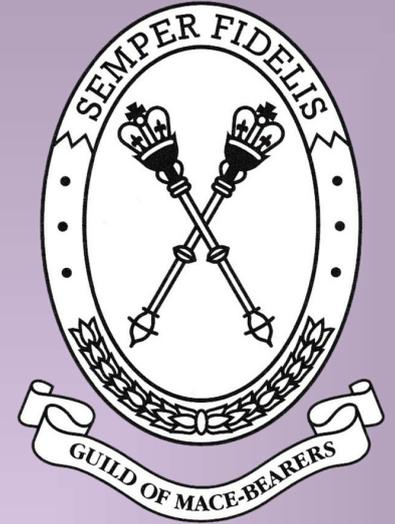
Why Join the Guild? - What's in it for me?

If you carry a mace and take part in (or organise) major civic or university processions and ceremonial events then this is the Guild for you.

Our members have a wealth of experience of these matters including who should be in a procession, what order they should be in and how they should be marshalled and announced. At less formal occasions the rules of protocol can be just as tricky. Should the Mayor wear his chain at a funeral? Can the Mayoress attend events in his stead? Does the Chancellor always enter last? Who should sit on the host's right at dinner? All these questions and many more are in the domain of the mace-bearer and the Guild of Mace-bearers is where you can get real answers from experienced colleagues.

As a member you will receive a membership certificate and badge and a whole lot more. You get a copy of the *Manual of the Mace* – A pocket sized book which is a complete road map to success for any new mace-bearer. It includes sections on correct forms of address, (do you know how to announce the Lord Lieutenant?) modes of dress (what should you advise the Mayor to wear for a royal garden party) and suggested formats for all kinds of civic visits (what should you advise your Chairman to do at a local football match?). Members also receive the annual Guild review magazine, training opportunities and access to our Facebook group.

THE GUILD COUNCIL



The head of the Guild is the Prime Warden and they are supported by their deputy, the Renter Prime Warden.

The Guild is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive Officer, supported by the Guild Clerk and the Guild Bursar.

The Guild is governed by a Council consisting of the Prime Warden, the Renter Prime Warden, the Chief Executive Officer, the Guild Clerk, the Guild Bursar, the Guild Editor, the Guild Training Officer, the Guild Webmaster, the Guild Welfare Officer and a number of non-executive Council Members up to a maximum equivalent to not more than 5% of the total Guild membership.

Prime Warden	Paul Mayhew	primewarden@macebearer.com
Renter Prime Warden	Ashley Winter	renterwarden@macebearer.com
Chief Executive Officer	Peter Legg	webmaster@macebearer.com
Guild Clerk	Adam Tregoning J.P.	clerk@macebearer.com
Guild Bursar	Paul Mayhew	bursar@macebearer.com
Guild Editor	Glenn Martin James	editor@macebearer.com
Guild Welfare Office	Ashley Winter	welfare@macebearer.com
Guild Web Master	Peter Legg	webmaster@macebearer.com
Guild Training Officer	Mark Crosskey	training@macebearer.com
Non Exec Council Members:	John Davies	
	David Hawkins	
	Richard Hunt	
	Colin Price	
	Michaela Squelch	
	Nick Chapman	

There are currently several vacancies on the Guild Council and we would welcome anyone interested in joining either in a particular role or as a Non-executive member. Guild Council meetings are held quarterly, online, lasting around an hour, so the commitment is not onerous. Come and help us steer the direction of YOUR Guild.

THE PRIME WARDEN



As Prime Warden, I am honoured to reflect on an exceptional year for the Guild of Mace-Bearers. This year, we not only upheld the highest standards of civic protocol across the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland but also celebrated a landmark moment: the centenary of the first gathering of mace-bearers in 1925. This year has been defined by unity, remembrance, and pride in our ancient office.

The focal point of our centenary commemorations took place in Liverpool, where mace-bearers from across the country gathered to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the first formal meeting at Knowsley Hall in 1925. This milestone in Lancashire laid the foundation for what would evolve into the Guild of Mace-Bearers in 1933. Colleagues travelled from councils, boroughs, and cities across the UK, showcasing an extraordinary display of professional unity and respect for our shared traditions.

One of the defining moments of the celebration was the unveiling of our bespoke Guild mace, specially commissioned for the occasion. This magnificent piece is believed to be the first mace to bear the cypher of His Majesty King Charles III, linking our centenary celebration directly to the new Carolean era. In an especially memorable moment, the mace was formally presented by Judith Cummins MP, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons (First Deputy Chair of Ways and Means), underscoring the national significance of the occasion. The craftsmanship, symbolism, and presentation of the mace set a tone of reverence and renewal, bridging our past with our future.

The Liverpool gala also marked another milestone: my investiture for a second term as Prime Warden, held on 26 July 2025. To be entrusted once again with this role, especially during the celebration of the first gathering of mace-bearers, was both humbling and profoundly meaningful. Standing in a hall filled with individuals dedicated to civic dignity and ceremonial excellence was a privilege I will never forget. The gala was beautifully attended by mace-bearers from every corner of the country. Many attendees remarked on the warmth, humour, and sense of belonging that the celebration created. It was not simply a dinner but a reunion of professionals bound by centuries of ceremonial tradition.

The Guild continues to grow, with 201 members serving 120 authorities and institutions across the UK and Northern Ireland. This breadth of representation is a testament to the continued importance of civic ceremony in public life and to the dedication of every member who carries a mace, provides protocol guidance, and upholds the dignity of their civic head. As we carry the momentum of our Liverpool centenary into the coming year, I encourage each of you to share your knowledge, experiences, and passion for the role. Our strength lies in our unity, professionalism, and commitment to tradition.

Thank you to everyone who helped shape this historic year, whether by attending the gala, supporting colleagues, or representing your authority with pride. Here's to the next century of the Guild of Mace-Bearers.

Paul Mayhew
Prime Warden



Ashley Winter
renterwarden@macebearer.com

Photo – Dave Daw Photography

RENTER PRIME WARDEN

The role of Renter Prime Warden is not onerous. Since the changes to the Constitution removed the automatic progression from Renter to Prime Warden, and the removal of the necessity to organise your own Installation, much of the role has been culled however Ash is never one to sit on the sidelines and watch!

Since taking on the role he has thrown himself wholeheartedly into the job, deputising for the Prime Warden when required, but also taking a very active part in the running of the Guild Executive on a day to day basis. Furthermore, with his professional experience in dealing with welfare issues for armed forces veterans he was the ideal person to take up the reigns as Welfare Officer when David Knight stepped down.

They say, if you need a job doing ask a busy man—so we did, and he said yes. You can read Ash’s take on his new Welfare role on page 9.

(words - Peter Legg)



Peter Legg
webmaster@macebearer.com

2025 was a turbulent year worldwide but I’d like to think that for the Guild it was one in which we steadied ourselves.

We celebrated 100 years since the first formal gathering of Mace-Bearers with a splendid event in Liverpool, our Editor produced two excellent magazines (OK so this one is published in 2026 but only because it took me so long to sort the finishing touches), and we elected several new and enthusiastic members onto the Guild Council at our AGM.

GUILD CEO

The day to day business of the Guild continued:

Members retired or resigned from their posts and were

replaced with newbies, and the inevitable questions rolled in - Can the Mayor do that? Can my boss do that? Can I do that? *Should I do that?* Sometimes I knew the answer and sometimes I had to take opinions from others. Most of the time I found that the person asking the question already knew in their heart what the correct answer was—they just needed the reassurance of hearing someone else say it first.

I like to think of the Guild as a resource that you can use, for answers, for knowledge and for support, and with the strengthening of the Guild Council and the programme of work we are hoping to progress during the coming year, we should be better able to provide that steady support.



Adam Tregoning J.P.
clerk@macebearer.com

As we look back on 2025, I am proud of the continued dedication and professionalism shown by our members across the country.

The Guild of Macebearers remains a unique and valued institution, upholding centuries of tradition while adapting to the needs of modern civic life.

As I write this, we are approaching the Christmas period, which is always a busy time in the civic calendar. I hope that by the time you read this, you have all enjoyed a merry Christmas and found some time to relax with your family and friends, ready to recharge for 2026 — which looks to be as busy as ever, especially with Local Government Reorganisation and devolution looming for many authorities.

Should any member have questions or queries about their role, please do reach out to the Guild for assistance. Together, we ensure that the mace remains not just a symbol of authority, but of service and pride.

GUILD CLERK



Paul Mayhew
bursar@macebearer.com

I'm pleased to be able to report that the Guild finances are in good health!

In line with our intended budget, we have spent money in the last six months both on paying for the new Guild mace and in putting on the Gala Celebration and dinner, however our reserves are still in excess of £10K.

The annual subscription fees from members cover the everyday expenses of running the Guild and furnishing the membership with Manuals and magazines. On that basis we will continue to offer the subscription renewal discount giving our member's excellent value with the subscription renewal for full members remaining at just £10 per year for the fifth year running.

If any member has any queries about the accounts please feel free to contact me at bursar@macebearer.com, or if your enquiry relates to your invoice or subscription payment please contact membership@macebearer.com.

GUILD BURSAR

Welfare



The Quiet Strength Behind the Mace: A Year in Welfare

As we look back on the year gone by, it feels fitting to reflect not only on the visible traditions of the Guild of Macebearers, but also on the quieter work that sustains it. While the mace is carried with ceremony and pride, the role of the Welfare Officer is carried with care, discretion, and a deep commitment to the people behind the regalia.

This year has reminded us that a guild is more than its history and its public presence; it is a community. The Welfare Officer has been central to that truth, offering support in moments both seen and unseen. From checking in on members during challenging times, to helping navigate personal difficulties with compassion and confidentiality, the role has been one of steady reassurance.

A

shley Winter

welfare@macebearer.com

In a year that brought its share of change and uncertainty, the Welfare Officer helped ensure that no member felt isolated. Whether through a quiet conversation, practical guidance, or simply listening without judgement, the work has reinforced the values that bind the Guild together: respect, solidarity, and mutual care.

It is easy to celebrate the pageantry of our traditions, but just as important is recognising those who safeguard the wellbeing of our members. The Welfare Officer's contribution may not always be visible, but it has been deeply felt. It has strengthened trust within the Guild and reminded us that looking after one another is as much a part of our duty as any ceremonial role.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we do so with gratitude. Gratitude for the dedication shown, for the empathy extended, and for the reminder that the true weight of the mace is balanced by the humanity of those who carry it, and those who care for them.

In taking on this role I am following the footsteps of those worthy members who have gone before. But at a time when the Guild is looking at what it does and asking, can we do more? I have been asked by the Guild Council to draw up a formal Welfare Policy that we can make available to members. This should help members to understand the support that is available to them and how to go about accessing it. This policy should be available on the website in the coming months and will be circulated by email. When it is published please do look at it and let me know your thoughts and share any feedback.

Of course, if you are aware of a colleague in need of support, or are struggling yourself, please do not suffer in silence - you can reach out to me at any time via welfare@macebearer.com.

WELCOME ALL!

NEW MEMBERS

The Guild always welcomes new members, and if you have colleagues locally who are not yet enrolled why not show them this magazine and encourage them to join?

Since the publication of our last magazine we have been delighted to welcome the following new members:

Tracy Frisby - NE Lincolnshire Council

Sarah Davies - Bedford Borough Council

Jason Connor - Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

Michael Anderton - Brackley Town Council

Mark Hopkins - Royal Wooton Bassett Town Council

David Tilbury - Huntingdon Town Council

Scott Bonner - Middlesbrough Council (UA)

David Godwin - Royal Hospital Chelsea

Jonathan Hocking - Falmouth University

Samantha Smith - Royal Wooton Bassett Town Council

Stephen Wakeman - Godmanchester Town Council

Luke Thomson - Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Mark Malyon - Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council (UA)

Nina Tsindides—City of London Corporation



THE GUILD OF MACE-BEARERS

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Presenting

THE GUILD'S NEW MACE

Speech by Judith Cummins MP
Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons
First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means
Labour MP for Bradford South

During the afternoon meeting of the Guild of Mace-Bearers at Liverpool University in July, there was a very special presentation ceremony as Judith Cummins MP, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, took the lead role of presenting the beautiful new Guild mace to our Prime Warden Paul Mayhew. It was a rather special occasion, and Ms Cummins made a speech which we bring to you in this edition and preserve for the Guild's posterity.



The Guild's new mace

PRESENTATION OF THE NEW GUILD MACE

'Prime Warden, members of the Guild, honoured guests:

'It is both a privilege and a pleasure to stand before you today in my capacity as First Deputy Chair of Ways and means, to mark a moment of great significance in the proud history of the Guild of Mace-Bearers'. 'Today, we gather to formally present a symbol of continuity, service, and tradition – the new ceremonial mace bearing the cypher of His Majesty King Charles III.'



Ms Judith Cummins MP

'This exquisite piece, designed and crafted by the esteemed Goldsmith, Gerard Collins, and assisted by Sam Semwayo, reflects not only the dignity of the office it represents but also the enduring values of public service and civic duty that the Guild upholds.'

'The mace is more than an object of ceremony. It is a symbol of authority, of heritage, and of the solemn responsibilities entrusted to those who bear it. In this new era under His Majesty's reign, it is fitting that the Guild should carry a mace that honours both the past and the present – a bridge between tradition and renewal.'

'It is with great respect and admiration for the work of the Guild and its members across the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland that I now present this mace to you, Prime Warden, as a token of esteem and a mark of the Guild's continued service to the Crown and to our civic institutions'.

Mr. Ged Collins stepped forward to hand the mace to Ms. Cummins MP.



Designers and Goldsmiths Ged Collins and Sam Semwayo with their exceptional new Guild mace

**A truly ceremonial occasion:
MP Judith Cummins presenting the Guild's
new mace to Prime Warden, Paul Mayhew**



Immediately afterwards, Ms Cummins presented the mace to the Prime Warden, Paul Mayhew.

Ms Cummins concluded: 'May it serve as a proud emblem of your office, and a lasting tribute to the reign of His Majesty King Charles III.'



The Guild's original Aboriginal mace presented in 1948



**Ms Cummins presenting the mace to
the Prime Warden, Paul Mayhew**

Photographs ©Glenn Martin James 2025

***The Guild of Mace-Bearers would like to
express our affectionate thanks and
appreciation to Ms Judith Cummins MP, for
presenting our beautiful new mace on such an
auspicious and historic occasion.***

ALAN SPENCER

TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE GUILD of MACE-BEARERS



Alan Spencer, shouldering the beautiful mace created by Ged Collins, pictured just to the right of Alan, close to Liverpool's Victoria Museum and Gallery

A familiar face to readers of *The Mace-Bearer*, ALAN SPENCER is celebrating his twentieth year with the Guild. In his time with us Alan has served as Guild Bursar, Editor of this magazine and as Renter and then Prime Warden, and was made a Master of the Guild in recognition of his service. Here he shares his thoughts on attending the Gala Celebration, and his unique legacy with the new mace....

'When I made my way to Liverpool for the 2025 Guild Conference, it coincided with my 20th year as a member of the Guild. Over the last twenty years, I have had the honour to hold various positions on the Guild Council. I started as South-East Rep, became Guild Editor where I produced ten Guild magazines, I then had a short tenure as Guild Bursar. In amongst this I was also elected as Prime Warden for 2015/16. During my time as Prime Warden, it often crossed my mind that, whilst I appreciate the historical significance of the wooden Aboriginal mace, I did not think it truly represented the Guild as a whole. Bearing in mind that the majority of members carried a heavy, elaborate ceremonial mace I put

forward the suggestion that, should it be affordable, the Guild should purchase a gilt mace.'

'As Bursar, I realised that the Guild may have sufficient funds so I put forward the suggestion officially at a Guild Conference. It was agreed that we could investigate and get quotes for the manufacture of a suitable mace. It came as no surprise that long standing supporter of the Guild, Ged Collins, came through with the most suitable design and at a price that was acceptable. Manufacture duly commenced. As we had a new King, the King Charles III cypher was to appear on the mace, making it the first in the country.' When it was announced that the mace was to be presented to the Guild in Liverpool, the location of the very first Guild Conference, I was very keen to attend. At one point, I thought I might not be able to make it as I had a scheduled total knee replacement in June. Fortunately, my recovery went well enough that I was able to travel to Liverpool for the Conference.'

'Having proposed the original idea, it was a huge honour to be able to witness the presentation of the mace and to be able to carry it for a picture, and by chance I managed to get a picture of me carrying the mace with Ged in the background!'

Alan Spencer, Master of the Guild of Mace-bearers

From Little Acorns...



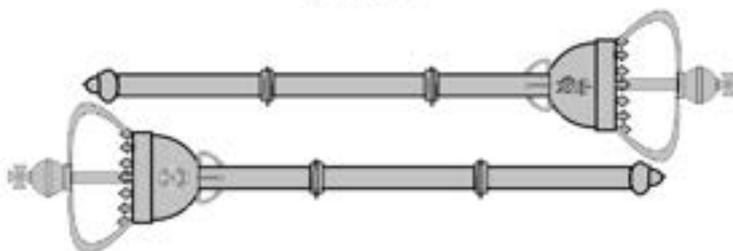
MARKING THE VERY SPECIAL OCCASION of the presentation of our splendid mace to the Guild, Alan Spencer kindly shared with *THE MACE-BEARER* the original email he had from the great Goldsmith GED COLLINS on his ideas for the Guild's own mace...

N.B The design of the Mace and descriptions thereof are © Copyright of GED COLLINS, all rights reserved

KRAFTWORK

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Brierfield
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01282 698872



Hi Alan,

Here's a very rough sketch of what we really would like to make for you.

The whole silver mace is strip downable so as to be of use in talks about how to care for your maces.

This also allows the return to us each year of just one of the shafts for engraving in the post with the latest name and we'd like to include all the past prime wardens too.

Obviously we're hand-making this I made a start on the bowl for the cup hand raising it from a flat sheet there's a small section of shaft there too and the royal coat of arms already cast for the top cipher plate. CRIII to go on the side of the cup along with your LOGO and Motto,

We just decided on the shaft size and in the real seventeenth century way have actually chosen our worn used workshop broom handle as the core.

1 yard long but substantial silver all round a "real Mace"

We're excited, can we carry-on? obviously we'd like to try for the coronation but in all honesty we're having give you time on this or it would far exceed your budget so unless I win the lottery I'm guessing it'll be more like August but I promise it'll be in Budget and well worth the wait.

Kind regards,

Ged



Established 1976

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Gerard Laurence Collins

A Golden Touch

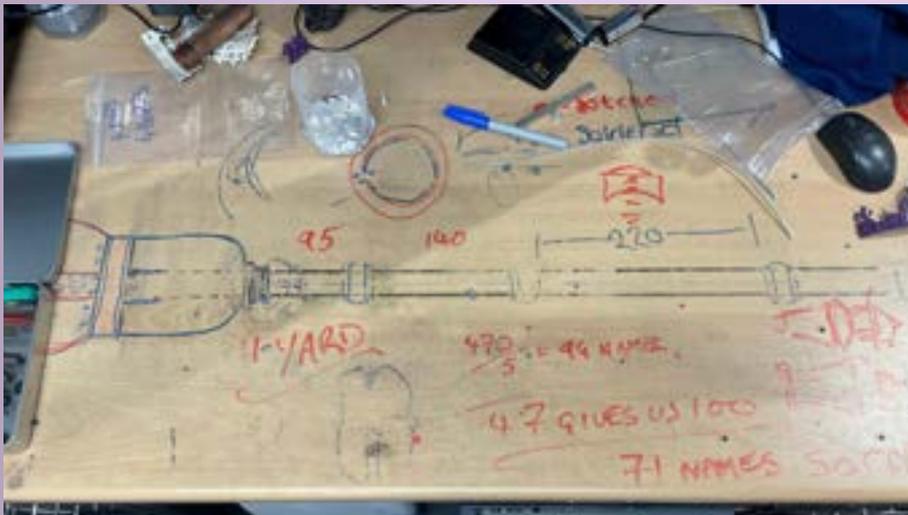
Creators of the Guild Mace

Following the presentation of the Guild's new mace, there was a special treat in store for attendees of the Guild's Convention: Goldsmith Ged Collins and assistant Sam Semwayo, who together collaborated on creating and building the mace gave a talk on their work and bringing this beautiful artifact to life.

For those unfamiliar with his work, Ged Collins has been a goldsmith since 1974, and has been constantly busy since day one of his career. In the early days, Ged was awed by the ornate jewellery and civic regalia he saw in museums and within three years of starting out, Ged's growing reputation meant the mayoral chains and maces he favoured would begin making their way through his door.



The glorious new mace with its proud creators Goldsmith Ged Collins and Sam Semwayo



At the drawing board: The working design of the mace during the planning stages



The component parts of the mace assembled against the working drawing

Whilst primarily making engagement rings and jewellery for local clients, Ged found the repair and restoration of civic regalia would become a significant portion of his business.

Mayoral chains and maces were designed to be easily disassembled and re-assembled for maintenance and repair but lack of maintenance records and 'How to' guides has often lead to significant damage being done by well-intentioned craftspeople. Ged worked on the Edinburgh City mace which had in Victorian-times been reassembled in the wrong order and subsequently became wrongly weighted when carried on the shoulder. Its central wooden shaft had also been replaced with a copper pipe resulting in a kinking of the metal after being dropped, making the whole mace impossible to dissemble.

Other problems which have kept Ged busy over the decades include maces repaired with cow-gum, lead, cardboard and super-glue. Mayoral chains and maces re-made in 1974 during local government re-organisation were often very badly done with authorities farming out the work to people who had no traditional goldsmithing skills and no interest in how a piece should work. Ged found gold paint used instead of gilding and no-one had ever thought to question it.

Silver gilt maces made until 1890 were mercurially gilded. This process is now illegal. This was due to the industrial use of mercury resulting in substantial numbers of people being poisoned by mercury in Birmingham and Sheffield, in a similar way to how hatters were famously poisoned by exposure to the same substance – mercury vapour covered the centre of Birmingham in the 1880's and drove everyone potty, like the 'Mad Hatters' of Luton.

Since 1890, old mercury plating has been replaced by electroplating. Cyanide is used in this process, and although each element (carbon and nitrogen) is quite safe on its own, when combined they create a deadly poison if ingested. The smell of almonds is actually from the cyanide contained naturally within the nut!

The Guild Mace

Geoffrey Robbins, the Prime Warden at the time first asked Ged if he could make a Guild mace in 1990, and Ged followed up Alan Spencer's subsequent request in 2023 – with a special price being accorded the guild: (They stopped the clock after 10 hours work – the next 120 hours were gifted!)

Assistant Sam Semwayo worked closely with Ged on the mace. At the presentation, Sam spoke of how the makers of 17th century maces, although limited in the tools at their disposal, still managed to create such elaborate (as well as functional) pieces. Much of the Guild mace was drawn up by Sam on a computer and its production was a combination of modern and traditional methods to create a piece true to its 17th century origins.

Sam talked us through the mace from crown to knop. The mace is 'parcel gilt' which means partly gilded. The crown and the orb are made from sheet silver with the design being jointly executed by hand and computer. The orb was hand-domed with dome punches, quenched, re-worked cold and re-worked again. The base was firstly turned in wax on a lathe from which a mould was made to lost-wax-cast the finished solid flange (a process used by the Egyptians 3,000 years ago). The knop for the base was made by 3D printing a wax model. The crown hoops on early 17th century maces were generally sand cast but this was something of a weakness.



Work in progress: Ged Collins busy on the crown of the mace



A work of heart: Sam Semwayo with the completed mace



A tantalising glimpse of the mace before presentation



The finished article

The crown hoops on the Guild mace were made in 4 separate sections. The hand-spun cup was made by spinning a large disc of silver on a lathe whilst pressing down a long polished burnishing lever against a wooden former, the shape and size of the inside of the cup. (This is how the nose-cone of missiles are made!) Polishing the cup took two and a half hours of intensive non-stop toil.

The Guild mace has a pattern of oak leaves and acorns, a deeply traditional English theme, representing continuity, particularly pertinent to our growing organisation. The mace core is solid oak rather than metal to give strength and to prevent irreparable damage to the outer silver skin in the event of accidental shaft deformation. The mace is disassembled by unscrewing the shaft from the knop, as demonstrated by Ged at the presentation.

Some details on the mace came from the most unlikely of places. The crosses of the crown are directly scanned and scaled then reproduced from a Cruz Campo beer mat, spotted when Ged was having an after-work beer. And an affectionate personal touch, the flanges are a direct scan of his father's Christening mug handles.

The names of the former Prime Wardens of the Guild have all been inscribed on the shaft by laser and there is still room for a further 100 names. Ged rushed the finished mace to Sheffield Assay Office where they scraped every separate part of the mace to test the quality of the silver. Upon passing the tests the mace was laser hallmarked. In a tip for all conscientious mace-bearers the best way to clean silver is to use chemical process. Generally tarnishing - silver sulphide on the surface - can be easily converted by washing first in hot water and Fairy Liquid to remove any grease, then using silver spray, or silver dip sponged-on. Stubborn stains can be gently brushed away with silver foam. Silver polish must be avoided as it removes some of the surface every time it is used. Rinse and dry, then air on a radiator. Ideally, once dry, wrap in plastic and seal, then keep in a dry atmosphere.

On a very practical level, the goldsmiths recommend the idea of purchasing a gun case for carrying a mace, a practical and unobtrusive means of transport in public. Ebay is the place to look, as it is for mayoral chain cases. As long as each chain is immobilised between compressed layers of foam they are safer than even recessed cases.

The Guild of Mace-Bearers would like to express our appreciation, our admiration, and our warmest thanks to Ged and Sam for the special and extremely significant contribution they have made to the Guild and to our future in the shape of this gorgeous mace. Your work upholds and preserves so much of our ceremonial regalia in the proudest traditions and long may you continue.

(Photos copyright © of Ged Collins 2025)



It has been a while since I wrote an article on behalf of the *Friends of the Guild*. The fact that this report coincides with my 20th year of association with the Guild has not gone unnoticed.

Whether I managed to get to Liverpool was a bit touch and go as Alan had a total knee replacement in July so we weren't sure whether he would be up to the journey. Luckily things went well and we made the trip by train to Liverpool the day before.

We had to change trains at Birmingham New Street and it was a good job I had left plenty of time as I hadn't realised how big and confusing the station would be.



After a journey of some five hours we finally reached our hotel. First thing before even finding our room was a well deserved drink.

We splashed out a bit and stayed in the fantastic Titanic Hotel which, coming from Southampton, held a special significance for us.

After a leisurely breakfast, we got a taxi to the Teaching Hub at the University. Whilst the taxi driver wasn't sure exactly where the Teaching Hub was, we knew we were in the right place when we saw another confused macebearer trying to find the entrance!

A lovely lunch was laid on for attendees. It gave us all a chance to catch up with old friends and to meet first timers.



During lunch I managed to get a sneak preview of the new mace even though Ged did his best to hide it!

After the official presentation, although we had to leave early to catch our train back home, we managed to see most of Ged's talk on the making of the new mace including a demonstration of how the mace is easy to dismantle.

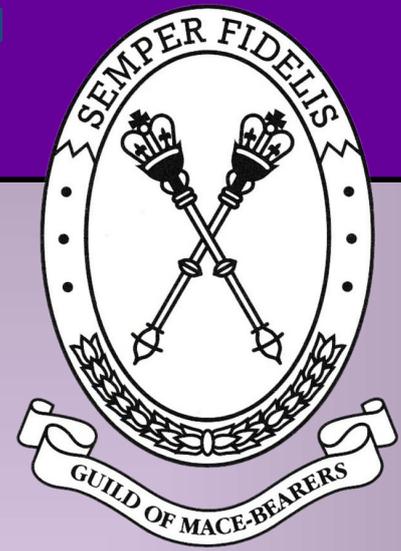
Susan Spencer (aka FoG One)

The Mace-Bearer would like to congratulate Susan on her wonderful twenty year involvement with the Guild, and in particular, to thank her for all her work and commitment where our publication is concerned.

The Editor is particularly mindful for all her work on the magazine alongside Alan, and hopes to honour their standards, their skill, and their legacy. (GMJ)



GUILD COUNCIL REPORT



As I said at the AGM, I'm very conscious that our Annual General Meetings have been slipping through the calendar, and have gone from being held in February (2023) to May (2024) and then as late as October 2025. With the Gala Celebration in the middle of the year the AGM was somewhat forgotten about. As a result, our next annual meeting will be on 1st April (*no, it's not a joke*) and you will all receive due notice by email.

The Gala event was deemed a huge success by all that attended, members and guests alike, although again, only a fairly small percentage of the membership attended. I'm still wondering if we are getting the offering right for members - the question should always be in the thoughts of the Guild Council - are we providing the services you want from the organisation? I often wonder if members' join purely to get the badge and certificate (and if that is the case, that's

fine) or do you want something more that we are not providing - if so, please do get in touch and tell us!

The AGM saw us make some pretty wide ranging changes to the Guild Constitution, doing away with a lot of the rules written for a previous time and freeing us up to be more creative in our thinking. You can read the updated Constitution on the Guild website, and again, please let us know what you think.

At the AGM we also welcomed several new faces onto the Guild Council and it is wonderful to see that they have already stepped forward and are taking on tasks to help us move forward. Hopefully you will start to notice changes in both the website and our social media representation, and in the longer term it would be great to see these new members take on more responsibility in leading the Guild forwards.

So what is on the agenda for the coming year?

In the past, Guild Council meetings were generally called on an ad-hoc basis when we had something specific to discuss. We are now moving to put things on a more formal basis. We have agreed the dates for the quarterly meetings of the Council for the coming year and I am working with the Clerk to instigate a plan for a more formal agenda which will see regular reports from the Officers to update everyone on their respective departments.

Our new Training Officer, Mark Crosskey, will be looking at how we can provide better training opportunities for new mace-bearers by offering a commercial training package to councils.

Our Welfare Officer, Ashley Winter, is writing a new Welfare Policy to make it clear how we can support members in need of support and how to access the service. This will be circulated to all members and made available on the website as soon as it is published in order that everyone can easily see what the Guild can (and can't) help with.

We still need to look at improving the offering in the Guild shop by refreshing the merchandise available. We now have a budget to do this and will be sourcing some "stuff" as a matter of urgency.

There will also be some changes to the Guild email addresses in the coming months as we dispose of some that are no longer in use and create some new ones for Council members with specific responsibilities.

Local government is in for a tough ride in the coming months and many of our members are likely to be severely affected by the changes as they are implemented. Rest assured that your Guild Council is going to be doing everything it can to ensure that the organisation is in the best shape it can be to deal with whatever changes are thrown at our members.

As always, if you have any questions about the management of the Guild, our website, your membership or subscription, or even a question on civic protocol, I am always contactable by phone, email or webchat via www.macebearer.com.

Best wishes,

Peter E. Legg
Chief Executive Officer
Guild of Mace-Bearers



Guild CEO Peter Legg, Prime Warden Paul Mayhew, Guild Clerk Adam Tregoning and Renter Prime Warden Ashley Winter with the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Barbara Murray, at the 2025 Gala Dinner.

Your Guild Shop

Guild Merchandise



Guild Collarette
£19.99



Guild Lapel
Badge £4.99



Gold Lapel
Badge £4.99



Cloth Blazer
Badge £6.95



Silver Mace Badge
(Butterfly Pin or
Brooch Pin) £8.50

Gold Mace Badge
(Butterfly Pin or
Brooch Pin)

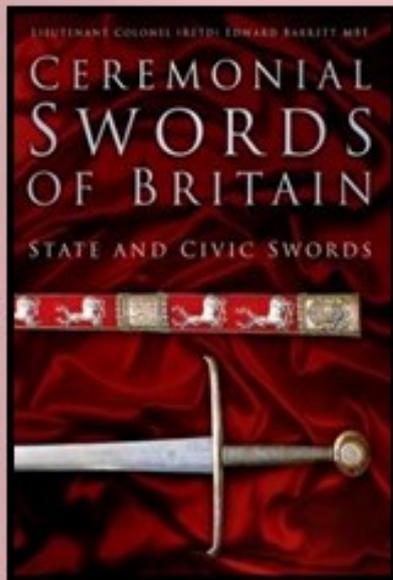


Guild Plaque
£20.00

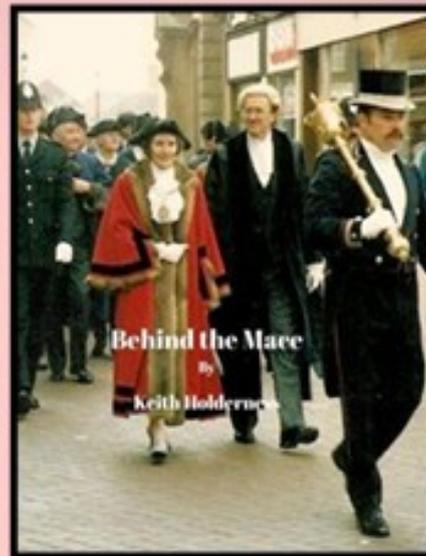


Guild Ties in Black/Blue/Maroon/Navy— £6.50

Visit our online shop at
www.macebearer.com



Ceremonial Swords by Lt Col.
(Ret) Edward Barrett
MBE £25.00



Behind the Mace by Keith Holderness



Various Magazine Back Issues - £2.50 Each



GALA CELEBRATION & DINNER 2025

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME

The Prime Warden, Paul Mayhew



INSTALLATION OF THE PRIME WARDEN 2025-2026

by Cllr Gareth Barrett, Deputy Leader of Brentwood Borough Council (Past Mayor 2023-2024)



PRIME WARDEN'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH



INSTALLATION OF THE RENTER WARDEN 2025-2026

by Cllr Vicky Davies, Deputy Leader of Brentwood Borough Council (Past Mayor 2014-2015)



PRESENTATION OF THE NEW GUILD MACE BEARING THE CYPHER OF HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III

by

Ms Judith Cummins MP
Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons
(First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means)



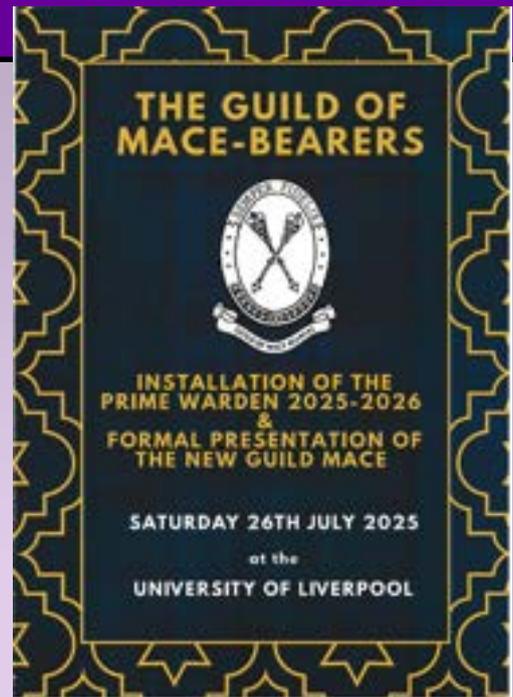
SPEECHES

Ms Judith Cummins MP
Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons
(First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means)

The Prime Warden

GALA CELEBRATION & DINNER 2025

LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY &
VICTORIA GALLERY and MUSEUM
26th July 2025



THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF LIVERPOOL SAW A PROUD GATHERING FOR A WORTHY OCCASION IN JULY, AS MEMBERS OF THE GUILD OF MACE-BEARERS GATHERED IN THE CITY, FOR A GALA CELEBRATION MARKING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST FORMAL GATHERING OF A GROUP OF MACE-BEARERS.

Report by Guild Editor Glenn Martin James

This gathering was really rather special: with the afternoon session taking place in the very pleasant surroundings of Liverpool University, and then at the gorgeous candle-lit vaulted hall of the Victoria Museum for the evening Gala dinner, it can be said the Guild of Mace-Bearers celebrated in some sophistication and style. With the presence of distinguished guests including the **Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Mr Mark Blundell**, the **Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Cllr Barbara Murray**, and the **Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, Judith Cummins MP** it was quite a day for all concerned.

The university conference room was the daytime venue where Prime Warden of the Guild, Paul Mayhew, was officially installed in office by Deputy Leader (and former Mayor) of Brentwood Borough Council, Cllr Gareth Barrett, before the presentation of the new Guild mace. Cllr Vicky Davies, also a former Mayor and now Deputy Leader of Brentwood Borough Council installed Ashley Winter as Renter Prime Warden.

The event was attended by many members in their various ceremonial uniforms and a group photograph was taken in the elegant square outside.





A good time being had by all at the Gala Dinner in the Victoria Museum and Gallery.

Following a lovely lunch back at the conference suite, it was over to the artisans for the rest of the afternoon, as the two goldsmiths extraordinaire, Ged Collins and Sam Semwayo, took the stage to give a cracking talk on how they had designed and built the mace. This was a fascinating session, and they even showed us how it could be disassembled and put back together, and explained how many historic maces are often awkward to carry because of having been reassembled in the wrong order after having undergone poor maintenance work!

The black-tie dinner at the Victoria Museum was an affair to truly remember, with candlelight and a rather wonderful dinner, in gorgeous surroundings, under the vaulted roof of that beautiful hall. The Lord Mayor of Liverpool gave a speech for the occasion (likewise included in this issue, with our thanks) and so did our Prime Warden. Our own Peter Legg, CEO of the Guild, was resplendent and in his element as toastmaster for the evening in his scarlet coat, and gave the occasion a very fitting sense of style. It is safe to say a good time was well and truly had by all, and the evening passed in an atmosphere of friendly conversation and a lot of warm-hearted laughter over glasses of wine, and this correspondent is only sorry he had to leave early because of a bad cold! I doubt anyone present will ever forget this gathering, and it only remains to look forward to the next Gala event—perhaps the 100th anniversary of the Guild in 2033.

GLENN MARTIN JAMES—GUILD EDITOR

(Photographs © Copyright Glenn James 2025)

AN OFFICIAL ADDRESS

Councillor Barbara Anne Murray

Lord Mayor of Liverpool

The evening of the Gala Dinner saw the Guild of Mace-Bearers entertaining a very special guest, in the person of the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Barbara Anne Murray. On this very special occasion, the Lord Mayor was kind enough to give an address to the company and the speech is reproduced here with her very kind permission.



(Photos © copyright of Liverpool Council and Glenn James 2025)

The Lord Mayor's Welcome speech

"Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to Liverpool and this Guild of Mace-Bearers Dinner."

"Liverpool is a world-class city that is proud to welcome people from around the globe. The city is increasingly diverse; we speak over 120 languages."

"We have made massive strides over the last 20 years, as you will see from the scale of unprecedented regeneration and the sense of pride our people have in our city, and rightly so."

"Liverpool is a vibrant city. It is full of character, culture, individuality and confidence. Our people are welcoming, bold, brave, and proud. We are born storytellers and well known for our kindness and our unique sense of humour!"

"Liverpool is an exciting place to be. It has a great atmosphere. We have a wonderful cultural scene. We are internationally renowned for our museums, art galleries, nightlife, and world-class events. We have fantastic buildings and outstanding architecture, two magnificent cathedrals, two Premiership football teams and, of course, we are home to the greatest



The Lord Mayor with the Guild of Mace-Bearers new mace while at the Gala dinner...



The world famous Royal Liver Building

(Left to right) The Lady Mayoress, Sam Semwayo, The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Ged Collins.



pop group in the world, THE BEATLES. But it doesn't stop there; music and creativity are in our blood, and our cutting-edge creative scene is flourishing in places like the Baltic Triangle and L8."

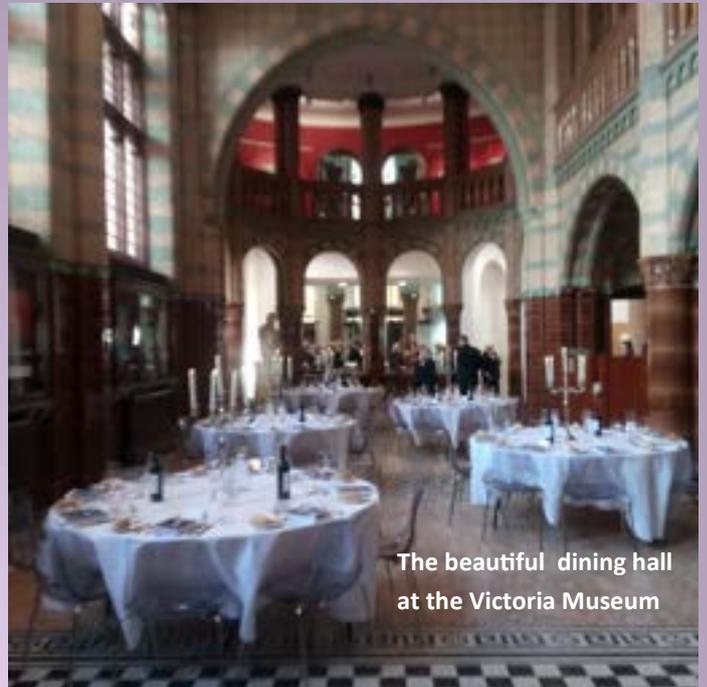
"Our Knowledge Quarter centres around our universities, and continues to grow. Our visitor economy is one of our major priorities. Since becoming European Capital of Culture in 2008, Liverpool's tourism growth has consistently outperformed other UK destinations."

"Our cultural scene is unrivalled, and we continue to stage world class award winning events which are FREE for all our communities in Liverpool, taking place in our neighbourhoods and on our streets as well as in the heart of the city centre and our wonderful parks. I always say that Liverpool has something for everyone. If retail therapy is more your thing - fear not, Liverpool ONE (a multi-million pound development) is just a short distance, where many well-known high street shops are located."

"I hope you have time to explore our fantastic city, our iconic world heritage waterfront, with its three Graces, The Liver, Cunard and Port of Liverpool Buildings can best be seen on one of our Mersey Ferry cruises. And of course, I very much hope that you will meet some amazing Scousers along the way! It would be great if you come back and visit again; we would be delighted to see you. Thank you and please enjoy this special evening."



A relaxed and elegant evening



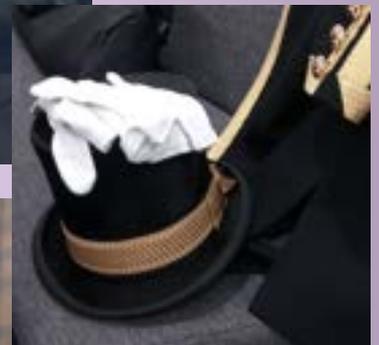
The beautiful dining hall at the Victoria Museum



The Lord Mayor of Liverpool with Renter Prime Warden Ashley Winter



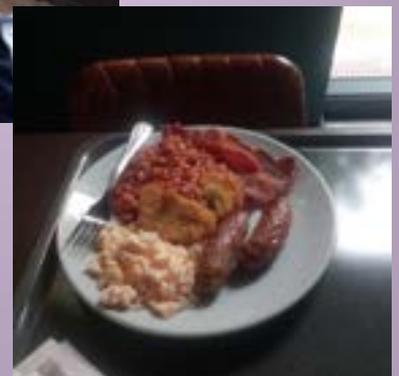
Mark and Kate Crosskey



Guild CEO Peter Legg with the new mace, Prime Warden Paul Mayhew and Mrs Claire Mayhew



Editor Glenn Martin James exploring the venue



Food glorious food—a hearty traditional English Breakfast was on the menu on Sunday

PHOTOS © COPYRIGHT Glenn Martin James 2025

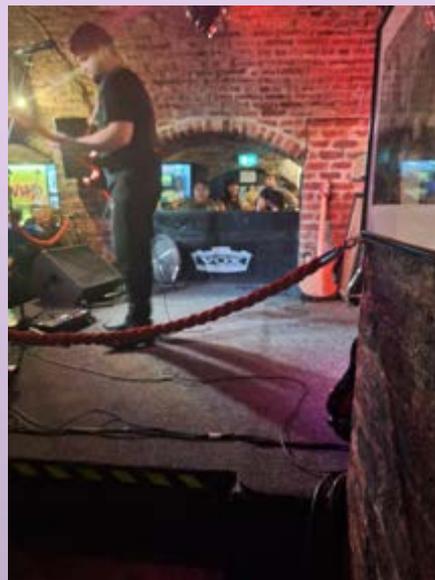


Every city has its must-see places to visit, and in the city of Liverpool, there can hardly be anywhere more famous and legendary than The Cavern Club: the ‘cellar-full-of-noise,’ which a young music impresario called Brian Epstein visited one lunchtime to check out a new band he was hearing about... and there and then, he discovered The Beatles. The rest, quite literally, is music history.

During the Guild’s gathering in the city for the 2025 Gala Dinner and Conference, Michaela Squelch and a hearty group of mace-bearers had the chance to visit The Cavern, and she has shared her photos with us for the magazine. They had a fabulous time, and Michaela said that ‘Each of the bricks you can see on the walls and ceilings have been signed by visitors over the years, both famous and non famous. There were also people adding to them while we were there.’



(Photos © copyright of Michaela Squelch 2025)



‘There are places I remember in my life, though some have changed. Some for ever, some for better, some have gone, and some remain. All these places have their moments, with lovers and friends I still can recall. I know I’ll often stop and think about them. In my life I’ve loved them all’ ‘

‘In My Life’ by John Lennon and Paul McCartney, © Copyright John Lennon and Paul and Paul McCartney 1965 (Rubber Soul)

Owen Collier - Master of the Guild

ON RECENTLY HAVING BEEN MADE A MASTER OF THE GUILD, OWEN COLLIER, (Town Crier and Sword Bearer of Royal Wootton Bassett) was presented with his certificate by a surprise guest at his council's Annual Council Meeting. Paul Mayhew, Prime Warden of the Guild attended the town's Mayor Making in person to present the award to Owen, a much loved member of the mayoral community.



The Prime Warden presenting Town Crier and Sword Bearer Owen Collier with his certificate as a Master of the Guild



The Prime Warden with Mayor Steve Bucknell, and Town Crier and Sword Bearer Owen Collier

From the Website of Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council:

'Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council is delighted to announce the election of Mayor, Councillor Steve Bucknell, following the Mayor Making Ceremony at the Annual Town Council meeting on Thursday 15th May 2025. Councillor Fiona Holness was elected as Deputy Mayor.'

'The ceremony took place at St Bartholomew & All Saint Church in Royal Wootton Bassett in front of residents, community groups, partner organisations, sports club and business, along with invited guests; including the High Sheriff, Martin Nye and Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner Ian Saunders. We were also delighted to host the Prime Warden of the Guild of Macebearers, Paul Mayhew, who presented our Town Crier, Owen Collier, with a Master of the Guild award for his many years of service and dedication – an award that is truly deserved. Congratulations Owen!'

Featured in the Group Photograph Opposite:

The High Sheriff of Wiltshire, Mr Martin Nye, Mayor of Royal Wootton Bassett, Cllr Steve Bucknell, Mayoress, Allison Bucknell, Deputy Mayor, Cllr Fiona Holness, RWB Chief Officer, Mark Hopkins

Historical Mace Bearers; PC Mike Gassner and Watch Manager for RWB, Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, Tom McInerney, Mayor's Chaplain, Mr Michael Page



The Mace-Bearer would like to add our congratulations to Owen for this wonderful honour, and to express our thanks to Naomi Coleman, Administrative Services Officer of Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council for her assistance with this article. Photographs © Royal Wootton Bassett Council.

To Honour a Mayor

Gordon Mole, Chief Executive Officer of Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council, honourably shares his thoughts on his duty following the death of the Mayor, Councillor Barry Panter earlier this year.

On the morning of Sunday, 16th February, the news no Chief Executive wishes to receive arrived: The Worshipful the Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Cllr. Barry Panter, had passed away following a tragic car accident the previous evening.

The death of a sitting mayor is a rare and solemn event. Though we had been hopeful for Barry's recovery, preparations were quietly considered, should the worst occur. In the days that followed, the Guild of Macebearers' handbook became a vital guide as arrangements commenced, guided by protocol, duty and respect.

Our first priorities were to Barry's family: his wife, children, and grandchildren.



Then lowering the flag to half-mast, issuing a public statement, and informing key individuals. Quickly, the focus shifted to assembling a supportive team, including dedicated council officers and local clergy such as the Mayor's Chaplain and the Rector of our civic church.

With their help, we moved swiftly to establish a public book of condolence, plan the funeral and civic service, and coordinate mourning formalities - from dress codes to ceremonial conduct. Throughout, we remained anchored in compassion and the wishes of Barry's loved ones. Regular contact with his stepson Brian proved invaluable in navigating this sensitive time.

Above all, we respected that Barry's role as Mayor was but one aspect of his rich, multifaceted life. His family's voice guided every step, reminding us that civic duties must never overshadow personal grief. Generous support arrived from neighbouring councils, clergy, and the community offering sound systems, logistical assistance, and post-funeral arrangements. Their kindness helped transform uncertainty into a meaningful tribute.

As the day of Barry's funeral approached – and came with dignitaries, friends, charities and all those who wished to remember Barry's fruitful life, we stood united in honouring not just a public figure, but a cherished father, grandfather, and friend. There are, of course, things that we would do differently, but overall, on the day itself, I felt great civic pride in the measures taken to honour the late Mayor. I think he would have been pleased too.

Freedom of the Town for Valerie

Freedom of the Town of Bideford awarded to former Mace-Bearer and Beadle Valerie Morrish

We would like to offer our congratulations to the Guild of Mace-Bearers own Valerie Morrish, who has been awarded the Freedom of her beloved home town of Bideford, after 16 years proud service as Beadle and Mace-bearer to the community.

In receiving this distinguished award, she has become the first person to do so since 1973, and the first woman in the annals of the town to receive the same. We have reproduced her story from the newspaper, with kind permission of 'The North Devon Gazette.'



Valerie in all her glory in full robes with her maces



Valerie proudly pictured with her award



Valerie receiving her awards from the town council in her official robes

(Photos © Copyright The North Devon Gazette)

Freedom of the town for Valerie after 16 years of civic service

SUSAN MARSH

susan@northdevongazette.co.uk



BIDEFORD-BORN Valerie Morrish has become the first person since 1973 — and only the fourth woman in the history of the borough — to be granted the honorary freedom of the town.

When Valerie saw an advert for the position of beadle — a ceremonial role which involves assisting the mayor and performing a whole host of civic duties — back in 2008, her interest was immediately piqued.

As a child, she had regularly attended remembrance parades in honor of her grandmothers' brothers who were killed during the First World War. And years later, she still retained a passion for the proud civic traditions of her hometown.

Three years previously, Valerie had retired from her job as a sales advisor and cashier at the Portman Building Society, giving her the time and energy needed to devote to the role. And even though a woman had never held the position before, she was determined.

"I wouldn't have taken no for an answer," Valerie tells the Gazette.

Luckily for Bideford, Valerie's gender didn't prove too much of an obstacle and she was appointed as the town's beadle later that year. Taking keenly to civic life, she took on the additional role of macebearer the following year, shouldering responsibility for everything from town hall tours to ceremonial processions.

After serving Bideford for 16 years, Valerie has decided to step down from both roles. In gratitude for her long and dedicated service, town clerk Paul Swan presented her with the freedom of the town, a prestigious honor that hasn't been granted in over 50 years. For Valerie, it represented one of the proudest moments in her long career.

Looking back on the list of previous recipients, who are known as freemen, it reads as a roster of Bideford legends, including the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie and the near-mythic John Strange, who dodged death three times and guided Bideford through the bubonic plague — eventually losing his own life in the process.

But while all these men — and a small handful of women — certainly accomplished great things, there is a common theme among them: largely, they all came from positions of wealth and privilege within the town. Proud of her working class roots, Valerie is delighted to have earned her place among the borough's greats.

When the Gazette met Valerie in the historic mayor's parlour, her pas-

sion for Bideford's heritage shone through. In fact, one of her favourite parts of the job has been showing children around the town hall, helping to inspire the next generation. And the artifacts housed there are genuinely awe-inspiring: the mayor and mayoress's chains, heavy with gold and resplendent with sapphires, and a silver mace bearing a worn Tudor seal, quite possibly handed over to the town by Queen Elizabeth I herself.

But for Valerie, the real treasure has been the experiences that she has enjoyed along the way. Highlights have included meeting the king, carrying the Civic Sword at Royal Wootton Bassett, and — in 2022 — becoming only the second ever woman to be appointed Prime Warden of the Guild of Mace Bearers of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Even with these achievements, though, Valerie was still shocked to receive the freedom of the town, which had been arranged as a surprise to mark her retirement. Now, her portrait hangs in the Town Hall alongside those of men such as Carnegie and Strange — having earned her right to be celebrated alongside them.

Although she has now retired from her civic duties, Valerie will look back on the past 16 years with pride.

"In this life, you find your niche," she told the Gazette. "And this was mine."



Former Bideford beadle and macebearer Valerie Morrish has become the first person since 1973 to be granted the honorary freedom of the town.



Valerie has received the freedom of the town, a prestigious honor that hasn't been granted in over 50 years

http://www

Website News

Peter E. Legg
Guild Website Officer

The Guild website is your go-to place for information on what's happening in YOUR Guild! In addition to the online shop for Guild ties, badges and memorabilia don't forget to register for access all areas!

Registration is free and easy, and once your membership has been verified you can get access to see and download minutes of recent Guild Council meetings and AGMs, read and download online copies of the magazines from the last 25 years, as well as the latest Guild Constitution and the Manual of the Mace.

Currently just under 50% of members have registered for online access but we are looking at refreshing the website contents much more regularly so now is the time to make sure you are in the loop.

I'm was delighted to welcome David Hawkins onto the Guild Council at the recent AGM and he is keen to be involved in looking after the website. Welcome David - I'm sure his involvement will bring a fresh wave of ideas and possibilities.



Don't forget you can also find us on social media.

Another very welcome new addition to the Guild Council was Michaela Squelch. Michaela is the Mace-Bearer for Haverfordwest and she has an interest in social media including several platforms I had never heard of!

Watch this space!

Public Page:

- <https://www.facebook.com/guildofmacebearers>

Private Group:

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1567867760119892>

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Memories of the Guild

A Lifetime with the Mace



RICHARD STRUDWICK

Founder Member of

The Association of Professional Toastmasters
Sergeant at Mace to the City of Leeds 1972-1993

RICHARD STRUDWICK

FREEMAN OF THE GUILD

One of the three Freemen of the Guild, and a man who has been intimately involved with the running of the Guild of Mace-Bearers since the early 1970s, Richard Strudwick looks back on his astonishing life...

I was born in Mylor, Cornwall, in 1941 and owing to family dishevelment raised from the age of 4 in Yorkshire by the Catholic Diocese of Leeds along with two of my three sisters, to the age of 18.

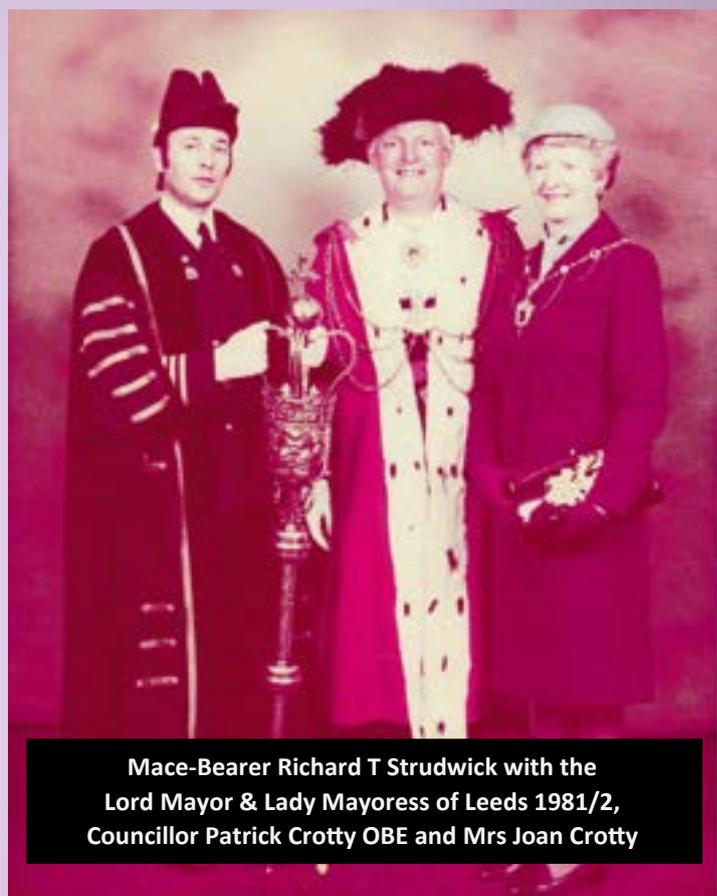
Attending local Catholic elementary schools (St Edward's) Cliffiord, Boston Spa and (St Mary's) Horsforth, Leeds, I entered the world of work first as a trainee bookseller. Sadly, this employment didn't last very long as I spent more time reading the books than selling! Shortly after I landed a job with a firm of wholesale grocers in Leeds (Morris & Jones) ending my time there some seven years later in charge of the complaints department! Getting somewhat fed up of people complaining all the time, I answered an advert in the Yorkshire Evening Post placed by the Lord Mayor of Leeds' Secretary (William Pitts) seeking the services of a young man to act as the Lord Mayor's Attendant. So started my 27-year association with the civic office.

I decided not to join the Guild until I felt fully qualified. This happened on the 4th of April six years later when I succeeded the then Sergeant at Mace, former Sergeant Major in the Irish Guards, Augustine Egan. This was also the year I married my dear wife, Gillian, 1972.

The structure of the Guild in those days was of course quite different from that of today. The UK was divided into Regions with our colleagues North of the border having their own association, SCOA, the Scottish Council Officers Association.

These regions were based on the National Guild with Regional Wardens, Renter Wardens, Bursars, Clerks and in the case of the Northern Region, an Editor who produced the Northern Region Journal. In addition, each region had an Executive Committee.

The Northern Committee met regularly in different cities and towns generously hosted by their respective civic heads, who usually extended a civic welcome on arrival, and often later joined the attendees for afternoon tea. (O Happy Days!!!)



Mace-Bearer Richard T Strudwick with the Lord Mayor & Lady Mayoress of Leeds 1981/2, Councillor Patrick Crotty OBE and Mrs Joan Crotty

Quite often the agenda of these meetings, which were also open to the membership, would include seminars on the role of the mace-bearer and question & answer sessions chaired by a panel of experienced members. Another feature was the attendance of family members, who took in the sights of the local town to rejoin their partners for tea.

I took an active part in the business of the Guild both locally and nationally, occupying most of the Regional Offices at one time or another... Regional Warden, Renter Warden, Regional Clerk, Regional Editor.

At National level I served for many years on the Guild Executive being appointed a Master of the Guild, Renter Prime Warden (1984/5) Prime Warden (1985) and was greatly honoured by the Guild in August 2006 being elected along with the late Alan Hughes of Northampton, (Prime Warden 1996/7) a Freeman of the Guild.

My last Guild position was as the Guild Welfare Officer, which I held for ten years, succeeding my good friend, Bill Banton. Of all the posts I held, this I found to be the most rewarding.

Of course, the Guild has moved on, with the disappearance of the Regional structure, not always in my view for the better. The annual conferences were always occasions for family get-togethers, indeed, my family were affectionately known as the Von Trapp Family as we always spent the Conference week with our three daughters from an early age.

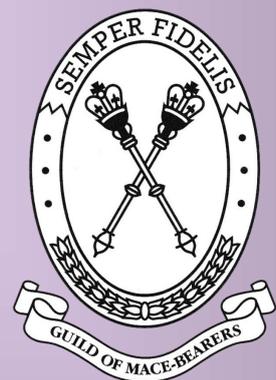
I appreciate that change is inevitable and now we have a CEO and the Annual Conference is Zoomed!!! On the plus side I was glad to see a revamped Manual of the Mace and especially pleased to see the duties of the Mace-Bearer included, this feature being the result of my labours at the request of my then Lord Mayor's Secretary, Kairen Brown, for the benefit of my eventual successor.

With early retirement in 1993 I look back with many happy memories on my time as Sergeant-at-Mace to the Lord Mayor of Leeds to spending much time in the passenger seat of U1 the very first number plate issued in Yorkshire (1904) now up for sale by the City Council (they got rid of the mayoral Rolls-Royce some years ago! Ah well!!! Let's hope they keep hold of the Chains of Office, the Great Mace, the collection of Civic Plate and Leeds Town Hall!!!

29th September 2025

In service to the King and Crown,
In service to the Mayor,
In service to the Provost,
And to this Kingdom fair,
United to a common cause, We Bearers of the Mace
Beseech of Thee, our Heavenly Lord,
Thy gifts of bounteous grace

**(Richard Strudwick, written for the Diamond
Jubilee of the Guild of Mace-Bearers, 1993)**



We would like to thank Richard for this wonderful memoir and for his significant contribution to the Guild over the years. It is deeply appreciated.

Photographs © Richard Strudwick 2025



REMEMBRANCE DAY



Remembrance holds a special place within the Guild of Mace-Bearers, woven deeply into our traditions and our sense of purpose. To stand in service during moments of remembrance is not simply a ceremonial duty; it is an honour that carries weight, meaning, and responsibility.

The act of remembrance asks us to pause, to reflect on sacrifice, service, and the lives that shaped the freedoms and communities we have today. As macebearers, our presence at these occasions is symbolic, but symbolism matters.

The mace represents continuity, authority, and respect for those who came before us. When it is carried in remembrance, it becomes a powerful reminder that history is not distant, but carried forward by each generation.

What makes these moments especially significant is the shared understanding among members of the Guild. There is a quiet unity in standing together, knowing that each person present recognises the solemnity of the occasion. It is not about individual recognition, but about collective respect. The silence, the stillness, and the dignity of the ceremony speak louder than words ever could.

I am immensely proud to be part of a Guild that treats remembrance with the seriousness and reverence it deserves. Pride not just in the tradition itself, but in the people who uphold it with humility and care. Being a macebearer during acts of remembrance has deepened my appreciation for the role we play within the wider community, serving as custodians of both ceremony and memory.

Remembrance grounds the Guild in its values and reminds us why tradition endures, not as a performance, but as a living commitment to honour, respect, and service. It is a privilege to stand as part of that commitment, and one I carry with lasting pride.

Ash Winter
Renter Prime Warden



MACES HIGH

THE MACE-BEARER QUIZ



FROM LORD NELSON TO PADDINGTON BEAR,
FROM ST. PAULS TO MORECAMBE AND WISE...

Presenting *The Mace-Bearer Quiz*...

1. Which formerly extinct giant predator has controversially been bought back to life?
2. Morecambe and Wise regularly teased a singer about his voice - who was he?
3. Which British explorer's famous last words were 'I'm just going outside, I may be gone some time.'
4. Which famous silent film had the first words 'Settle back, folks, you ain't heard nothing yet!'
5. What were Admiral Lord Nelson's words on lifting a telescope to his blind eye?
6. Lady Astor told a famous politician she would poison his coffee if she were his wife - and he replied, 'If I were your husband, I'd drink it!' Which famous PM made this witty response?
7. What was the staple meat of sailors on long voyages in the 18th Century?
8. In the TV series 'The Munsters', which character was Grandpa supposed to be?
9. Which famous antipodean media mogul attended King Charles' State Banquet for Donald Trump?
10. Which King of England famously lost his jewels in the wash?
11. Which famous strip cartoon character had a fearsome wife called Flo, lived in Doncaster, and was played by James Bolam?
12. What destroyed the spire of Old St Pauls Cathedral?
13. Which famous Gene Kelly musical number did Paddington Bear perform in the 1970's television series?
14. What was the affectionate nickname of the wife of President Lyndon Johnson?
15. Which well known extinct bird is said to be being bought back from extinction?

N.B. Extra points if you can reach Mornington Crescent before turning the page...

Long Ago and Far Away...

INVESTIGATING the FEAST of FOOLS and the MOCK-MAYOR TRADITION...

Photographs © Amanda Dixon, Glenn James and Muncaster Castle 2025

The Modern Mock Mayor Painting (2024) dedicated to the late Mayor Barry Panter and Dr Roger Joy



Britain has a rich heritage, filled with heraldry, folklore, very curious traditions and odd legends: A truly enviable story. In this edition, macebearer and artist Glenn James looks into how the ancient Mock Mayor Festival of Newcastle-under-Lyme is affectionately viewed by the Mayors, and how his painting of the event is now on display in the Guildhall.



Mayor Simon White having fun at the Mock Mayor

You know, a few centuries ago, the prospect of a Mock Mayor festival being held in Newcastle would have caused the incoming mayor to grit their teeth and gird their loins. In centuries past, this was a bawdy and highly disrespectful tradition, very much in the mould of the 'King of Fools' festival in Victor Hugo's classic novel 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame.' The town's Ne'er 'do Well' were set up as an

opposing mayor, and pranks and mischief were the order of the day, at the expense of anyone perceived to be taking themselves a bit too seriously, or being too officious. A riotous time was had by all, and no doubt there was a lot of hangovers the following morning. The town's civic regalia did not escape the cheek of the revellers, and the mock mayor was dressed in a huge lambs fleece as a wig



Mayoress Beatrice and Mayor Barry Panter, to whom the painting is dedicated

of office, and carried the keys to the jail around his neck, (which no doubt came in handy the next morning when everyone sobered up!) They also carried a horse's tail, and strutted about making very absurd decrees. The mayoress, in the finest pantomime tradition, was a man in drag riding backwards on an ass, and the town charter was represented by an enormous sheet of leather hastily inscribed with whatever they thought appropriate. Revellers wore 'Phrygian Caps of Liberty', in reality probably a cosy snatched off the nearest teapot!

I find myself writing this as one of the Macebearers to the Mayor of Newcastle, so all of this is of historical interest, but in particular for me there are the objects carried by the mock-macebearers... Two great big cabbages on their stalks! (Our beautiful genuine ones are 17th Century gilded silver from the reign of Charles II, and in no way do they attract Cabbage White butterflies!)

Our Mock Mayor event petered out by the late Victorian age, being out of step with much more industrialised times. But an affectionate change has undergone this tradition, to the point where a painting of mine depicting a modern version of the event, dedicated to the late Mayor Barry Panter, is displayed in the Borough's Guildhall: the very building which used to see this bawdy All Fools Festival taking place right outside its doors. How times have changed!

The painting was actually unveiled by none-other than the former Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Sir Ian Dudson KCVO CBE and Mayoress Beatrice Panter in her husband's memory.

The painting notably also features former councillor Simon White, (thrice Mayor of the Borough, and a great supporter of Mock Mayor performances) and all together, no less than 5 mayors, the Mock Mayoress herself, three macebearers, my fellow Macebearer Jenny Otter and Mayor's Sergeant Peter Shore, Josh the Mayor's Chauffer, and Queen Elizabeth II on the balcony, during her visit in 1973! The unveiling was quite an occasion with some very distinguished guests. The painting also features the Leader of the Council Simon Tagg.

I am enormously proud that it is on show, but reflecting on its ancient riotous roots, I cannot help but be warmly amused that there is a painting of the Mock Mayor in the Guildhall, and that the picture and the performance it reflects is held in affectionate regard. The Mock Mayor Festival, as the name indicates, was not always such an affectionate event at all, as it actually started as a protest over the rights to elect the Mayor of the Borough in the middle ages, and it was originally a very sore point. But this tradition was nothing new at the time of John O'Gaunt. It has roots in the ancient past, being incredibly old, and going right back to the Roman feast of Saturnalia, where everything was turned upside down, and masters acted as servants and servants played the king, a cultural tradition which is the direct



The cast of the Mock Mayor with Mayor Simon White



Reigning Mock Mayor Christine Mallaband-Brown



The incomparable Richard Brown as the Mayoress

Former Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Sir Ian Dudson



ancestor of our own April Fools Day. This survived after the fall of Rome in the medieval Christmas Courts of the Boy Bishops, where that very spirit of Saturnalia was continued. And it's interesting to relate that this new painting, which I started in 2019, has acquired quite of a history of its own, and a genuine significance. In 2019, The Friends of The Guildhall were looking to stage a new modern version of the Mock Mayor, with the full support of then Mayor Councillor Simon White, (who has a terrific sense of humour and is a passionate supporter of our traditions.) As an experienced scriptwriter and producer, I was asked to take up the challenge. I can only say it was the most marvellous fun and we well and truly had the time of our lives - Christine Mallaband Brown was fantastic as the cheeky mayor, and her dear husband Richard Brown, dressed as is tradition as a woman, was a force of nature as the mayoress. After a couple of weeks of rain the skies cleared, and a September sun shone down like the dog days of August. We had a terrific reception under blue skies, performing around the market cross, under the dryly raised eyebrow of Mayor Simon White! He was a terrific sport, and he absolutely loved it. The event was such a wonderful celebration of our heritage, held on Heritage Day.

Everyone who took part remembers the event with genuinely deep affection, and there has been talk of staging it again ever since - and with a cheerful enthusiasm from the mayors.

I started work on creating a painting of the modern event in the autumn of 2019, getting the whole composition laid out as a line drawing by March 2020, and I was ready to start adding the colour when COVID came along. The whole thing went on hold, as much more important events unfolded, and we all tried to get back to normal. It took four years to complete it in the end, rather than the four months it should have taken: But the painting is now a unique depiction of our civic festivities, and life itself, literally right smack bang before the pandemic. And the work is now also a memorial to a number of dear friends who have sadly gone.

The work is dedicated to late Mayor Barry Panter, with enormous affection, to my late second father Dr Roger Joy, and to everyone involved. The work is housed in the Guildhall of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and may be viewed by the public for free.

(With thanks to Gordon Mole CEO of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council for his assistance with this article. All Photographs © Copyright of Amanda Dixon and Glenn James)

MACES HIGH

QUIZ

ANSWERS

1. The famous Dire Wolf
2. Des O'Conner – extra points if you said 'Death O'Connor!'
3. Captain Oates
4. The Jazz Singer, spoken by Al Jolson
5. 'I see no ships'
6. Winston Churchill
7. Giant Galapagos Tortoises
8. Count Dracula
9. Rupert Murdoch
10. King John
11. Andy Capp
12. It was struck by lightning and burned down
13. Singing in the Rain
14. Ladybird
15. The Dodo.



*"Granville! I think I've got
a story for the
M-M-M..."*



HAVE YOU GOT A STORY FOR

The Mace-Bearer

Magazine?

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

CONTACT THE EDITOR AT editor@macebearer.com

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Guild Subscriptions

2025 / 2026

Members £35.00 (Discounted to £10 for renewals)

Honorary Members £6.00

Friends of the Guild £6.00

Fees are due upon receipt of your invoice.

MEMBERSHIP as at 1st December 2025	Total	201
FULL MEMBERSHIP (includes 4 Masters of the Guild)		157
Honorary Members (includes 4 Masters of the Guild)		33
Friend of the Guild		8
Freeman of the Guild		3

The Guild has 201 members carrying out ceremonial duties at 120 separate authorities/universities spread across the whole of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

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PAST PRIME WARDENS

1947-1952	Cmdr John Poland RN (Rtd.)	City of London
1953-1954	Cpt. W.F. Floyd	Northampton
1954-1955	H. Gregory	City of Chester
1955-1956	R.H. Strong	Middlesbrough
1956-1957	A. Johnson	Paisley
1957-1958	R.C.F. Leppard	Dover
1958-1959	A. Broadhurst	Nuneaton
1959-1960	W.R.H. Thompson	City of Edinburgh
1960-1961	J.W. Foreman	Norwich
1961-1962	W. Wood	Goole
1962-1963	J. Currie	Ayr
1963-1964	W.G. Webber	Gravesend
1964-1965	H. Giliver	Bolton
1965-1966	J.P. Slater	Dumfries
1966-1967	R. Pote	Bedford
1967-1968	T. Lewis	Bury
1968-1969	J.R. Moffat	Falkirk
1969-1970	G.T. Eadie	City of Bath
1970-1971	C.F. Clifton	Barnsley
1971-1972	C. Macrae	Inverness
1972-1973	G. Busby	Sandwich
1973-1974	W. Lambert	Harrogate
1974-1975	W. Allen	Hawick
1975-1976	J. Eaton	Taunton
1976-1977	J.W. McKiernan	Tyne & Wear
1977-1978	D. Aitkin	Kirkaldy
1978-1979	C. Watts	Southampton
1979-1980	J.C. Robinson	City of York
1980-1981	G. Paul	Renfrew
1981-1982	V.A. West	Woodspring
1982-1983	F. Purcell	City of Kingston
1983-1984	R. Scott	Hamilton
1984-1985	D. Trafford	Banbury
1985-1986	R.T. Strudwick	City of Leeds
1986-1987	J. Malone	Falkirk
1987-1988	G.D. White	Barnstaple
1988-1989	A. Milner	Pendle

1989-1990	D. Megarry	City of Belfast
1990-1991	T.T.F. Harding	Peterborough
1991-1992	G. Robbins	Burnley
1992-1993	G. Milligan	Roxburgh
1993-1994	I.E. Warner	Stevenage
1994-1995	K.M. Carson	Charnwood
1995-1996	D. Morrison	Western Isles
1996-1997	A.M. Hughes	Northampton
1997-1998	P. Nendick	City of Kingston
1998-1999	T. Cobban	City of Aberdeen
1999-2000	G. Weatherhead	City of Wells
2000-2001	L. Love	South Ayrshire
2001-2002	D. Jardine	Blandford Forum
2002-2003	G. Adams MBE	Caledonian University
2003-2004	P. Hyde	City of Manchester
2004-2005	R. Buckle	Colchester
2005-2006	W. Paterson	East Dunbartonshire
2006-2007	D. Knight J.P.	Poole
2007-2008	P. E. Legg	Charnwood
2008-2009	A. Jenkins	St. Helens
2009-2010	S. Dennis	City & County of Swansea
2010-2011	J. Smoothy	St. Ives, Cambs.
2011-2012	P. Townsend	London Borough of Croydon
2012-2013	J Caruana	Hertford
2013-2014	O Collier	Royal Wootton Bassett
2014-2015	R Crabb BEM	Exeter
2015-2016	A Spencer	Portsmouth
2016—2017	R Trigger	Yeovil
2017—2018	J Vauvert	Ripon
2018—2019	K Simpson	LB Hammersmith & Fulham
2019—2020	C Hobbs-East	Deal
2020-2021	A Tregoning J.P	Southend-on-Sea
2021-2022	A Tregoning J.P	Southend-on Sea
2022-2023	V.Morrish	Bideford
2023-2024	C. East	Margate Charter Trustees
2024-2025	Paul Mayhew	Brentwood
2025-2026	Paul Mayhew	Brentwood



PROFILE OF THE MACES: Uniquely, for this special issue of *The Mace Bearer*, we are featuring two very special maces: The original wooden Aboriginal mace, presented to the Guild in 1948 and the beautiful mace created by Ged Colins and Sam Semwayo of Kraftwork Precious Metals in 2025 (pictured far left.) A unique opportunity to see the two together, honouring the past and future of the Guild.

With each edition of *The Mace-Bearer* we aim to feature and celebrate some of the beautiful maces cared for by members of the Guild on our front and back covers. If you would like to see your mace featured please email the Editor .

editor@macebearer.com

Mace-Bearer

*“A Sword. A cap of Maintenance. A Mace
Great and well gilt, to do the town more grace
And on festivities or High Days, then
Those Magistrates their scarlet gowns do wear and have six Sergeants
to attend each year”*

John Taylor 1622

Noun:

an official, as of a city or legislative body, who carries a ceremonial mace before dignitaries.

Origin: 1545-55, mace + bearer

SEMPER FIDELIS

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