

Welcome



Pictured above: A 15th Century siege.

Charity

One of the most important aspects of the Bowyers' Company, as with all City Livery Companies, is the charitable giving. Although never richly endowed, the Bowyers' today contribute significantly to several charities particularly those associated with the City and archery with an emphasis on the disabled and disadvantaged.

To further the ongoing possibilities of such charitable giving it is essential to provide funds for the future and all Freemen and Liverymen are strongly urged and expected to donate as generously as they can to the Charitable Fund and covenant if at all possible.



*Pictured right: Sir Roger Cork
– A Past Master of the Bowyers'
Company who was Lord Mayor
of the City of London in 1996.*

Support of Bowmaking

The Bowyers' Company supports the sport of Archery by sponsoring two competitions organised on our behalf by the Royal Toxophilite Society, presenting prizes at the Junior World Championships and participating in an annual competition against the Fletchers' Company at the Tower of London every July. The Company also supports today's working bowyers by sponsoring a certification programme organised by the Craft Guild of Traditional Bowyers and Fletchers.

Contact Details

The Company has an extensive web site where you can find more information on the activities and history of the Bowyers and the Clerk will be pleased to assist with any queries you may have about membership. All details are below.

The Clerk

Mr Richard Wilkinson

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To join the Worshipful Company of Bowyers is to become part of a living tradition dating back to the fourteenth century when the craft guilds of the City of London laid the foundations upon which so much of the greatness of our nation is founded.

Our Company is proud of its unique history and the part played by our predecessors in fashioning the great war bows that led to the famous English victories of Poitiers, Crecy and Agincourt - names that form the motto to our Company, that together with the three 'floats' (or planes as they are known today) form the basis of our Crest and Coat of Arms.

The first set of coherent written ordinances were not drawn up until 1487/88 this being the later years of the use of the longbow as a serious weapon of war. Henry VIII had a great personal interest in archery as is well documented by the artifacts discovered on the Mary Rose but this could not save the longbow with the improved handguns that emanated from Germany in 1517 soon becoming the preferred choice in battle.



Pictured left: Some very competitive archery at the Junior World Championships in 2005 where the Master Bowyer, Mr. Peter Seaton, presented the prizes.

To-day's Company

Fellowship is a key element. The Company organises a varied programme of events throughout the year with the Agincourt Dinner in October and the St George's Day Dinner in April being the highlights. Not owning

a hall for many years the Company dines in other magnificent City locations such as Tallow Chandlers', Innholders', Pewterers' Halls and Mansion House.

Events include golf, shooting, company suppers and visits to such diverse places as the College of Arms, Westminster Cathedral and City Markets where members can meet, mingle and network on an informal basis.

One of the great privileges and responsibilities of becoming a Liveryman is that of attending Common Hall at Guildhall in June and September to elect the incoming Sheriffs and Lord Mayor for the ensuing year.



Pictured above: Archers depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry.

Governance and Membership

The affairs of the Company are presided over by the Master and his two Wardens, the Upper and Renter, who hold office for two years, a unique situation in the 107 Livery Companies in the City of London, all other Masters only being in office for one year. Together with 13 Court Assistants they meet officially four times a year to manage the smooth progression of the Company.

All office holders are elected from the Livery who number about one hundred and come from a wide range of professions. They all have progressed through the Company by obtaining their Freedom of the Company and the Freedom of the City of London before being clothed in the Livery.

The day to day running of the Company is managed by the Clerk who is assisted on official occasions by the Beadle.