



COMPANY COMMENT

Honourable Company of Freemen of the
City of London of North America
www.freemenlondon.org

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From the Master

On behalf of the Court, I would like to wish every member of our Company a very happy, healthy and joy-filled 2007.

The Court, the Honourable Company and I offer sincerest condolences to Vivienne, David and Andrew Stevens on the recent death of Past Master Arthur Stevens. Arthur was a huge supporter of the Honourable Company, serving on the Court for 10 years as Warden, Honorary Treasurer, Deputy Master and Master. He attended his last Company event, the Annual Dinner, in 2004 at the age of 89. He will be sorely missed by all his friends in the Honourable Company. This article is followed by an obituary for Arthur which has been written by David with help from Vivienne.

The beginning of a new year is a good time to reflect on the successes of the past, and to set goals and resolutions for the year ahead.

The past year has been a good one for our Company in many ways; we increased our membership, and equally important, its diversity; we upgraded the quality of our events, and attracted many people to them, including a good number of guests; we strengthened our relationship with the City of London through the good work of our London Clerk and members of our Court; and we started the process of putting in place a strategy that will lay the foundation for our future philanthropic endeavours.

There were also a few disappointments in 2006; our attempt to organize a cricket match was met with tepid interest and the game was rained out; we were not able to get enough details of the annual Christmas Lunch and Carols in New York from the St. George’s Society in time to produce a flyer, resulting in poor representation at this event; and we fell behind schedule in issuing membership certificates to existing members.

As for 2007, your Court will be setting priorities at our next meeting in early January. One of my goals is to increase the participation level of our existing members. I am not just referring to attendance at events, but equally important to your communication with the Court and me. We want to hear from you – by email or letter. We want to get your views on what we are doing well and what can be improved upon. We want to know what kind of information you need to take advantage of all of the benefits of being a member of our Company, and in being a Freeman of the City of London.

Becoming a Freeman is one of the great privileges of belonging to our Company, and I would like to see more members take this step in 2007. Neil Purcell, our Membership Chairman, has helped many members gain their “freedom” (including me), and he is available to provide advice and assist in the process. You can reach him at neilivia@rogers.com. As a Freeman, you can also consider applying for membership in The Guild of Freemen, or in one of more than 100 Livery Companies located in London. Peter Leach, the Editor of our Company Comment, has written about many of these companies and is a great source of information should you wish to learn more about their history. As a starting point, I encourage you to visit our website www.freemenlondon.org and click on the “City Livery Companies” link that will take you to the site of the Corporation of the City of London which has a listing of and links to the City Livery Companies.

Updating our own website will be another priority for 2007. Our webmaster, Robin Braithwaite, has already begun this process by culling the number of photos from old events. We are looking for ideas as to how we can make our website more useful to members and would appreciate receiving suggestions for content, visual appeal, and navigation. Please send your comments to Robin at rjb-a@rogers.com.

We also plan to complete the process of issuing membership certificates to existing members in 2007. To date, we have been issuing certificates to new members as they join our Company. However, since our records do not provide a date of membership for all existing members, we have been unable to issue many certificates to them. Consequently, we have had additional certificates printed that do not contain a line to state when membership was granted. We will begin issuing these certificates to existing members soon.

In addition, we plan to increase our communication and cooperation in 2007 with other British Societies in North America and certain Guilds and Livery companies in the United Kingdom. In particular, I see many advantages in planning joint activities and events in Toronto with our fellow British Societies. I would also like to increase our contact with members outside of Toronto, particularly in Atlantic Canada where we have an East Coast Chapter, and on the East Coast of the United States where we have added several new members over the last two years.

Finally, my top resolution for the New Year is to ensure we implement our new strategy for our Company Charity. Our Charity Committee, under the leadership of Past Masters Martin Walmsley, Geoffrey Mayo and John Smith, have been working hard to negotiate and confirm arrangements that will enable us to give a scholarship each year that will help a Canadian student do post-graduate studies at a university in the Greater London Area. The student would be required to attend a livery company event in London during their term there, and to report back to our Company at an annual meeting upon their return to Canada about their experience in London.

In conclusion, I hope you will agree that your Court has made considerable progress in implementing its strategy, and that we are setting the right priorities for 2007 and beyond. I know I speak for all of the Court when I wish you the very best for 2007, and encourage you to share your thoughts and wishes with us.

David Moorcroft



**Obituary – Past Master Arthur
Stevens, Grocer, Freeman of the City of
London, Member of the Guild of Freeman**

Arthur was born in London, England in 1915. He excelled in school and intended to become a lawyer. However, the sudden death of his father in the middle of the depression threw him into running his dad's business; no more driving racing cars at Goodwood, no more amateur boxing, no more thought of law.

Just prior to the outbreak of WW2, Arthur, attending a large wedding, met the girl who would be his wife and life

partner. He was engaged within two weeks, and married Vivienne three months later, on December 24, 1939.

Despite three attempts to join his brothers, one of whom was in the navy, the other in the air force, Arthur was not allowed to join for health reasons, and was assigned to the Territorial Army, where he became a Lieutenant and intelligence officer. Vivienne and Arthur received medals for their service to the Country during the evacuation of the armed forces from Dunkirk. Early in the war his company was issued blueprints and instructions for a flame-thrower. Arthur and his engineers designed the production line, mostly on the living room floor of his home, and production soon followed in his small tube-fabricating factory. The flame-thrower was used throughout the war by the British Army.

After the war, he had another designing marathon on the living room floor with his engineers, Vivienne providing the never-ending tea and sandwiches, and started making folding baby carriages.

In December 1940, Arthur and Vivienne had a son David, followed by Alfred in '44, who died earlier this year, and Andrew in '48. By 1952, Arthur, seeing the government nationalize the steel industry and concerned about his family's future in a country he felt was being badly governed, moved to Canada.

His intent was to sell British machinery, primarily metalworking, in Canada, and with that in mind he brought his family to Toronto, leased a store on King Street where there were other machinery dealers. He put the one machine that he had in the middle of the shop, and, leaving Vivienne to run the shop with its one desk, phonebook and a phone, he took to the road to sell machinery, something he had never done in his life. Like most things Arthur tried, with hard work, intelligence and tenacity, he succeeded; having Vivienne as a partner, he would suggest, made it all possible. Arthur sold machinery for forty years; huge sophisticated cutting edge production lines of equipment, latterly from his own company and taking his last half million dollar order at the age of 82.

A very well dressed man in town, Arthur could be found on every summer weekend from 1954 in a pair of swimming trunks and running shoes at his cottage in Haliburton. No television every made its way to the cottage, nor a radio that could do much more than find the next days weather report. His was the first sailing boat on the lake, and how he loved a windy day. To be his crew was a joy for his sons, though maybe a cause of some anxiety for the occasional British machinery company executive, banker or technician who joined him for a weekend.

Local charities received major support from Arthur and Vivienne, though his favourite was the Technion University in Israel. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian side of that organization for several years. Before leaving the UK, he was a senior member of the Hove

Masonic lodge, having joined that organization in 1938. So shortly after arriving in Canada, he joined the Masonic Lodge in Toronto and was an active member there since 1952. With the encouragement of Vivienne's father, Alfred Myers, Deputy of the Grocers Company, Arthur was admitted to the Freedom of the City of London on 5th July 1949 and as a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Grocers soon after.

In 1984, when Arthur discovered the Honourable Company of Freemen of the City of London had been formed in 1979 in Toronto, he joined, and found a group of people whose company, outlook and objectives he much appreciated and supported. He and Vivienne spread their enthusiasm about the Honourable Company around, and signed up a slew of new members. He felt very honoured when, in 1990, he was invited to join the Court and to become Honorary Treasurer. Subsequently in 1993 he was elected Deputy Master and in 1994 proudly served as Master. It was a particular honour and pleasure for him when Sir Paul Newell, Lord Mayor of London visited during his term in office. For this, together with Gary Burroughs and the other Wardens, Arthur hosted a spectacular luncheon at the Oban Inn, Niagara-on-the-Lake. He so enjoyed the Honourable Company that he attended his last banquet in 2004, when he was 89 and in a wheelchair.

Arthur will be remembered very fondly by the Honourable Company and many of his Freemen friends will grieve with his family at his passing. We have all been honoured by his friendship, his humour, his leadership and his generosity.

This obituary was prepared principally by David Stevens in memory of his Father, Arthur, and with considerable help from Vivienne Stevens.



The Company of Watermen and Lightermen

Throughout London's history, the Thames has been the highway that enabled its citizens to travel easily from place to place along the river and to carry goods where they were needed. The Thames watermen provided the vital service of transporting passengers to their places of work and leisure, or simply carrying them across to the other riverbank and the Thames lightermen have looked after the transport of goods both across and along the river, and to and from ships anchored there. London Bridge, first built by the Romans, was the only bridge spanning the Thames in London until Westminster Bridge was built in 1750. The watermen and lightermen did all they could to ensure that their boats remained the only practical means of getting about.

By Elizabethan times, Thames watermen and lightermen had become some of the most important tradesmen in London, but work on the river could be dangerous for the poorly

qualified in unsuitable boats. Accidents were frequent, and passengers and merchants were often overcharged.

In 1514, in Henry VIII's reign, Parliament found it necessary to introduce an Act to regulate watermen's fares. A further Act of 1555 led to the foundation of the Company of Watermen and the introduction of apprenticeships on the river. The original one-year waterman's apprenticeship became seven years in 1603.



The Company of Watermen and Lightermen

The first interesting difference about the Company of Watermen and Lightermen is that its existence is not through Royal Charter but as a result of law passed by Parliament. This has resulted in the Company not being in the order of precedence, not being a Worshipful Company, being classified as a Company without livery, although as we shall see it clearly has one, but having all the same attributes as the other London Livery Companies. The crown first became involved in the development of the Company when, in 1585, Elizabeth I granted the Company its own coat of arms showing the tools of the watermen's trade, and soon afterwards their first Hall was built. Then in 1700, the lightermen joined with the Company, and it became the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames, a title it still holds. The Company moved to its present Hall in 1780.

Watermen flourished in the 18th and early 19th centuries, and many popular prints and ceramic figures illustrate their activities. Some of these caricatures make fun of the watermen's and lightermen's



rivalry when touting for passengers and wares and the reputation of the less scrupulous for overcharging.

However, competition from new bridges, improved road and rail transport and Thames steamers with their heavy wash, eventually led to a serious decline in the number of watermen. The lightermen, however, benefited at first from the increase in the shipping trade of the Port of London. But they were severely affected by new cargo-handling methods introduced into the docks in the second half of the 20th century.



Changes to the Company's role

The Company maintained its responsibilities throughout the 19th century for regulating watermen and lightermen and their fees, for registering their boats and for apprenticeships. After this, the Thames Conservancy and the Port of London Authority took over most of these duties. However, the Company continues to be responsible for

apprenticeships. So today, the principal activities of the Company are the training of apprentices and the charitable support of watermen and their families. The Watermen's Company also continues to encourage an interest in rowing and the use of the Thames, as well as traditional City of London ceremonial river events.



Thames taxi service

Until the mid 18th century, London Bridge was the only crossing place and road transport was slow and difficult. Thames watermen provided a taxi service for people traveling along the river, or crossing to the other bank to visit theatres and other entertainments. Using the tide to their advantage, watermen could make very fast passages by river. Other watermen rowed the private barges owned by the nobility, rich citizens and city livery companies, as well as the ceremonial royal barges. These elaborately decorated vessels became an important part of river pageantry for centuries.



A fully licensed trade

In the 16th century, Acts of Parliament regulated the watermen (also known as wherry men) working on the tidal Thames between Gravesend and Windsor. In Pepys's time, there were 10,000 licensed watermen and lightermen on the Thames.

Particular landing places on the river were designated as plying places for the watermen to pick up and put down passengers. These were next to stairs down to the river and often near the bigger inns and the bridges that were built from 1750 onwards. By the 18th century there were more than 100 such plying places in London where watermen could carry on their trade. Watermen's stairs can still be seen along the river in many places, some finding other uses since the decline in the river taxi trade.

By the early 19th century, watermen were being issued with official numbered licence badges that they had to wear on their coat sleeves. These allowed passengers to identify properly trained professionals before risking a journey. Watermen who used bad language or overcharged could be fined.



Seven-year apprenticeship

Apprentice watermen signed indentures binding them to a master for seven years. Among other commitments it stipulates that: "He shall not haunt Taverns or Play Houses, not absent himself from his Master's Service Day or Night, unlawfully, but in all things as a faithful Apprentice he shall

behave himself towards his said Master". In return, each apprentice's master shall "teach and instruct, or cause to be taught and instructed, finding unto the said Apprentice Meat, Drink, Apparel, Lodging, and all other Necessaries according to the Custom of the City of London."



Wherries and skiffs

The watermen's traditional open boats were known as wherries and had been used on the Thames since the 16th century or earlier. They were beamy clinker-built boats, often double-ended, painted green or red and with seating for several passengers.

Wherries had pointed bows so that they could get close in to shore and let their passengers off without them getting their feet wet. Covers could be raised to protect the passengers from rain and sun, but these could slow the passage in adverse winds. The Watermen's Company tried to standardize these boats and to ensure they were sound.



The waterman's skiff was a later development of the wherry. It was a smaller craft with a transom or flat stern.

By 1860 there were almost no wherries left on the Thames, but skiffs had become quite popular for pleasure boating especially on the upper reaches of the river. A modern replica of a waterman's wherry was designed and built to traditional plans in 1981 by Mark Edwards of Richmond. Called *Rose in June*, she is still raced on the Thames.

Inevitably, the watermen's traditional rowing boats were eventually replaced by motor boats. This was because:

- they were faster
- they could carry more passengers
- they were not dependent on the tides.



Current role

Today's modern Thames passenger boats are now part of the London tourist industry. They are still licensed by the Watermen's Company and watermen also work on the Thames piers. Royal Watermen are selected from the Freeman of the Company and still accompany the Queen on ceremonial occasions such as the state opening of Parliament and royal river journeys. Their distinctive red uniforms have a silver-gilt breastplate (plastron) decorated with the Royal Arms and insignia.

In 2002, a new Royal shallop *Jubilant*, was built to an 18th century Royal barge design to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. This elegant 13-metre (45 feet) rowing craft has since been used by Royal Watermen and others to recreate historic Thames ceremonial events.



The Watermen's Hall

The history of the early Halls appear to be confused. From the Geocities Website (www.geocities.com/thameswatermen/chapter2.htm#halls) the history goes back to before 1550. From this reference, it appears that the first Watermen's Hall was a leased building at Three Cranes Wharf on Board Street. This is south of the Guildhall on the Thames. This reference continues to refer to this Hall being leased until the Great fire in 1666. This site was burned down and the Watermen built a new hall at Coldharbour. This is contested on the Charles Harrison Wallace website www.cichw.net/pmhallwm1.html#wh2 version which shows pictures of the Watermen's Hall in Coldharbour in the Isle of Dogs area in 1550 and 1647. This was a large 4 storey building with a roof comprising 5 gables built right on the riverbank and having a stone staircase leading directly from the river. In 1647, essentially the same building is shown but the southern part of the building is then shown as only 2 storeys high. In 1670, pictures show an entirely different building and one might surmise that the original building was destroyed in the Great Fire in 1666. However, this was too far from the site of the fire to have been effected. This second building, a 4 storey rectangular building with a flat roof, stands back from the riverbank and is still at Coldharbour. The Court is reported to have ordered this building pulled down in 1719 to make way for a new Hall. It appears that this was built by 1721. Sometime between 1721 and 1780, the Company bought and had built a new Hall in the City, probably in light of their growing importance and influence in the city and possibly to thwart the building of more bridges over the Thames. The Watermen's Hall is one of the 'hidden gems' of the City of London. Tucked away down St Mary-at-Hill, a narrow street only a few yards from old Billingsgate Fish market, Watermen's Hall was designed by a William Blackburn and has occupied its present Georgian premises since 1780. Its impressive stone façade, adorned with Coade stone reliefs of dolphins, oars and boats has behind it the complex of rooms that make up the Company's premises.

The Clerk has provided this interesting description of a walk through of the Hall.

"Beginning in the lobby, with its interesting collection of old prints and a huge bone model of a sailing ship, we enter the intimate and cosy Parlour, which is adorned with an array of old books, a stained glass window and display cases showing fascinating Company artefacts, including some beadles' truncheons for keeping unruly watermen and lightermen in order!

Upstairs is the Court Room with a flamboyant Master's chair and superb "after Robert Adam" ceiling, the stunning paintings and immense coat-of-arms over the fireplace. In this room 37 members of the court meet quarterly under the command of the Master.

Going into the Freeman's Room, which was incorporated into the Hall in 1983 when the property next door to the Hall was purchased. Here we can see the Company's fine displays of silverware (most Masters present a piece) as well as a collection of historic uniforms on display, including a Doggett's Coat and Badge, presented to the Company by Prince Albert in 1851.

Finally, we go in to the wood paneled Silver Room surrounded by display cases of the Company's treasures and a list of all the Masters and the Clerks that have served the Company. One cannot help but notice that some of the Clerks have served a lifetime with the Company."

Information about the Company

Information about the Company can be obtained by contacting the Clerk, Mr. Colin Middlemiss at Watermen's Hall, 16 St.Mary-at-Hill, London EC3R 8EF, by phone at +44 2079297451 or by e-mail at clerk@watermenshall.org. They also have an good website www.watermenshall.org. There is an extensive history of the Company, especially on the www.geocities.com/thameswatermen.

This article was written with the assistance of Mr. Colin Middlemiss, Clerk of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen and Robin Braithwaite. Sources of information include the website of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen and the references included in the text.



CITY TRADITIONS - DOGGETT'S COAT AND BADGE WAGER

At 12.00 a.m. on Monday 16th July 2007, up to six young watermen freemen of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames will line up for the start of the 293rd wager for Doggett's Coat and Badge. The race, which is for single sculls and covers a course of 4 miles 7 furlongs, is said to be the oldest continuous sporting event in the country, if not the world. And yet, like so many other historic traditions that have evolved in London over the centuries, it remains relatively unknown.

It is called Doggett's Coat and Badge Wager as the winner receives a scarlet coat and silver badge first given by the founder of the wager, Thomas Doggett, to wear on special occasions. Thomas Doggett was an Irish comedian who came to London about the year 1690. After playing many parts at Drury Lane, he became the Manager of that theatre and also of the Haymarket. As well as his interest in the stage, Doggett was also a very strong Whig in politics and when George I came to the throne following the death of Queen Ann in 1714, Doggett had the brilliant idea of founding the wager as a tribute to the Hanoverians.

The first mention of the race appears in the books of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the river Thames and reads:

“On the first day of August 1715, Thomas Doggett, Comedian, a great Whig in Politics, lately joint manager of Drury Lane Theatre with Wilks and Cibber, gave a coat and badge to be rowed for by six watermen in the first year of their freedom. It was rowed for on this day, being the first anniversary of the Accession of King George I”.

Doggett himself organised and managed the race each year until his death in 1721. In his Will he instructed his executors to endow the race and to hand over the funds in trust to Mr. Burt of the Admiralty Office who was to manage the race after his death. Doggett also set out detailed instructions in his Will as to the style and cost of the badge and the livery which was to be presented to the winner. The Trust was to provide: “five pounds for a Badge of Silver representing Liberty, eighteen shillings for a Livery on which the Badge was to be put, a guinea for making up the suit of livery and buttons and appurtenances to it, and 30/- to the Clerk of the Watermen’s Hall”. The Trusteeship of the race was eventually handed to the Fishmongers’ Company, with an endowment of £350.

Throughout its 290-year history the race has remained relatively unchanged. The course, originally from the Swan Inn at London Bridge to the Swan Inn at Chelsea, is still the same, although neither of these houses now exists. Up until 1873, competitors rowed against the tide using four-seater passenger wherries and there are stories of the race taking over two hours to complete. Since then the race has been rowed with the tide and the passenger wherries have been replaced by modern single sculling boats. The time now taken to complete the course is between 25 to 30 minutes and, in 1973, Bobby Prentice set the fastest recorded time of 23 minute 22 seconds, a record that still stands today.



In 1908 Mr. Guy Nickalls wrote: - “this long course is not so much a test of speed as a test of watermanship, which after all are more the qualities required of a man who is going to get his living on the water as waterman or lighterman”. This statement is still true today and many a race has been won or lost by a person’s skill, or lack of skill, as a waterman.

During the Second World War between 1939 and 1946 the race was suspended as it was considered too dangerous to allow watermen to compete under the circumstances. However, in 1947, nine races were held that year to allow those watermen who had missed out during the war to row for the year they would have been qualified to do so under normal circumstances. This made up for the years that were missed due to the war and has maintained an unbroken record of winners since the race first started in 1715.

According to “Doggett’s custom” only young watermen “in the first year of their Freedom of the Watermen’s Company” were entitled to enter the race which effectively meant that a

waterman only had one attempt. Of course, in Doggett’s time, watermen were much more numerous than they are now, being that they were the equivalent of the modern day taxi driver on the river. However, by the early 1980’s, the number of watermen working on the Thames had declined and fewer apprentices were being trained, which meant there was a lack of qualified competitors to row for “Doggett’s Coat and Badge”. Therefore, in 1988 it was decided to extend the entry qualification to allow an individual three attempts at the race.

Doggett’s Coat and Badge is still a coveted prize amongst the water community of the river Thames and plays a great part in the history of both the Fishmongers’ Company and the Company of Watermen and Lightermen. This year’s race will be on Monday, 16th July and will start from London Bridge at 12.45 p.m. The race can be viewed anywhere along the course from London Bridge to Chelsea.



A national sport



The early Doggett’s races were the first beginnings of competitive rowing, which has now become a huge international sport. Today on the Thames, annual events are held such as the Oxford and Cambridge University Boat Race, first rowed in 1829, and the Henley Regatta.

The Great River Race



The Watermen’s Company still encourages competitive rowing on the Thames. The annual Great River Race, which started in 1987, is open to all crews rowing in small traditional boats of every type. One of the rules is that at least one passenger must be carried. This is a modern reminder of the waterman’s historic role in London’s river transport. The race is rowed over a 35-kilometre (22 miles) course from Richmond to Greenwich. Traditional style Thames watermen’s racing cutters always compete in the race, pulled by up to six rowers. These boats can also be adapted as ceremonial barges for river events. Modern replicas of a royal shallop and a waterman’s wherry usually compete in the race as well.

This article was written principally by Mr. Colin Middlemiss, Clerk of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen, together with information from the website of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen.



Upcoming Events

Annual Dinner and AGM

Location: The National Club, 303 Bay Street, Toronto
 Date and Time: Friday 27th April 2007
 18:00 reception for 19:00
 Carriages: 23:00 pm
 Dress: Black Tie with medals or a Dark Business Suit
 Cost: TBA

Other events are being planned. Please visit the Hon. Co's website at www.freemenlondon.org regularly for up-to-date information on all events.



Event Reports

New York Joint Luncheon with the St. George's Society of New York

It is disappointing to report that no members of the Court were able to attend the St. George's/Freemen Joint Christmas New York Luncheon at the Yale Club on 9th December this year. As is usual, Past Master Bill Miller, who is also a leading member of the St George's Society of New York, attended and led the diners in Christmas Carols after the excellent meal catered by the Yale Club.

Wine Tasting and Dinner evening – A "Minervois" experience

In association with Arthur's Cellar Wine Club, we held two resoundingly successful and enjoyable wine and food pairing dinners on November 22nd and 23rd at Bodega Restaurant in Toronto. Graham Nutter, a London, England resident and owner of Château Saint Jacques d'Albas in the Minervois appellation of southern France regaled us with tales of locating, developing and operating his magnificent winery. He also presented several of his award winning wines capped off by the glorious 2003 La Chapelle. Each of these delicious wines was specially matched to one of five courses of a sumptuous feast prepared by Paul Biggs, proprietor and head chef of Bodega. A total of 100 Freemen and their guests attended the sold-out evenings, and here is what some of our epicureans had to say:

- "A great night of certainly superb cuisine and wines. True value for the money. My guests were very impressed. Always enjoy the ambiance of Bodega. Chef Paul is creative and the pairings were well thought out. Leona and the team were first class. The meal was a delight, served by a friendly and highly efficient staff. Graham was an essential part of the evening and kept the information to the basic essentials of wine tasting. What the aficionado and the layman need to know about his growing business. This has to be an annual event for the Freemen if it can be arranged."
- "Just a quick note to thank you for organizing such a great evening, probably one of the best Freemen events I have attended. The combination of food, wine, company and location worked very well together and all at my table

expressed thanks and congratulations to all involved. (My wife) and I both want to return to Bodega as we enjoyed the food, ambience and service. And Arthur's Cellar will definitely become a source of excellent wines and no doubt a catalyst for future such events."

- "My wife and I and our family greatly enjoyed the evening at Bodega with the fine French cuisine and great wines provided by Graham Nutter. An event like this really helps to put Toronto on the map: although we all know Toronto is a great city such an event goes that extra distance to enhance our culture. The wines and food were beautifully presented and we were very pleased to be able to join the wine club."

It would certainly appear that we should plan another wine and food pairing evening in the future.

Your reporter, Jim Walker, runs Arthur's Cellar Wine Club and invites you to find out all about it at www.arthursellers.com.

This report was provided by Jim Walker, Member.



New Members

Jorge Luis Rivera III

Jorge is an executive mortgage banker with William Raveis Mortgage Company and lives in Southport, CT with his wife and two children. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT, and a Master of Science, Fire Science, from the University of New Haven. Jorge, who retired from the Bridgeport Fire Department in 2003, has a keen interest in the history and traditions of firefighting. He hopes to become a Freeman of the City of London and eventually join the Worshipful Company of Firefighters.



Wine Selections

As it is clear that one of the delights that many of our members and guests enjoy most is the tasting and drinking of wine, we are pleased to bring you some recommendations. These are not chosen by any elite subcommittee of the Court (although it is certain they would love to attempt this), but from the pick of noted wine writer and critic, Natalie Maclean, an Ottawa wine connoisseur who has kindly agreed to allow us to use her recommendations. The prices are quoted as a guide only – they are actually the Ontario Liquor Board / Vintages prices but will be different elsewhere.

Doubleday Canada has recently published Natalie's book "Red, White and Drunk all over". This is both very informative and very well written with lots of humorous anecdotes. ISBN 0-385-66154-1.

The Company Comment does not have the space to provide all Natalie's recent picks. The ones that follow are her favorites based on quality alone and on value for money.

- 2003 Cantina di Negrar Amarone Della Valpocicella, Italy: Full-bodied but not over-extracted (not too much alcohol and flavor, etc). Ripe aromas of black fruit. Drink with game, roasts and hearty meat dishes. \$28.95 Score: 90/100. **Favorite Red from 2006-12**
- CHÂTEAU COS D'ESTOURNEL 2003 AC St-Estèphe, Bordeaux 2e Cru VC: Cos d'Estournel is one the best wines of the 2003 vintage. We highly recommend cellaring this spectacular wine for 5-6 years. My note: A truly magnificent wine with aromas of chocolate and black fruit. A kiss of oak and a sturdy backbone. Drink 2008-2012. Is it worth it? Depends on your priorities and your budget. (XD) 750 mL \$279.95 Score: 96/100. **Favorite Red. From 2006-11-25**
- 2004 Ubuntu Shiraz, South Africa: Aromas of chocolate and plums. Full-bodied. Drink with a rich roast. \$10.95 Score: 88/100. **Best Value Red from 2006-12**
- CREMASCHI FURLOTTI FAMILY LIMITED EDITION CABERNET SAUVIGNON, SYRAH, CARMENÈRE 2003 Maule Valley VC: It's Europe meets New World in this blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (60%), Syrah (20%) and Carmenère (20%). While Carmenère is believed to have been widely planted in Bordeaux's Médoc in the 18th century, it is rarely seen there today. Chile is it's new home and it has become that country's signature grape. This big, complex, full-bodied wine offers up gorgeous red fruit aromas with subtle hints of leather, earth and spice. Delicious with veal tenderloin. It won a Silver Medal at the prestigious Concours Mondial de Bruxelles 2006. My note: Spectacularly well priced! Lovely rich aromas and depth of flavor. Dive into the depth of black plums. (XD) 750 mL \$17.95 Score: 90/100. **Best Value Red from 2006-11-25.**
- 2004 Moselland Divinum Riesling Spatlese, Germany: Floral and citrus notes. Light- to medium-bodied. Wonderful. Drink with soft cheeses and seafood. \$11.95 Score: 88/100. **Best Value White from 2006-12**
- BISCHÖFLICHEN WEINGÜTER RIESLING KABINETT 2004 QmP, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, Eitelsbacher Marienholz, Estate Btld. VC: An ideal Riesling for sushi or spicy Thai and Chinese cuisine. The aromas suggest citrus, lemon drop, apple, apricot and floral tones. It is medium dry, with lively acidity to bring it perfectly into balance. Medium-bodied, it has a substantial finish. My note: Lovely and light like sunshine and laughing rainbows. Translation: pear and peach fruit with a nice underseam of mouth-watering acidity. Love it! (MD) 750 mL \$18.95 Score: 89/100. **Best Value White from 2006-11-25.**
- 2006 Villa Maria Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, New Zealand: Intensely aromatic with a long finish. One of the most consistently good, value-priced NZ SBs. Aromas of gooseberry and grass. Drink with chicken, pork, fish and salads. \$16.15 Score: 89/100. **Favorite White from 2006-12**
- EUGEN WEHRHEIM SIEGERREBE AUSLESE 2003 QmP, Rheinhessen, Niersteiner Findling, Estate Btld. VC: Siegerrebe is a unique-to-Germany crossing of Gewurztraminer with a red table grape. It produces very rich, ripe wines. This Gold-Medal winning wine has very exotic aromas of muscat, peach, guava, mango, floral and curry spice. It is medium sweet, intense, outspoken, impactful and ready-to-drink. An excellent wine for fruit-stuffed pork roast with a sweet reduction sauce or even fruit-filled crêpes. My note: Sweet, rich and delicious. (MS) 750 mL \$20.95 Score: 90/100. **Favorite White from 2006-11-25.**

- MISSION HILL 'OCULUS' 2003 VQA Okanagan Valley British Columbia VC: Mission Hill's flagship red is one of Canada's most sought-after wines. Produced in limited quantities, the 2003 vintage is comprised of 47% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Cabernet Franc and 8% Petit Verdot. Elegant and complex, this rich, concentrated and powerful wine will continue to develop over the next five years. My note: Canada's Chateau Margaux: elegant, structured, long-lived and long remembered. (XD) 750 mL \$56.95 Score: 93/100. **Notable Canadian Red**

These recommendations are from Natalie MacLean, Wine writer Ottawa, Ontario — www.nataliemaclean.com and they are reproduced here with permission



Communications with your Company

The Master, Deputy Master, Honorary Clerk, Honorary Treasurer and the Editor of Company Comment

Please see: Page 1, Column 1

Also see the Honourable Company's website at www.freemenlondon.org

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The Membership Secretary is also responsible for the processing and validation of Freedom applications that are supported by the Honourable Company.

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