



# La Flèche

## email edition

September 2017 issue



## THE TOWER JOINT SHOOT

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Nestroque! Knock! Draw! Loose! Knock! Draw! Loose! Knock! Draw! Loose!

Well the steady rhythm may not have been there, nor the regular pattern, but the actions certainly were as, what I was told was a considerably weakened Fletchers' Team took on that of the Bowyers in the east moat of Her Majesty's Tower of London on a balmy Tuesday evening in June. We were taking part in the annual archery competition between the Fletchers and the Bowyers for the Governor's Trophy which we were told had first been presented in 1901. More importantly we had lost it to the Bowyers last year and had been exhorted to try and retake it for the honour of the Company.

Targets were set up, shooting stations organised and instruction was provided by a most efficient team of volunteers from The London Archers – they even recovered the arrows and collated the scores; not that any company member wouldn't have been delighted to annotate the score cards...

The evening was enhanced by several of the Yeomen Warders who brought their self-crafted bows into the moat and demonstrated their own skill as well as allowing anyone who wished to try their luck drawing 60 – 90 lbs bare bows (no sights, no fancy shaping etc.) and loosing as many arrows as they wished or indeed could.



Soon arrows were flying along the moat and most were hitting the distant targets but to our horror we learnt that there were 'professionals' in the Bowyers' ranks and one of their chaps actually taught archery! Moreover, whilst enjoying a refreshing glass of Pimms I was told that although never having shot in a competition before I really ought to 'have a go'

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as we were so desperately short of people, and that anyone with even a modicum of willingness to shoot really should do so. I duly did but my accuracy was far from impressive. However there were some talented Fletcher archers, and Jane's son, Nicholas Gilbert ran up an excellent score to win him the outstanding guest archer of the evening award with a score of 27.

Having written so often about the archers at Agincourt I was expecting a similar score from Anne Curry but somehow the spirit of Sir Thomas Erpingham eluded her that day – it wasn't Crispin Crispianus.

*Professor Anne Curry shares a joke with Yeoman Warders Clive Towell and Terry Humphries.*



However it was the taking part that really counted. I regret that how the adjudicators arrived at the final scores is a mystery to me but amid much cheering the announcement came at the end of the Joint Shoot Dinner in the Royal Fusiliers Officers Mess. Bowyers: 166. Fletchers 170. We had actually won, and a grateful Master was most happy to take charge of the trophy once again.

*The Master holding the Trophy with the author desperately trying to keep track of names and scores.*

The most memorable event ended with our two companies having the VIP post to watch the centuries-old ceremony of the keys before wending our way out of the Tower beneath Byward. Our grateful thanks to all those who helped make this occasion so enjoyable. I apologise but I did not catch the names of those who ran the moat bar or indeed organised the activities apart from our esteemed Clerk Kate who was her usual busy self. Our most

grateful thanks must go to the Constable and Governor of the Tower for permitting the event to take place in this historic venue and to the Royal Fusiliers who were our hosts for the evening and royally entertained us in their mess. We look forward to defending the trophy next year, so if you can shoot without embarrassing yourself too much please join us.

*Chris Scott  
Photos Pamela Golding*



## Visit to Highgate Cemetery

*“Buy now while stocks last – very few vacant opportunities left – but you must be over age 80 or terminally ill to apply.”*

On 7 June the Master and 22 members and guests visited Highgate Cemetery in north London. An initial discussion point was whether the choice of venue was linked to the Master’s professional knowledge of mortality. It was certainly dead appropriate.



We were given a fascinating tour of the West Cemetery by Visitor Manager Nick Powell. It was opened in 1839, one of the “magnificent seven” new cemeteries opened around that time, in response to what had become a chronic shortage of burial ground in inner London, where graveyards were almost literally overflowing. The London Cemetery Company was a commercial concern, and at its height could have up to 30 burials a day. However it started to fail as a business in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the Company went bankrupt in 1960. The Cemetery was then

run by the United Cemetery Company, but that too failed, leading to a rescue by the Friends of Highgate Cemetery, whose charity runs it today.

Walking around, we were impressed by the landscaping and architecture, including the Egyptian Avenue, the Circle of Lebanon, and the Terrace Catacombs. Perhaps the grandest mausoleum is that of newspaper magnate Julius Beer, who was one of the first investors in the cemetery. At first sight however, some areas seemed still to be rather overgrown, but Nick assured us that it was all part of their deliberate policy of “managed neglect”. (I must remember that phrase the next time my lack of gardening is criticised.)

Many well-known people rest in Highgate. In the West Cemetery, we viewed the tombstones of Michael Faraday, and of Tom Sayers – a much loved Victorian bare-knuckle fighter whose funeral was the largest ever, with a reported 10,000 mourners. We also passed the much more recent grave of Alexander Litvinenko (who had been poisoned with polonium).

We finished by crossing the road for a brief visit to the East Cemetery. When it was built (subsequent to the West Cemetery), the two were linked by a tunnel, which ran from under the chapel on the West Side – so that the one chapel could serve both, with hydraulic lifts at either end. Unfortunately that final underground journey experience is no longer available.

The East Cemetery contains the graves of Karl Marx, perhaps the most famous “resident”, and of George Eliot. Other more recent notable resting places are those of George Michael, and Bert Jansch (notable if, like the writer, you remember the 1960’s folk scene and Pentangle). The morning finished with a walk up the hill (Highgate is not known as the highest point in London for nothing!) to a welcome lunch, where we enjoyed Italian food and good company.



*Gordon Sharp*

## A TOUR OF SMITHFIELD

On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May some 20 Fletchers met at the Henry VIII gate to St Bart's Hospital for a tour of Smithfield. No not the meat market but to learn about the burnings in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

At 6pm, our guide, Virginia Rounding, met us and was introduced by the Master. Virginia has just published a book on the Smithfield Martyrs. The book, "The Burning Time" chronicles the burnings at the stake that took place in the Smithfield area in Tudor times.



Virginia has extensively researched the period and showed us the memorial to some of the martyrs on the hospital wall and then we walked a short distance to St Sepulchre's Church where we learnt the sad fate of John Rogers – a Catholic priest under Henry VIII who transferred to Protestantism and, when Edward succeeded Henry, moved back to England as a Protestant Minister. He was appointed vicar of St Sepulchre's but, when Mary – a staunch Catholic- succeeded to the throne after Edward's short reign, found himself in the wrong religion. He refused all inducements to recant and was condemned to death and burnt as a heretic.

We then moved back into the church of St Bartholomew the Great. where Virginia used the example above to show how difficult those times were with martyrs from both Catholic and Protestant sides depending on the faith of the reigning monarch. Henry V111 although having broken from Rome, still held mainly to the Catholic religion while Edward, his son, was a Protestant. Mary followed Edward and she was a Catholic and, in turn, was followed by Elizabeth, a protestant. So if you lived in those times you could be a believer one day and a heretic the next. She read short passages from her book to explain her points. It is remarkable how much information is available if you know where to look.

We also learnt of the horrors of being burnt at the stake and of the effects of the smoke and heat on the body, but if you want these details, I will encourage you to read the book. Our visit concluded with supper, perhaps appropriately, at "The Butcher's Hook and Cleaver" in Smithfield Square. This was an excellent venue and we were well looked after. JLD

## The Lapel Pin

Our lapel pins in the shape of the Fletchers' shield are selling well. They measure 2cm across and 2.5cm long (3/4"x1") and come in a presentation box. Our picture shows three of them. They are nicely executed in enamel and make a suitable gift for partners or can be worn to show you are a member of our livery. They cost £5 each including post and packing and any profits will go to the Fletchers' Trust.

Some enterprising Fletchers have made them into cuff links.

We still have a limited number available, please order by post from the Clerk enclosing a cheque for £5 made out to the Worshipful Company of Fletchers.



## The Livery Companies and the London Trained Bands

By Dr Christopher L Scott.

Every year during the Lord Mayor's Show his/her carriage is escorted in procession through the City by the officers, pikemen and musketeers of the Honourable Artillery Company. Dressed in uniforms of the mid-seventeenth century this group of former soldiers appears at ceremonial occasions and is a colourful reminder of London's citizen-soldiers.

The Londoners who bravely served Parliament during the civil wars of the 1640s and 50s belonged to the London Trained Bands (LTBs) and were part of a nationwide organisation of part-time forces collectively known as the Militia. England had no regular army and the militia was the country's defence force – royal armies being raised on a temporary basis for specific wars. Militiamen, usually between 16 and 60 years old were unpaid but did rudimentary regular military training and turned out when summoned and commanded by the lord lieutenants of the counties or the lord mayors of various cities. Being England's largest city London naturally raised a lot of companies of men for the militia; however their service was often limited to the defence of the capital.

The story of the English Militia begins with the Celts and continues with the Saxon Fyrd and the Norman Posse Comitatus, and survived for centuries, undergoing increasing legislation to render them better organised, so as to defend the nation in times of crisis, and continued attempts to make them cheaper to operate. The trained bands were part of this evolution. Created in 1572 as part of Elizabeth I's militia reforms, the trained bands in the counties had their fair share of problems in recruitment of both officers and men willing to leave their farms and small holdings at a moment's notice, especially during harvest. In the cities it was easier as trades and shops could be left in the care of extended families, journeymen or apprentices, and being an ordinary member of a band carried social status, more so among the officers. Enthusiasm did vary over the decades in most cities but the involvement of the livery companies in London tended to ensure the LTBs remained fashionable if not always efficient. Many of the livery companies were wealthy and able to make substantial payments to equip the men and pay the wages of professional muster-masters who taught drill, oversaw turnout and arranged spectacular displays – a favourite venue being the Artillery Ground, an open space near Spitalfields and part of the Liberties of the Tower of London. There was also a pride in the knowledge that the livery companies had always contributed to England's defence; viz. the financing of Henry V's Agincourt Campaign in 1415 as explained at the Guildhall lectures recently. In fact the whole system of the LTBs was based upon the Guilds until 1586 when it changed to recruitment governed by the wards.

The supremacy argument between bows & arrows and gunpowder weapons would have aroused the interest of the Worshipful Company of Fletchers at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup>C. It was a hotly disputed matter appearing in pamphlet form in 1574 and again in 1590 but I have discovered no records of Bowyers and Fletchers involvement with the LTBs although I strongly suspect none of the 'warrior guilds' would have willingly absented themselves from enlisting and taking part in martial displays, especially when feelings ran high as in the following statement,

...how many noble victoryes haue bin by them achued, Cronicles are ful, and Histories can well make mencion, and I am of that mind that one thousand good Archers would wronge tow thowsande shot, yea and would driue them out of the feeld and there be a great many of that opinion beside my selfe.

Fletchers may not have won contracts to produce arrows for the LTBs as theirs was redundant technology, however, further research would more than likely reveal their involvement in

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their ranks.

In 1588, the year of the Armada threat, the LTBs were organised into 4 regiments of 10 companies of 150 men in each – that is 3,000 men armed with pikes, muskets and calivers plus officers. Each regiment was based upon four divisions of the City: North, South, East & West. The LTBs experienced a surge in popularity in 1611 under James I when voluntary associations of gentlemen who studied and indeed wrote their own military texts often got together to debate military theories and practice drill manoeuvres. Many of them were leading lights in livery and the wards, and became officers of trained band companies and colonels of regiments. One important such group was 'The Gentlemen of the Private and Loving Company of Cripplegate' who were known for their military fashion and stylish dress. Although initially only a temporary structure, membership was popular and developed into a regular set up in 1616 when the 4 regiment structure was formalised and numbered 6,000 soldiers in 20 companies.



In 1625 in the first year of his reign, Charles I established an Exact Militia, insisting on more regular training and even proficiency inspections. The LTB companies, being full of liverymen, also represented Mercantile London's prestige and the aldermen liked to display this with ceremonial processions and having the citizen-soldiers mount guard at civic events. These were splendid occasions and the various officers often vied with each other in the splendour of their military clothing.

The LTBs did not wear uniform, wearing instead their own civilian clothes indicating that the ordinary soldiers were drawn from 'the middling sort' of people: shopkeepers, tradesmen & merchants who could afford to purchase not only specific military clothing but their own weapons as well. This freedom to dress in their own clothes must have been cherished as they were still not obliged to adopt uniform during the great re-organisation of 1642 when, in response to the impending break between king and Parliament, their numbers were increased. They were firmly based upon the wards and mustered 8,000 men in 40 companies in 6 regiments and were called the Red, Blue, Green, White, Orange & Yellow Regiments after the colour of the flags each carried. In March 1642 control of the LTBs was given to the London Mili-

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tia Committee. After hostilities broke out their numbers grew even bigger after the king ordered the looting and burning of Brentford and then threatened London at Turnham Green. During the course of the war the LTBs helped to fortify London and to man its newly erected walls and forts. Their strength increased to some 20,000 men and from 6 to 18 regiments; being 3 more trained band regiments and nine auxiliary regiments essentially drawn from London apprentices. Two regiments of City Horse were also added to their numbers.

These regiments although specifically raised to defend the capital were frequently sent 'on loan' to Parliament's field armies. As many were liverymen, tradesmen and merchants more accustomed to business meetings, ceremonial parades and fine dinners, they could be somewhat fickle when the going got tough, especially if they had to sleep under the stars in the cold and damp. On campaign they sometimes had serious desertion problems, particularly in bad weather and if they thought they'd been out of London for too long! However, as part of the army of the Earl of Essex several LTB regiments took part in the successful relief of the siege of Gloucester, the disastrous invasion of Cornwall and in the Thames Valley and the Newbury Campaigns. They loyally served Parliament and were known to recruit in good numbers, provide good officers and usually fought well, doing so with exceptional bravery at both battles of Newbury, 1643 and '44. Moreover they fortified and strongly garrisoned London, affording it such protection that the city was never again threatened by the royalist forces.

With the creation of Fairfax's New Model Army in 1645 England had its first paid regular army and the trained bands began to lose prominence. A remarkable incident took place in 1647 when The New Model Army quarrelled with Parliament and marched on London. The Trained Bands were ordered to assemble and defend the city but only the Westminster Band answered the call and soon dispersed. Although certain militia regiments continued to serve Cromwell and Fleetwood well, particularly in 1651 at Worcester, where they helped defeat the self-proclaimed Charles II and his Scots invasion force, the guild and ward sponsored LTBs had had their day.

The militia has continued to serve England over the centuries undergoing amalgamations and name changes, including The Yeomanry, The Fencibles, The Volunteer Force, The Territorial Force, The Special Reserve, The Territorial Army, The Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve and now the Army Reserve. Many of these units lost their uniqueness during these reorganisations and the change to being Reserve Battalions of the Regular Army, although three, the Hertfordshire, Monmouthshire and London Regiments have managed to maintain their special and separate identity.



Based upon engravings on one of the brass clasps of The Great Vellum Book of The Honourable Artillery Company, c.1635

## Fletchers' Golf Day—Tuesday 11th July

Sixteen hardy souls including two guests braved the rain at Muswell Hill. The course was very parched (at least when we started!) but played well, provided a fair test and the greens were in great condition.

The MacLellan Cup was won by Gordon Sharp with an excellent score of 35 points. Rainer Vogt (33) was second and Michael Whatley (29) third.

Best lady was Anne Prout and best guest David Limer. Nearest the pin was won by Paul Knight and longest drive by John Power. The Scott Knight Trophy was keenly contested and won by Bob Hall on count back.

Many thanks to the Master for contributing champagne to the prizes and we have provisionally booked Muswell Hill for 2018 on Wednesday July 11th.

The Goblet has now reached the semifinal stage with Angela Mortimer to play Rob Cossey and Andy Wiggins to play Rainer Vogt.

I wish you fairways and greens.

*Mike Williams*

## A FEW EARLY ARCHERS!!

The **Stonehenge Archer** is the name given to a Bronze Age man whose body was discovered in the outer ditch of Stonehenge. Unlike most burials in the Stonehenge Landscape, his body was not in a barrow, although it did appear to have been deliberately and carefully buried in the ditch. Examination of the skeleton indicated that the man was local to the area and aged about 30 when he died. Radiocarbon dating suggests that he died around 2300 BCE, making his death roughly contemporary with the Amesbury Archer and the Boscombe Bowmen buried 3 miles away in Amesbury.



He came to be known as an archer because of the stone wrist-guard and a number of flint arrowheads buried with him. In fact, several of the arrowheads' tips were located in the skeleton's bones, suggesting that the man had been killed by them.

The **Amesbury Archer** is an early Bronze Age man whose grave was discovered during excavations at the site of a new housing development in Amesbury near Stonehenge. The grave was uncovered in May 2002, and the man is believed to date from about 2300 BC. He is nicknamed "the Archer" because of the many arrowheads that were among the artefacts buried with him. The calibrated radiocarbon dates for his grave and dating of Stonehenge suggest the sarsens and trilithons at Stonehenge may have been raised by the time he was born, although a new bluestone circle may have been raised at the same time as his birth.

The **Boscombe Bowmen** is the name given by archaeologists to a group of early Bronze Age individuals found in a shared burial at Boscombe Down. The grave contained a total of seven burials: three children, a teenager and three men. Analysis of the skulls suggests that the men and the teenager were related to each other. The eldest man was buried in a crouched position with the bones of the others scattered around him and their skulls resting at his feet. They became known as the Bowmen because several flint arrowheads were placed in the grave.

*JLD*



# The Worshipful Company of Fletchers Disability Championship August 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> 2017



As part of Archery Great Britain's preparation for Tokyo, the Fletchers' Trust agreed to sponsor an annual Championship Competition between existing Paralympians and those hoping to make it to Tokyo.

Plans for the competition began last year and the inaugural event was held on the recent August Bank Holiday! The Fletchers' party of 16 made up of Liverymen, Freeman Archers and Hon. Archers arrived at Lilleshall, the home of Archery Great Britain an enjoyable, hot and sunny weekend. The Company also made up its own team of archers to challenge the Paralympians.

Saturday saw the athletes, including four visually impaired archers, compete in the qualification rounds at the end of which, Chris Brown, Chairman of the Fletchers' Trust, presented prizes ably assisted by the Almoner Michael Holden. The Fletchers party then retired to their hotel in nearby Telford where they enjoyed an excellent dinner with guests David Tillotson, AGB's Performance Director, and Steve Tully, an AGB director. Also attending were Mel Clarke and John Cavanagh both Paralympians and Fletchers and Richard Hennahane another interna-



tional and a co-opted Fletcher for the night as he was shooting for us the next day!

The next morning the Fletchers party were back at Lilleshall for the individual matches, a head to head between the Paralympians. Incredible shooting. The Master thanked the athletes for all their efforts and the officials for organising a great day. She then presented the new Fletchers Championship Cup to the winner Hazel Chaisty.

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After lunch we all went down to the indoor range for our big event of the weekend, – well, possibly - the match between five teams each consisting of one Paralympian and one Fletcher. The teams were;

Andrew Trapnell and Victoria Rumary

Melanie Trapnell and Jodie Grinham

David Goodall and Jo Frith

Gordon Sharp and Hazel Chaisty

John Cavanagh and Richard Henahane

There was some debate as to whether John and Richard should be allowed to take part in view of their record at the Paralympics but eventually they went head to head with the leading team of Jo Frith and David Goodall. An intense dual followed with Jo and David winning by a narrow margin! So the final scores were - Gold for Jo and David with Hazel and Gordon gaining silver and Victoria and Andrew bronze.

Totally exhausted we made our ways home. Our special thanks go to David Tillotson who has been involved in the Championship from the beginning (and possibly set the rules!) and Kathy Cumming, AGB's Performance Coordinator, who made the



smooth running of the Championship look easy.

The Championship is to be held on an annual basis and it is hoped will become a showcase event in the Fletchers' calendar. Great fun, great sport, great company and thanks to everyone who made the weekend so enjoyable.

*Michael Holden  
Hon Almoner*