



GLOUCESTER FREEMEN

NEWSLETTER

April 2025

From the Secretary

Hello, I have the pleasure in sending out this year's newsletter as your new Honorary Secretary. Andrew has decided to step down and so I thought I'd give an attempt at taking on the role. I'm hoping to bring some fresh ideas to the table and to modernise how the Freeman do things. My main goal of this year will be to get more people involved and open up communication a bit more. With that being said, if you'd like to discuss or need to know about any other relevant articles, please feel free to contact me via the address at the end of this newsletter.

Presidents report

The proposed division of Gloucestershire remains a key focus for the committee, particularly concerning the potential impact on the future of the Mayor of Gloucester. We are currently uncertain whether the Mayor will be retained under the new structure. If removed, this change could have significant implications for the future of Freedom admissions. However, rest assured that both the committee and I are fully committed to preserving the continuity of the Freeman of Gloucester, and we will make every effort to ensure that this important tradition remains intact.

Communication within our Guild continues to be a challenge. Our newly appointed Secretary has been given the responsibility of addressing this issue and improving communication going forward. This is an important priority, and I have every confidence in our Secretary's ability to make significant strides in this regard.

I would also like to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to Andrew Croose, our past Secretary, who has stepped down after many years of dedicated service to the Guild. Andrew's contributions over the years have been invaluable, and his commitment to our cause has left a lasting legacy. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

In my ongoing efforts to promote the Freeman and Freedom of Gloucester, I continue to work closely with members of the council and the local community. It remains a priority to ensure that our rich history and the role of the Freeman in the city are well understood and appreciated by all.

Since the last newsletter, I have had the privilege of presiding over two admission ceremonies. I was particularly pleased to witness a remarkable moment during one of these ceremonies, where a lady of 101 years of age was granted the Freedom. This is a testament to the fact that it is never too late to become part of this honoured tradition, and it was a moment that filled me with great pride.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended last year's Annual Dinner. The event was truly enjoyable, and I know those who attended had a memorable time. I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events this year. As a reminder, if anyone would like to lay the Freeman's wreath at the Remembrance Day ceremony in the park, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or the Secretary.

Thank you all for your continued support

Events this past year

Last year we had two Admission Ceremonies, paraded on Gloucester Day, had ten Freeman represent us at the Remembrance Service and hosted the Annual Dinner. The latter event went down as a huge success, raising £130 on the raffle, which was donated to the Gloucester food bank.



The Smart family at the 2024 Annual Dinner

Vote on Age of Admission

This year, we are holding a significant vote at the AGM! We've received several requests to lower the age for becoming a Freeman from 21 to 18. Due to the importance of this change, the entire Guild will participate in the vote.

To cast your vote please see the form attached.

Treasurer's Report

I would like to thank all those Freeman and Women who have paid their subscriptions and made donations, your continued support is greatly appreciated. It is extremely important that this source of income is maintained thus ensuring we have enough funds to sustain our administration costs and continuing production of the annual newsletter.



Our most recent Freeman / Freewomen - March 2025

The AGM

This year's AGM will be held on the 18th of September at 7:00 PM in Meeting Room 1 at the City Council's North Warehouse. We encourage all Freeman and Freewomen to attend—your thoughts, concerns, and ideas are always welcome. Last year, we had a very low turnout, so please make every effort to join us and show your support for our organisation.

Merchandise and Robes

If there is any merchandise you would like to purchase please fill out the form and send it to the Secretary.

Robes can be purchased from Gemma May. (Facebook) – Gemma May Alteration Service or Tel – 07982826662.

Subscription Fees!

At the 2014 AGM, it was agreed that the previous £5 voluntary contribution would become a mandatory payment for all members, in response to our rising operational costs. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed so far.

We also understand that, due to the ongoing cost of living, some members may find it difficult to make this payment. However, your support is vital to the future of the Gloucester Freeman and Women. If you are able to contribute, please complete the enclosed form and return it, along with your payment, to the Secretary, Mr. Morgan Hensley.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Admissions

We had two Admission Ceremonies last year one in March and one in September as well as an enrolment in the March just gone. We will try to keep enrolments at a regular pacing of late March and late September every year in the future. The cut-off date for getting your forms in for the March enrolments is February 1st and the cut off for getting your forms in for the September enrolments is August 1st.

From these ceremonies we'd like to welcome to the following Freeman to the Guild:

- Thomas Carlile
- Scott Cull
- Vanessa Cull
- Warren Cull
- Amanda Harris
- Emilie Harris
- Rebecca Harris
- Harry Heath
- Shay Hensley
- Simon Hewer
- Gareth Lane
- Marcus Lane
- Ashley Owner
- Damien Owner
- Dominic Owner
- Ellen Owner
- Lorna Parsons
- Mellissa Tonksevas
- Shay Tonksevas
- Susan Townsend
- Shiela Tuckey

Welcome!

FEW

The Guild is a member of the Association of Freeman of England and Wales (FEW), and as a Chartered Freeman of Gloucester, you are automatically a member as well. This grants you access to attend any of their events, including the Annual General Meeting (AGM). If you wish, you can also become an individual member and receive a colourful journal three times a year, filled with news of other guilds' activities. For more information, please visit their website <https://freemen-few.org.uk>

Dates for your diary

St. Georges Day Service - Wednesday 23rd April at 7:30pm

St Barnabas Church, Stroud Road, Gloucester, GL1 5LJ

This is a first come first serve event with a limited number of tickets if you are interested in coming, please contact the Secretary.

Gloucester Day – Saturday 6th September at 2pm

Gloucester Town, Constitution Walk behind Brunswick Road Museum

All are welcome to partake or watch during Gloucester Day if you wish to march with us, please meet at the above place by 1:30pm.

AGM – Thursday 18th September at 7pm

Gloucester City Councils North Warehouse, Meeting room 1

Annual Dinner – Saturday 11th October at 7pm

Mercure Bowden Hall, Gloucester

See enclosed booking form and menu for further details.

Remembrance Sunday Service – Sunday 9th November at 2pm

Gloucester Cathedral

This is a first come first serve event with a limited number of tickets If you are interested in coming, please contact the Secretary.

Andrew Croose

As highlighted in the President's report, Andrew has stepped down after many years of dedicated service but will remain an active and valued member of the committee. In recognition of his outstanding contributions, he was presented with a Long Service Award at the annual dinner, celebrating his unwavering commitment to the Guild



Andrew accepting his award

GCT

We hold two Trustee positions on the board of Gloucester's Charities Trust, currently held by Lee Hensley and Steven Heath, who continue to represent the Freeman. The Freeman have been involved with the charity for many years, stemming from our former ownership of the Alms-house's. For more information, contact the President.

Committee Members

Lee Hensley • Morgan Hensley • Keith Bretherton • Emma Carr • Andrew Croose • Stephen Heath • Harry Croose • Derek Butt • Alan Heath • Jacky Heath •

Contact us!

As always you can keep up to date with us throughout the year either via our website or social media.

The website – www.gloucesterfreemenandwomen.co.uk

X (Twitter) - @glosfreeman

Instagram – glosfreemen

Facebook – The Chartered Freeman and Women of Gloucester

We are constantly working to keep our records updated, so please let us know of any changes of address or circumstance as this helps make sure we can keep you informed. Also, if you know of anyone else not receiving the newsletter that should be please contact us.

If you have any further questions regarding any topics spoken about in this newsletter or anything else regarding the Freedom, please feel free to contact either the Secretary or President at the addresses below.

Secretary: Morgan Hensley – 86 Painswick Road Gloucester GL4 6PT

Email: GlosFreemansec@gmail.com

President: Lee Hensley – 86 Painswick Road Gloucester GL4 6PT

Email: leehensley@btinternet.com Tel: 01452305493, 07780680810