

THE MASTER'S BLOG WEEK 6

VISIT TO HMS SULTAN, GOSPORT: 27 NOVEMBER 2017

The Plumbers' Company is proud of its affiliations with each of the three Armed Services and it is a pleasure today to visit our Royal Naval affiliation, HMS Sultan at the invitation of the Commanding Officer of the base, Captain Peter Towell, OBE.

We are one of 7 Livery Companies with an association with HMS Sultan and I am joined



today by the Plumbers' Clerk along with Masters and representatives of other Companies. Responsible for the training of some 1300 students (in marine and aeronautical engineering), HMS Sultan is an impressive training establishment. During the day we have presentations about the work done here and get to see the training facilities. I even get to board not one, but two, Sea King helicopters! (admittedly, both were out of service and firmly on the ground but I am able to experience the tight accommodation space in which the crews must operate). The final presentation of the day

is about naval air power in the context of the new Queen Elizabeth Carrier and it is given by a group of phase 2 students who demonstrate their knowledge and pride in the training which they are undertaking. We leave the base with a very positive feeling about the training which is undertaken here and a feeling that we have met a large group of people who are a real credit to today's Royal Navy.

RED CROSS CHRISTMAS MARKET AT GUILDHALL: 28 NOVEMBER 2017

Where in one place would you find Lightmongers selling torches and Christmas lights, Tallow Chandlers selling candles and nightlights and Gardeners selling plants and flowers? Well, these are just a small number of the stalls which are situated in Guildhall for the annual Red Cross Christmas Market. With over 100 stalls and a range of talks and presentations, this is an excellent event and we see a few familiar faces from the Livery circuit.

[Although the following two engagements are not technically "official", I record them as there are clear links with my role as Master Plumber.]

VISIT TO THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA: 29 NOVEMBER 2017

I first met Chelsea Pensioner Ray Pearson when he was clothed as of the Livery of the Plumbers' Company and we visit him today at Chelsea. Providing accommodation and comradeship for former soldiers since it was established in 1692, the Royal Hospital is a wonderful place to visit. Today, Ray takes us "behind the scenes" and we see his berth (one of the relatively recently introduced en-suite rooms). Ray introduces us to his old school friend, John Denton, who is also a Pensioner and we enjoy a lovely lunch with them in the Hospital's Great Hall. This is a very special visit and we appreciate the opportunity which has been provided to us.



SCOTSCARE 352ND ST ANDREW'S DAY FESTIVAL DINNER: 29 NOVEMBER 2017

The Royal Scottish Corporation was established as a charity to assist Scots in London in 1603. In spite of its 400-year history of service in the capital, it isn't too well known and I was

first made aware of it some weeks in a meeting with late Sheriff of the City, George Gillon, who has taken an ambassadorial role to raise awareness, especially among Scots living and working in London.

Now operating under the name "ScotsCare", we are guests tonight (with representatives of two other Livery Companies) at the charity's 352nd annual St Andrew's Day Festival Dinner in the Caledonian Club (the night before St Andrew's Day). It is good to meet trustees of the charity and its Chief Executive, Shona Fleming and to hear a progress report from the Chairman, David Guild. It is apparently traditional for the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to spend a week in London in the week of St Andrew's Day and the current Moderator, the Right Reverend Dr Derek Browning, is the principal guest speaker tonight. It is good to meet the Moderator as Sheila and I attended the same school as him, although we point out to him that we didn't know him at school as he is a little younger than both of us!

MERCERS' LIVERY CONCERT AND SUPPER: 30 NOVEMBER 2017

We heard virtuoso trumpeter Crispian Steel-Perkins in action at Westminster Cathedral last week. Tonight, we have the joy of listening to him accompanied by Leslie Pearson, one of Britain's most distinguished keyboard players, in an excellent concert in Mercers' Hall. Crispian relates the history of the trumpet and demonstrates his skills on a variety of instruments in music ranging from Handel and Haydn to Bacharach and Glenn Miller. A musical treat! The concert is followed by supper at which we have the chance to get to know yet more Livery Company Masters and their consorts.