



Lammas Day

Issue 10

August 2025

This newsletter is to keep member's up to date with what is happening within the Durham City Freemen.

Guild News

The Lammas Guild Day was held on the 4th August 2025 in the Guild Hall Durham

First Calls

Peter Carr (Masons Company) to be admitted via Servitude.
David Cummings (Plumbers Company) to be admitted via Servitude.
Eric Barlow (Plumbers Company) to be admitted via Patrimony.

Second Calls

Susannah Steenkamp (Barbers) to be admitted via Patrimony.
Christopher Atkinson (Cordwainers) to be admitted via Servitude.
Gary Wilkinson (Joiners) to be admitted via Servitude.

Third Calls

Daryl Metcalf (Cordwainers) to be admitted via Patrimony.

Diary Dates For 2025

Members Meeting 24th September
Wardens Meeting 25th September
Wardens & Trustees Meeting
26th September
Wardens & Deputies Meeting
30th October
Martinmas Guild Day
3rd November

The management committee for the Freemen is set below.

Chair; Garry Dunnill. Deputy Chair; Neil Graham. Secretary; Bryan Proud

Wardens:

Bryan Proud	Barbers Company.
Mac Williams	Butchers Company.
Alan Metcalf	Cordwainers Company
Iain Wilmshurst	Curriers Company.
Dave Howard	Drapers Company.
Ann Thurlow	Joiners Company.
Neil Graham	Masons Company.
Garry Dunnill	Plumbers Company.

Deputy Wardens:

Robert Elliott	Barbers Company
Vincent Syson	Butchers Company.
Vacant	Cordwainers Company
Vacant	Curriers Company
Trevor Carter	Drapers Company
David Neale	Joiners Company
Alan Richardson	Masons Company
Arthur Lockyear	Plumbers Company

Chair Report

I would like to welcome our new Mayor, Mr. Gary Hutchinson and new members to our Guild Day.

I enjoyed the Mayor making ceremony on the 11th June and it is always a privilege to be invited to such civic ceremonies.

I would also like to welcome our speakers from, Northumberland Blood Bikes, Carol Nelson and Stephen Law who is also a freeman, who will be giving a talk later in the proceedings.

I am sorry to have to report the death of a member of the Masons Guild, Mr. Norman Johnston of Moor Crescent Durham and would like to pass on our deepest sympathy to his family.

Its lovely to be back in the Town Hall, which is looking very nice, I must also thank the Story for looking after us during the works to the Town Hall making our time there very enjoyable and easy. There is still a small amount of work to be carried out in the Guild Room with the replacement of the Charters on the walls. We have arranged for the originals to be stored at the Story with temperature and humidity control and new, high quality, prints and frames will replace them. The cleaning of our silver and the upgrading of the cabinet is also still to be carried out, however some of this work may have to be moved into next year's budget as this year's finances are getting tight.

We had our first BBQ at Durham Rugby Club on the 21st June, and we must have been unlucky that we had some rain that day, however that did not spoil a great afternoon and was well attended. A big thank you to Vincent, Dave, Neil and Bryan for organising it, and all those that attended and let's hope it becomes an annual event and numbers continue to grow. We are looking to arrange one or two other events throughout the year so please continue to look at the Web page and any information we send out.

We are in the very early stages of updating the Web site to bring it in line with current standards and a more modern look.

We have made several donations through the Charitable Trust since the last Guild Day to the following: -

Lionmouth Rural Centre, 2nd cash injection for a public tea room.

Local Community Group, Middle Rainton towards 2 Memorial heritage boards outlining the lost village history.

Waterhouses Community Association, Summer afternoon tea party.

Durham Fringe to help young people engage in the arts.

Durham based group that have regular meetings at the Brawns Den public house Brandon, offering support for locals with prostate cancer.

County Durham based Ambulance Charity, Supportive.

Safe Hub, Late-night weekend refuge operating from St. Nicholas's Church in the Market Place.

More comprehensive information of all of these are on our web sites.

One of our valued Trustees Canon Michael Everitt has resigned as he is taking up the role of Interim Dean at Carlisle Cathedral on the 1st August, a nicer person you could not wish to meet. Michael has supported us at many of our events throughout the years and will be a great miss. We would like to wish him well in his new post.

We appointed Bob Elliot as Deputy Warden for the Barbers and look forward to his contribution over the coming meetings. We have a new Membership Secretary in David Howard and would like to thank him for taking this role over, he volunteered something that does not happen very often with these roles.

Alan Richardson Deputy Warden of the Masons has completed an excellent job on our booklet for the Mason Guild and if anyone would like a free copy just to let us know. Very much appreciated Alan people do not realise how much research goes into such a booklet.

We have realised that Bryan our Sec was carrying out a lot of work and Alan Metcalf has taken up the role of Assistant Sec to help Bryan out, thanks for that Alan.

It is with regret that the Trustees of Durham City Charitable Trust on the 22nd July 2025 held an Extraordinary Meeting and have decided to close the charity and if anyone has any charities that are looking for donations, please contact the Charitable Trust no later than the 30th September 2025.

We have a Members Meeting on Wednesday the 24th September in the Guild Room Town Hall 6.00 to 7.30 all members are welcome. I understand a small number of members may have some issues with the running of the Freeman, this is your opportunity to talk these through or if possible, merge ideas. Sitting quiet and complaining gets nothing done.

MEMBERS MEETING

**THE POSPONED MEMBERS MEETING HAS BEEN RE-ARRANGED FOR
WEDNESDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER IN THE GUILD HALL AT 6.00PM**

DARYL DETERMINED TO STAY IN THE LOOP



THE world of high finance and artistic exercise, performed within a loop suspended from a ceiling, are unlikely bedfellows. But they both feature in the life of insurance specialist Daryl Metcalf – the Freeman’s latest recruit, where she joins dad Alan in the Cordwainers’ Guild.

Thirty-one-year-old Daryl, born in Esh Winning and educated at Framwellgate School, Durham, completed A-levels before embarking on an art-based degree course in Newcastle which she quickly came to accept was “a passion and not a career.”

She switched to Direct Line Group’s (DLG) Green Flag call centre in Leeds, initially selling policies and advising customers. Building on her day-to-day experience advanced her to expert status and an invitation to provide input on the company’s decision to launch a new database setting out the direction and priorities of their work.

The result was elevation to “product owner” her work extended to embrace DLG’s business in Direct Line, Churchill and Privilege. While with the company Daryl worked alongside the charity Young Women’s Trust, launched to promote equality and help women, through support and mentoring, to launch their careers.

A spin-off of her trust involvement provided the chance to attend the 2024 Financial Times Share Exchange’s Women’s Leaders Review, which looks to improve representation of women on boards and leadership teams within the FTSE 350 and 50 of the largest of Britain’s private companies.

It was while was working at Direct Line she met her partner John, and the couple now live in Coventry with his daughter Sienna and their pet dog Bailey. Last year, after seven years with DLG she switched to NFU Mutual, still working as a product owner. In her spare time Daryl attends a fitness centre where she follows a new mainstream training regime, using an aerial hoop, believed have originated in the circus.

The metal hoop, up to a metre wide and bound by tape, is suspended above the ground and locked into a fixed rig hanging from the ceiling. Users can spend up to an hour running through a wide range of artistic combinations of movement which can put every bodily muscle to the test.

"I explained it to John, and he thought it would be a doddle – but he got quite a surprise at just how difficult some of the routines can be," said Daryl.

"When dad first suggested I follow him into the Freeman I was hesitant because of where I live but the historical aspect really caught my eye. It's a great way to stay connected to my home city and something which has played such a big part in its history. Looking at the extensive charity work the Freeman are involved in, it would be a privilege to be able to support it in some way in the future," she added.

Daryl's dad had the distinction of making one of the shortest journeys ever when he was sworn in, walking little more than 100 yards from his then office in Clayport to take the oath of allegiance. During the last five years he has been warden of the Cordwainers' Guild and, at one point, Chair of the Wardens.



New Membership Secretary



Dave Howard has now taken over the reins from Garry to be the new Membership Secretary for the Freeman.

Dave joined as a Freeman in 2003. He was a Deputy Butcher in 2020, and he became Warden of the Drapers Company in 2023.

He also has another important job as Grassman looking after the Freemans interests on the Sands.



Masons Booklet

Dr Alan Richardson, Deputy Warden of the Masons' company, has now completed the seventh Company History Booklet in the series. This has been posted to all Masons and is now available to all Freeman. Should you wish one to be sent to you then please let me know and I will pop one in the post for you.

Freemen Family and Friends Barbeque

On June 21st, around 50 guests descended on Durham City Rugby Club for the very first Freeman, family and friends BBQ. There was of course no mistake that we had assembled for a BBQ! The heavens opened just as the first few guests arrived and didn't give us any form of respite until much later in the day.

As well as local guests, it was great to welcome a contingent from Alnwick and a couple who had travelled from Gatwick. Albeit on their way for a holiday in the lake district, they had made a point of stopping at Durham along the way to catch up with fellow freemen. There was a most convivial atmosphere as the afternoon progressed with BBQ food and beer aplenty... Of course, other drinks were available!

From the feedback we have received, this will most definitely be an annual event, and we look forward to welcoming more Freeman, family and friends next year.



Presentation by Carol Nelson and Stephen Laws, Northumbria Blood Bikes



Northumbria Blood Bikes is a registered charity established by local volunteers to deliver essential blood and urgent medical supplies, out of hours, between hospitals and other healthcare sites in North East England. We cover Darlington, Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle Upon Tyne City, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

Saving money...

Outside normal office hours, hospitals rely on taxis or couriers to transfer urgent medical supplies or test samples between hospitals and other sites. Blood Bike groups, across the country, offer to carry out this service free of charge, ensuring the limited resources of the NHS can be used where it makes a difference. Northumbria Blood Bikes' funding comes entirely from charitable donations, and the service is provided solely by volunteers, giving their own free time to help others.

Saving lives...

In critical situations, blood or other medical items need to be delivered urgently to save a patient's life. Blood bikes, with their distinctive livery and narrow profile, can quickly get through busy traffic to reach their destination. For bulky items, or in extreme weather conditions, we use cars too, to ensure our service is available every day of the year.

Continued Growth ...

Work to establish the group started in September 2012, and the team of dedicated volunteers, with support from the [Nationwide Association of Blood Bikes](#) and other groups, began live operations in February 2014. By the end of that year, we were supporting hospitals across the whole of our region and since 2015 we have also supported the Great North Air Ambulance Service with daily deliveries to its aircraft bases. We perform around 15,000 deliveries per year with demand for our service growing all the time. In June 2017 Northumbria Blood Bikes was the proud recipient of The Queen's Award for

Voluntary Service - the MBE for voluntary groups - which we think recognises the value of the work we do and the professionalism and dedication of our volunteers.

Carol Nelson is the Young People Engagement Coordinator for Northumbria Blood Bikes Charity.

Stephen Laws is a Freeman of Durham in the Butcher Company since 1989.



Closure of Durham City Freeman Charitable Trust

We have received the following information from the Charitable Trust.

At an extraordinary meeting held on 22nd July 2025, a unanimous decision was reached to close the Charitable Trust. This followed an extended period (18 months), that was fraught with difficulties, during which time the Trustees grappled with a range of issues that had to be addressed which would ultimately determine the future of the Charitable Trust.

Closure of the Charitable Trust

It is with regret I have to announce that at a recent Extraordinary meeting of the Durham City Freeman Charitable Trust, the following resolution was agreed unanimously by the Trustees to close the Charitable Trust.

Resolution

Due to the mounting difficulties of retaining sustainability and maintaining the ethos of the Charitable Trust, it is proposed that the Durham City Freeman Charitable Trust be dissolved and that the assets of the Charity be distributed in accordance with clause 20 of the Declaration of Trust dated the 23rd of January 2015, made by Roger Charles Norris, Stewart Atkin, Alan Ribchester and John Heslop and that the Charity Commission for England and Wales be notified in accordance with the said Declaration of Trust.

22nd July 2025



Management Vacancies

The Wardens and Deputies are always on the lookout for capable Freeman to come and help with the management of the guild. The usual starting point is a deputy where you will get to understand how the guild is managed. The time commitment is about 4 meetings per year. The meetings are scheduled to last from 6.00 until 7.30 on a Thursday night usually in the Guild Hall.

We currently have two Deputy Warden vacancies: Cordwainers and Curriers. You do not have to belong to one of the companies to apply as they are open to all. Training will be given once you have been elected.

Come and help us move the Freeman into the future, we are hoping to enhance the Apprentice Award Scheme and to increase member involvement in the organisation. If you are interested, then please get in touch via the secretary.



Any comments on the format, content, and any future ideas you may have for content please get in touch via secretary@durhamcityfreemen.org

This newsletter has been sent to those members who have supplied their e-mail address; however, it is available to view on the website. If you no longer want to receive this newsletter then please contact the Secretary to have your address removed.