



Merchants' View

Issue 18

October 2018

Master's Report

Fellow Members

As I sit down to write this report we have just returned from a very successful day trip to Eyemouth and Dunbar. We took a trip on a rib boat and had the good luck to see minke whales, porpoises and dolphins as well as the stunning Berwickshire coast line. This was followed by a most enjoyable tour of Bellhaven Brewery in Dunbar.

The company has again had a very busy and successful year with various sporting events, our winter function, AGM and Dinner in March and an excellent Bussin' in June which was very well supported by our members.



The year started off with a very well attended AGM and Dinner that saw us appoint Stuart Davidson as Merchant Company Standard Bearer for 2018. Stuart received a very enthusiastic welcome at the dinner and has been an excellent choice as Standard Bearer; he and his wife Karen have been a credit to themselves, their families and the Company.

Over the following weeks Merle and I joined Stuart and Karen at the various functions and can I again extend a big thank you to all the members who come along and support our Standard Bearer. I know it meant a great deal to both Stuart and Karen.

At this point I would also like to thank Stuart Hogarth and David Amos for their support for Stuart as Right and Left Hand Men, some of it beyond the call of duty.

During the weeks following on from the dinner, Stuart spent a lot of time perfecting his casting skills. Yet again can I say thanks to Stuart and Pam Kemp for hosting the Sundays and providing those delicious goodies. It was also nice to see the flags cast at the Haining.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Sunday 11th November 2018

To mark the 100th anniversary of the armistice which brought the First World War to an end, this year's Remembrance Parade will take a different form. All casting organisations will carry their flags in the parade and dip them at the War Memorial at 11 am.

The timing for the morning is as follows:

**0915 parade forms up in the Valley; march to Parish Church
1030 parade re-forms outside church; return to War Memorial
1100 Act of Remembrance and 2 minutes silence**

The Master encourages all members who are able to attend.

The Bussin' itself was another resounding success; it was gratifying to see so many people attending to support Stuart and Karen.

Congratulations to Karen on the way she carried out her duties on the night.

Common Riding day arrived and we had an excellent turn out, starting at the War Memorial at 5.30am with the support just growing from there for Stuart.

This year saw Stuart being the first person to cast our new flag and what a tremendous job he did on the day in windy conditions.

I must at this point congratulate Mr Bill Ainslie on reaching his golden jubilee anniversary. And what a delight it was for the members to see him take the Ceremonial Flag coming along Scotts Place, a memory I am sure Bill will treasure. We also had a special 50th anniversary medal made for Bill and I had the honour of presenting this to a very special gentleman indeed at our Annual Bussin'.

Once again we had an excellent Foy in the offices of Heard Hamilton. This just seems to keep on growing year on year, which is fantastic for our Standard Bearer and Lady Busser.

David A. Heard, Master



**Selkirk Merchant Company
Standard Bearer 2018**

Stuart Davidson

At the annual dinner and AGM in March Stuart Davidson was the popular choice to carry the Company flag in the 2017 Common Riding.

Stuart is the 51st member to cast the flag in the Market Place and is proud to be the 1st member to cast our brand new banner.

Stuart, runs his busy architecture practice from his offices in the High Street. He is married to his Lady Busser Karen and they have 3 children; Poppy10, Harry 8 and Innes 5 who were all tremendously excited by their dad's celebrity status!

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Winter Function & Jim Oliver Award



Merchants' View



Master David Heard presents Caroline Penman with the James Oliver Memorial Shield

The winter function in November was a chance for members to relax together over a meal and a drink and to enjoy the entertainment provided by local band Fahrenheit. It was also the occasion of the presentation of the James Oliver Memorial Award, which this year was awarded to Caroline Penman.

Caroline was born and educated in Selkirk and from an early age she showed the enthusiasm for participation and involvement which has informed her whole life. She was a member of the Brownies, the Guides and the Venture Scouts as well as being an active member of Selkirk swimming club. After leaving school she played rugby and was a member of Selkirk Ladies team in 1999 when they won the Selkirk Sevens. That same year she ran the Edinburgh marathon in aid of Scottish Hart.

Caroline is a qualified accountant and she has put her skills at the service of many local groups, acting as treasurer for some and doing the accounts on a voluntary basis for others. But her talents are not only fiscal; she has volunteered at The Haining where she helped organise the Teddy Bears Picnic and the Easter Egg Hunt and she is a member of the Common Riding children's picnic committee helping to organise the races and the kids' teas. Indeed her involvement in local groups and organisations, as volunteer, committee member, chair

and coordinator is many and varied.

Caroline is also an instigator of new ideas and she has been a driving force in many of the improvements that we have seen in Selkirk in the last year or so, from the new Christmas lights to the regeneration of the Market Place. She is the organiser of the Welcome to Selkirk town guide, which will be in its third edition next year and she is an active member of the Chamber of Trade, which is committed to stimulating growth in the town. She was active in starting up the Borders Business Women's Club, which aims to support and inspire women in the Scottish Borders to develop their businesses, and she is an Ambassador for Women in Enterprise Scotland.

And she has a day job! With her business partner Leanne Main, she runs the Post office in the Market Place as well as Liberty Star Home and Gift and Liberty Star Design. Married to Ian, and with two teenage children, Caroline amazingly somehow manages to incorporate domestic life with all of her other activities.

The award was presented by the Master, David Heard, who observed that her commitment and willingness to work for the improvement of Selkirk makes her a truly worthy recipient. In thanking the Company for the honour, Caroline told how she had known the Oliver family well growing up, so this presentation had a special meaning for her. "A community is only as good as those who become involved in it," she said, "and there are so many passionate individuals who put their heart and soul into making this wee town great that I am blown away by their generosity and support." She stressed that the more you give and the more you put in to things, the more you get out of them. And she went on to say how her involvement with the various projects and groups she works with has fostered many friendships and privileged associations.



Merchant Company Outing

A boat trip from Eyemouth followed by a tour of Bellhaven brewery made for a brilliant day out



On behalf of the Company, the Master presented cheques to each of the town's bands



Bowling & Quiz Night

Selkirk Merchant Company Bowling and Quiz night was held once again at Ettrick Forest Bowling Club. A good turnout of members and family attended. The bowling was convincingly won by the rink of Kelly Mitchell, Grant Kinghorn and Ian Pretswell.

The winning quiz team was Ian Pretswell, Jade Fraser, Grant Murray, Robin Elliot, David Mitchell and Agnes Mitchell

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SELKIRK MERCHANT COMPANY WINTER FUNCTION 2018

Friday 2nd November SELKIRK RUGBY CLUB

Entertainment provided by the popular local band

FAHRENHEIT

Presentation of Jim Oliver Award

Tickets on sale from Heard Hamilton £13.00 (includes supper)

The event is open to members and guests

Common Riding 2018

Merchant Company Standard Bearer Stuart Davidson and his Lady Bussier Karen are both Selkirk born and bred, they have always done the Common Riding, but both admitted to being amazed by seeing up close all that goes on in the lead up to Selkirk's big day. For example, Spurs Night, the first time they went out all dressed up and wearing rosettes, they couldn't get over the amount of people waving and tooting as they passed by! As time went on though they realised how much preparation has gone in to the event and how very well rehearsed it is.

Stuart's family were all Hammermen or Weavers and two of his great-uncles have been Weavers Standard Bearers so it was with a great sense of



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Stuart carries the flag into the Market Place, supported by the Master, his Right and Left Hand Men and our 50th anniversary Standard Bearer Bill Ainslie, plus a great following of the Company.



Bill, David and Stuart enjoy a moment of companionship at the Toll, before returning to the Market Place

pride that he took on the role of Merchant's Standard Bearer. He mentions particularly the huge privilege of the double-whammy, casting the new flag for the first time and also being the 51st member of the Merchant Company to actually cast the flag in the Market Place. The first Merchant to perform this honour was of course Bill Ainslie who was marching in the procession again this year. Stuart described what an emotional moment it was when Bill got to carry the flag again.

Of the actual cast itself Stuart has very little memory; he does recall climbing on to the platform and looking out over what seemed to be a sea of pom poms! His cast wasn't made any easier by the wind that gusted round the Market Place grabbing at the flag and there's no doubt that many would have been struggling to cast their flags in the wild and windy conditions of the

day before. Karen recalls with gratitude how many people were on hand to help out as she made her way round the procession with three excited kids to look after. She was thankful also for all of the help and advice she was given before the Bussin', not least from Company Officer Jim Cockburn.

There's no doubt they both really enjoyed the whole experience but are looking forward to the next two years when they can maybe relax a little and provide support to whoever follows them. They look forward to maintaining the friendships they made with their fellow Standard Bearers and Lady Bussiers. Stuart and Karen both marvelled at how those 14 people who hardly knew each other previously became such great friends in such a short time, united in their common goal to play their part in Selkirk's ancient traditions.

New Members



Merchants' View



4 new members joined the Company this year, seen here with the Master David Heard (l to r) Ben Agate, Rona Munro, Jennifer Craig & Caroline Penman

SPORTS REPORT

Curling

The Curling Competition was a two horse race this year with Team Clapperton and Team Amos storming into the final. Team Amos prevailed in the final with team of seasoned stalwarts in Dave Amos, David Mitchell, Jake Wheelans and Stuart Davidson. Runners Up were Ian Clapperton, Pat Clapperton, Donald MacLeod and Peter Henderson

Summer Bowling League

This year turned out to be the most successful yet for our Bowlers with the team winning the Summer Bowling League. The winning team consisted of David Heard, Merle Heard, Bryan Hoggan, Dougie Hogarth, Isabel Hogarth, David Deacon and Callum Deacon

Golf

The Lindsay Henderson Golf Trophy, held at Minto in July, was won by Gerald Beggs with David Heard taking the Scratch Cup.

Shawburn Trophy

The Selkirk Merchant Company regained the Shawburn Trophy 3-1 victory.

MEMBERSHIP NOMINATIONS

All proposals for membership in 2019 must be in the hands of the Secretary or Master by 31st December 2018

50th Anniversary Standard Bearer Bill Ainslie



Master David Heard presented Bill Ainslie with a special commemorative medal

Bill Ainslie is a man of firsts – not only was he the first person to cast the Merchant Company flag he is now the first person to be interviewed twice for Merchant's View, the first time being for the first issue back in 2001.

And I'm having the pleasure of chatting to him again with good reason, this being the 50th anniversary of that first cast. To recap for anyone who may have missed issue 1: at least as far back as our first recorded Standard Bearer, Archibald Watt in 1721, the Merchant's banner has been carried in the Common Riding procession but had never been cast in the Market Place. Then, in 1968, Tom Henderson who was Master that year and also a Baillie of the Town Council said that any of the organisations who carried a flag in the procession should be able to cast their flag. The stipulation was that the flag had to be carried in the whole

of the procession; the exception to this was the Merchant Company, which has the privilege of joining the procession at The County Hotel.

And so it was decided that Bill should be Merchant Company Standard Bearer that year as he had already had the experience of casting the flag for the Ex-Soldiers Association in 1951. There was no time to arrange for a casting flag to be made so it was further decided that Bill should cast the ceremonial flag. Now anyone who has carried that flag will tell you what an incredible feat that was. The ceremonial flag is like a big carpet on a stick, unlike the casting flags which are much lighter so, as Bill says, it was a good job it was a perfectly calm day, if there had been a breath of wind he would have ended up alongside the Bandmaster! Not only was the flag not made for casting the pole it was on was deemed to be unsuitable for the job. This problem was solved when an old lady in the West Port was able to provide the pole from the Tailors' casting flag; the Tailors were by that time no longer active. On the Tuesday afternoon just before the Bussin' the flag was put on the old pole and Bill says it made it easier to cast.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first cast Bill was presented with a specially struck gold medal by Master David Heard at the Bussin'. This was totally unexpected and Bill was honoured to receive the medal. Another high point of the year was having the chance once again to carry the flag in the procession for a short way.

Bill is the longest serving member of the Company having joined in 1950. He

was Standard Bearer in 1968 and Master in 1984. He says he has been fortunate to live and work in Selkirk all his life and has attended every Dinner and Bussin' since he joined. He thinks the Company is in good fettle and he approves the way that it has moved with the times; he contrasts it with his day, when everything ran to a strict formula and everyone had to stick to the script. The admission of women members to the Company was a terrific benefit and, in his opinion, as long as we can continue to attract new members to carry on the old traditions the Company will be in good health.

DATES FOR THE DIARY 2018-19

Early February 2019 (tbc)

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

- Philiphaugh

Friday 8th March 2019

AGM & DINNER - Philiphaugh

Tuesday 11th June 2018

MC BUSSIN' - Victoria Hall

Friday 14th June 2018

SELKIRK COMMON RIDING

Editorial Team: Alistair Pattullo
& Judith Thompson

Thanks to members for their contributions
and permission to use photos

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