



Omnia Subjecisti sub Pedibus Oves et Boves

# CARNIFEX\*

The Newsletter of the York Butchers' Gild

Left: Butchers' Guild sign, Český Krumlov, Czech Republic

in tempo Domini  
A. C. Trueman

editio XVIII  
auctumnus MMXII

## MAUNDY SHOCK – MASTER TOPLESS!

from our Staff Photographer and Court Correspondent

### Master Attends Maundy Service

Members of our Company will, no doubt, be mortified to see the sordid photograph taken of our Master when he was discovered improperly dressed **without his hat** during the procession following the Maundy Service in the Minster, in the presence of Her Majesty, The Queen.

Questions should certainly be asked in Court as to how this unfortunate *déshabillé* state came about. The Gild Wardens have instituted a search for the photographer who is understood to have escaped abroad, possibly in hiding in the wilder countryside of County Durham.

For further information on this incident, please turn to page 7 to view the Master's Diary jottings.



### Introducing Sustainability

Sustainability – now there's a word that didn't appear in the annals of The York Butchers' Gild – but in hindsight, our forebears possibly should have examined this concept so as to ensure the survival of the Company as society changed and the objectives of guild life were eliminated by trade practice and by statute.

Our Gild was fortunate when the challenge of reawakening it from its almost-final coma was taken up in the 1940's so enthusiastically and successfully, thereby maintaining our continuous history from mediæval times. But even since this revival, the make up of the Company has changed immensely. The current generation, if it believes in Guild Life, should be taking all steps to keep the Gild ♦ relevant ♦ stimulating, and ♦ meat-trade-aligned, whilst retaining its traditional life. This issue of *Carnifex* examines, and perhaps challenges, our structure and practices. In effect, it attempts a 'Business Review' that the normal annual round of Gild management does not provide for. This might lead to uncomfortable questions, not for their own sake, but to try to stimulate *thought*, perhaps *debate*, and maybe even some *actions* for a continual existence.

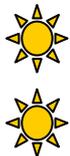
## IMPORTANT CRITICAL DATE – LADIES FEAST

**LAST DATE FOR BOOKING TICKETS** The Providitor, Phil Stobart, requires that all bookings for tickets for the Feast are returned to him by **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October**, as he will then be away on holiday.

*In any pressing situation after this date, please telephone 01908 667007 to see if a late booking can be made. If necessary, please leave a message, with your telephone number. No guarantee can be given of success.*

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\**Carnifex* – Latin term used for butcher in the York Freeman's Rolls, last used in 1403

## **Sustainability**

### **Introduction**

These following thoughts on Sustainability were prompted by a current increase in the giving of artefacts, books or other gifts to the Gild. This practice is not, of course, new. The Gild was fortunate in receiving, in particular, its wonderful set of Windsor chairs, each a gift of a new member during the first ten or twelve years or so of the reawakening of the Company after World War II. A glance through section 5.1 of your handbook reveals the artefacts, tableware, regalia, robes and other articles now in the care of the Company.

And yet we know, from our history, what happens when Gild life is no longer meaningful. With dwindling membership throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Gild sold off all its silver and plate (where to we shall probably never know) but allegedly to the profit only of the last remaining members. The property of Gell Garth was sold to the council, its position now covered by the stalls of York Market.

Will our current Gild go the same way, or is it destined to flourish with a meaningful future? Has the Gild planned for every eventuality? Have we all looked at our own position and asked 'What can I do to ensure a long new era of the York Butchers' Gild'?

We have to accept that the Gild has no place in the control of the meat trade – its last privileges were abolished in the 1835 Municipal Reform Act. The danger is that we become only a glorified dining club, celebrating our past history in two great (or more) feasts per year. This is, of course, an option (but if so, then the Feasts would need to be something very special and become flesh-based, gastronomic masterpieces, with high cost and tourist guests willing to pay for the privilege).

This article has taken as its base all sections of the Gild handbook as this has become the repository of all current Gild information and practice. Therefore, the handbook itself should also come under scrutiny (*and even – dare we say it – the status of **Carnifex!***)

### **Objects of the Gild (1.2)\***

The objects are currently threefold: • fellowship amongst butchers • the preservation of the Company and its traditions and ceremonies • charitable purposes. These objectives have not been challenged seriously since they were formally drawn up on the inception of the handbook in 1997 and are communicated to every new member by his or her sponsor before they join the Gild. Every member is committed to helping with all three objects by the simple act of joining the Gild. All our Gild activities are aimed at fulfilling these three goals.

So the question is raised – is that enough? New members, in particular, may sometimes query if we are doing enough to make for a meaningful Gild life. Should we do more within each of the three contexts? Should we add to these objectives?

**Carnifex** is of the opinion that the objectives are set just about right, but that the Gild could do more to fulfil them. For example, (*objective – fellowship*) it is disappointing that no one (nor the Gild as a whole) has grasped the opportunity that was left when a senior member had to call a day on his excellent annual bar-b-que, due to ill health. It was always a grand day and one that could be tailored to other formats.

### **Management**

This is an area that covers many aspects, but put simply, is it time to review how the Gild is managed?

The structure of robed officers' authority is somewhat obscure, but seems to reflect some kind of ancient protocol, except that our Searchers now have no powers. On the other hand, do our robed officers have (or could they have) responsibility that they are not exercising? In recent years, responsibilities have been given to officers to make their roles more meaningful (parade control, librarian) before taking up the senior roles of Mastership. Could these be extended so that such officers are able to provide the Gild with a more continuous series of Gild activities?

The role of Clerk is an honorary position and we are grateful for anyone who takes up this long, behind-the-scenes job. Our current Clerk is also storer of Gild artefacts, a task done at Yorkshire's favourite price. We should ask him his opinion of the position, how it is handled and how it could be improved for the future.

Non-robed officers are the unsung heroes of the Gild, taking on roles in an entirely voluntary capacity. It is critical that members be willing to fulfil roles when they become vacant. One question here – should all roles be time limited (Two, four, eight years?) in order to provide opportunities for newer members to gain management experience before rising to the heady robed positions? (Editorship of **Carnifex** is always open to new blood).

The current Court structure often seems to be muddled. Whilst ordinances are clear as to how the Courts act (3.1)\* (*important decisions taken by the senior Court, the Court of Assistants, are required to be approved by the subsequent Full Court*), in truth, the two Courts often seem to sit as one body, each happily taking decisions. This is possibly because each sits only twice a year, which is not often enough to maintain a business flow. The Court of Assistants decisions frequently have to be implemented before a subsequent Full Court, and the Court of Assistants often acts as if it has full powers.

The Court of Assistants seems a cumbersome body to act as an executive, yet advisory, group. It currently has

\*see section of handbook

about 30 members, plus any (non-voting) chairs of sub-committees, if asked to attend. Is this too large? Is there a way to define a smaller group that could • meet regularly • take executive decisions • call on the complete Court of Assistants if necessary • put actions before the Full Court for ratification when required? This would then open up Gild time for more 'fellowship' occasions (not necessarily including all members at once).

### **The Handbook**

The handbook, of course, falls within the Management heading.

In effect, the handbook functions as the first line of sustainability. Back in 1996, a request was made by a new member for some form of document to act as a guide on Gild objectives, background, structure and ordinances. The result is an information resource that ensures that Courts do not fall back to discussing issues without an understanding of the result of previous debate and the current status of decisions made.

The purposes of the handbook are clearly defined (1.1)\* within itself and it is hoped that all members take time to read and understand its content. The book is not complicated, as it is designed to aid and abet the decision-making process and not act as a barrier. Its 48 pages were chosen to keep it with a convenient and easy-to-read format. However, most importantly, it is not written in stone. It can be altered at any time.

Does the handbook still meet its original purposes?

If any member at any time has a difficulty with the status or content of the handbook, then he or she should enquire of the Court of Assistants, through the Clerk, as to making an appropriate change.

For example, the method of introducing a new Gild member was recently questioned, but it is well defined. (*In effect, if you want to propose a new member, then simply contact the Clerk before, or early in, October in order to get a copy of the membership application form, which takes you through the process*). The procedure (4.1)\* was introduced by the 2001 - 02 Master so as to provide a method of approving new members in good time **and in confidence** before their introduction to the Gild at the Shrove Tuesday Court. Introducing new names directly at a Court may lead to an embarrassment if the proposed person is deemed unsuitable.

If, for any reason, this procedure agreed by the Courts does not seem to be appropriate, or ineffective, then please propose a new or altered procedure.

### **Membership** (3.3) (4.1)\*

At the time of the revival of the Gild, Court attendance registers read like a list of the worthies of the butchery trade in the City of York. Over the subsequent seventy or so years, the Gild has flourished as a body of tradesmen broadly all within the same Craft. This is unusual – most other York guilds maintain looser links with their founding trade, but closer links with York families and businesses. The Company of Butchers has opened its membership to meat (and associated) traders from (mainly) the Three Ridings of Yorkshire, but also has valuable members from much further afield.

The Gild also, very professionally, debated and agreed on the possibility of Lady Members *before* the need actually arose. As a result, when the first three Lady Members were proposed, their membership was discussed on the grounds of their own talents and not on the gender issue. (It is also worth noting that a quiet discussion with the then Chaplain also indicated that there would be no bar to those of other faiths, whenever such a proposal is made).

So each new member is made familiar with the objectives of the Gild by his or her proposer before accepting the honour of joining the Gild and *'should live within a reasonable distance of York, or expressly confirm a commitment to support The Company's activities'*. It seems to **Carnifex** that a proposer / seconder has the responsibility of ensuring that a new member is happy with his or her role in Gild life and, if not, of quietly enquiring as to the reasons for non-participation.

It is hoped that members are brave enough to examine the possibility of younger members (*or, as procedure 4.1 defines them, normally attained the age of 30 years!*) and even financially support them through the early stages of membership. At some point in their lives, all members are normally offered the opportunity of taking a year as Master. This is best taken with some vigour left in the legs and stomach (much dining takes place!) and the experience gained is valuable in Gild life and development in subsequent years. **Carnifex** applauds those Past Masters who still return, time and time again, to Courts with their knowledge, often outpacing newer members.

It is hoped that the Gild will flourish with its current, and new, activities into the future. Is the Gild doing enough to attract new members, especially from York and its close environs? Are our current criteria for membership too restrictive? Are there other suitable traders out there that you know about that will fit Gild criteria and give of their time and talents to help? Is our current structure attractive to sustain the Gild for another eight centuries?

### **Home of the Gild** (2.4)\*

The Gild currently is based at Jacob's Well, kindly hosted by the Parochial Church Council of the Priory Church of the Holy Trinity, Micklegate. This follows our unfortunate ejection in 1992 (to the continuing shame of the

\* see section of handbook

then Master) from Butchers' Hall in the Shambles by a Council that clearly has no idea of what Sustainability means. As part of the post-war Shambles rejuvenation programme, the Hall was promised to the Gild by the Council in order to ensure that Butchery Gild-life was retained within the historic core of the street. Our expulsion, achieved by an impossible increase in rent, still seems to make nonsense of the original objectives of Council ownership of the street.

But having got that off the broad **Carnifex** chest, is it perhaps time to look again at our premises?

Firstly, is there any chance of a return to our proper home in the future? There would, of course, be enormous difficulties in convincing the Council that this would restore its honour, but perhaps we should, at least, indicate to the Council that we would like to retain an interest in the property should the opportunity of return ever arise. In order to make it financially viable, we would have to have in place a business plan to get a decent income out of the Hall, (but wouldn't it make a lovely place for small weddings – just an opening suggestion!)

But for the foreseeable future, we are privileged to live in Jacob's Well. However, we were recently guilty of abusing the hospitality of the Parochial Council when, without permission, we added furniture and banged nails into the walls of this Grade 1 listed building.

The Gild has taken effective steps to repair our relationship with the authorities. We should now ensure that we retain these better terms and keep Jacob's Well as a permanent fixture on Courts' agenda, or with liaison built in as a defined responsibility. We should look at our tenancy agreement (actually, there isn't one – we have a grace and favour agreement based on our furnishing the hall with our chairs and table) to see if there is more that we could do to firm up our position in this delightful building.

### **The Charitable Trust** (3.2)\*

The Trust, from its inception, has City and Gild charitable and educational objectives. Under changes brought about by its merger with the William Wright Charitable Trust, it has also taken on further objectives in the areas of medical research, arts, crafts, recreation and leisure.

The Trustees have examined the possibility of alterations to the objectives. Changing the Trust deed would be a difficult and expensive process, but, because of the clever wording of the deed, different donations can be made under the direction of the Master and Wardens, although the trustees (the cheque signers) would have to examine such donations very closely and seek further guidance from the Gild.

Two important areas of sustainability are critical – one under the control of the trustees and the other (much more important) under the control of the members:

- Should the Gild ever expire, then the Trust must have a way of disposing of its assets. The trustees have taken appropriate decisions as to how such monies shall be distributed.
- The Charity Commissioners require that charities are seen to be using their monies regularly. This can only happen if requests for charitable donations are coming in. In the last couple of years, the number of requests coming from the membership can be counted on the fingers on one hand of a dicey butcher. It seems unlikely, in a membership of eighty plus, that none know of a York area (*liberally defined*) community that would benefit from a donation to enhance the local educational, recreational, or cultural environment.

Please – Use Your Charity, Or Lose It!

### **Feasts** (3.6)\*

Feasts are the one way in which the Gild meets its 'fellowship' and 'tradition' objectives. In particular, it picks up on the Saxon roots of guild life – of the early 'brotherhoods, formed for mutual support and protection.

The Gild has adopted two feasts in its time of renewal– the original Annual Feast to celebrate Shrove Tuesday and the consumption of flesh prior to the Lentern Fast. Guests are broadly defined (although not documented as such) as those who are professional colleagues of members.

The Ladies Feast came shortly later. **Carnifex** understands that the then wives of members were asked how they would like to be entertained – Dinner? Dance? Day out? The answer was a similar feast, so as to enjoy a Baron of Beef in the same manner as on Shrove Tuesday, but with entertainment instead of speeches. And very successful it has been too. Even when Lady Members joined the Company, it was properly decided to retain the term 'Ladies Feast' in order to reflect the post war traditions, even at the expense of male spouses and partners being toasted as 'Ladies'. The Ladies Feast, in particular, has been seen to be a celebration of the Master's year with his (or future *her*) family.

There has been some questioning of the status of the Ladies Feast at recent Courts, due to the presence of Ladies at the Shrove Tuesday Feast. **Carnifex** is content with the current situation, but understands that expense is becoming a serious barrier to attendance. However, the Gild must remain proud of its feasts that offer a fine dining experience to members, friends and civic guests. We are proud that our feasts are judged the best guild functions in York. Each event is a Feast, not a Dinner, and should remain so. (Reflected, especially, in the 'all-close-together' experience of the intimacy of long tables).

\*see section of handbook

## **Sustainability** (continued)

The Gild needs to look at a series of questions regarding the Feasts. **Carnifex** offers some suggestions, but looks forward to a lively debate in the next edition through its letters page.

- Is there a way that the Gild can build up funds to support the Feasts? Top table fund? Wine fund?
- Could the Treasurer offer a Feast monthly saving package to all members?
- Should the Ladies Feast be seen as a fundraising opportunity? Perhaps always at the bigger venue of the Merchant Adventurers' Hall? Tickets could be sold to York visitors at prices considerably greater than Gild members and guests pay, thereby defraying costs. The entertainment to be of professional quality.
- Could the Ladies Feast be a Sunday Lunch after the Church Service? (Saving a night's hotel expense!)
- Should we survey our Ladies again as to what format their annual entertainment should take? Maybe Fish and Chips (nay – Best Beef Burger!) on Whitby sea front may be preferable! Or a roving Feast venue?

### **Waggon Plays** (2.6)\*

This article is written as plans have started to be made, by the York Guilds Waggon plays Board, for our 2014 production around the streets of York.

Our Gild has always done its bit towards these productions – we are currently committed to annual funding of the Plays, we have built our own pageant waggon, and members have always, so far, pulled, pushed and cajoled our waggon around the streets.

We rely on the Master, our Waggon Plays' representative and the Waggon Keeper for the Gild to maintain our role in Play production. Responsibility needs spreading – our Courts need to look at how this could be.

This is a particular area where newer members should be seen to take on more interest. Waggon building and maintenance can be a physical activity, and opportunities to help with the running of the whole event exist.

**Carnifex** repeats its call for more attention to be paid by the Board for ensuring that the waggons take central stage in the production, and not just a means of transporting stage effects for ground level productions. Our Guilds' role is surely to try and demonstrate how the plays would have appeared in mediæval times. Whilst we applaud some of the more *avant-garde* interpretations seen at the 2008 production, with actors leaping over wide areas of grass and street, interest in the Guild's production will only be maintained if the waggons themselves take the lead, with directors and players taking on the challenge of limited space and with audience at just an arms length from the action.

Our Gild has developed a relationship with the players from St. Chad's church. There is, however, no compulsion for the next director of the plays to follow this route and he / she could possibly take an entirely different option. We need to see if both parties (Gild and St. Chads) want to retain this relationship and find ways of strengthening it. If Gild members want to actually take an acting role in our play, then this is a good relationship as we develop an understanding with the play group (and members should make their interest known now to allow for introduction into the team!)

### **Artefacts and Library** (4.8) (5.2) (5.1)\*

Since its revival, the Gild has built up a collection of artefacts, now supplemented with the start of a library. The Gild is always delighted to receive appropriate gifts (York hall-marked silver would be especially appropriate!) but potential donors should always bear in mind that the Company will have to take on the upkeep of such gifts, currently with very limited secure storage space. They should also note that the Courts have decided to operate without insurance in these matters as cost was deemed to outweigh risk.

All artefacts have been carefully logged in **Carnifex** since 2005. The contents of the new library will also need to be incorporated in some form of register. However, we have no procedure for audit of our physical assets. We need some form of protocol • to set out responsibility and authority for annual audit of all the physical assets of the Gild and for their ongoing care • to allow for asset sale or disposal if deemed necessary • for library content cataloguing and lending control • to decide on asset dispersal method should the Gild ever fail again.

\*see section of handbook

### **Photographs from Orsogna** (please see article on page 8)



*Street procession*



*Gild Waggon at night*

And, of course, last, but by no means least: **Carnifex (2.8)\***

The editor can only hope that this esteemed, learned and witty journal has succeeded in bringing, through its eight year life, (delete as applicable) • a smile to your face • a frisson of excitement as the envelope clatters through your letterbox, or your screen indicates rogue e-mail in your system • some knowledge into your cerebral cells • a better set of entries in your diary.

What it has manifestly failed to do, even after various imploring paragraphs and begging notes, is to provide a forum for members to give their views on Gild matters. However, from this edition especially, the **Carnifex** editorial team is girding its loins in the expectation of a tidal wave of opinion on how to keep the Gild alive, interesting and relevant in the twenty first century.

The editor pleaded at a meeting at Jacob's Well, sometime in 2011, for the Courts to take on some control of **Carnifex** so that he was not quite so 'out on a limb' all the time. This was denied, and so there is absolutely no come back if anyone feels offended by any of the content of this edition. The editor was, in effect, given *carte-blanche* to include anything he deemed appropriate. He trusts that he has maintained enough personal decorum to keep the readership happy. He confirms that, as yet, he has received no restraining orders from the Press Complaints Commission. Nor, unfortunately, has anyone ever offered a bribe, but he remains hopeful.

But seriously, we have no idea if **Carnifex** is fulfilling a need. Please get out your ink and quills and send something – anything – a letter – a classified advert even – for inclusion in the next spring edition.

Questions for consideration: • Are two editions per year OK? • Should we be covering other subjects such as food safety / adverts from member businesses? • Is **Carnifex** worth its annual cost to the Gild? (Last twelve months in the order of £110, mostly to cover printing and postage to members without e-mail) • Could I (i.e. you, dear reader) take on the responsibility of printing and delivering a copy to a local member who is without e-mail facilities, thereby saving the Gild costs, and relieving the publication team of some of its pressure?

### **Conclusion**

So there you have it – a long diatribe that really doesn't reach any conclusions – these is for you to decide.

When the editor joined the Gild, back in the mists of time, there really were only two activities happening – our two annual feasts. It really did seem to be just a dining club on two occasions. (Very enjoyable – don't get me wrong!) Since then, various activities and functions have been added to try and make the Gild more relevant so that the feasts really do have a meaningful background, and thereby make the Gild more sustainable. These initiatives include the Waggon Plays, the Master's Day Out, the re-emergence of the Charitable Trust, the publication of **Carnifex**, and the new Library. (see below)

Is this enough? What more can all members do? Please attend the next Full Court (8<sup>th</sup> January, 2013) to see if there has been any reaction.

\*see section of handbook

### **Master's Day Out**

A thank big thank you to the Master for his excellent day out in Thirsk. About seventy members and guests attended, from as far afield as New South Wales, to take up the opportunity to mooch around the World of James Herriot. The Master carefully arranged for the storms that day to circulate around the Vale without actually approaching the gardens of Thirsk Hall that provided a lovely setting for the excellent bar-be-que and tipples. A huge thanks to Mr. and Mrs. John Bell for allowing us to invade the Hall grounds and wander around the gardens.

### **New Library**

The Gild Library is now up and running, under the management of a team lead by the Deputy Master. We look forward to see how control of book lending is managed! Books should be available to be borrowed at any Court. Please see section 4.8 of the handbook to judge if you have suitable books that you may wish to donate.

### **New Members for 2013**

Now is the time for proposals for new members to join in 2013, allowing time for the Master to convene the membership committee and report to the next Court of Assistants. Application forms are available from the Clerk, to whom they should be returned, completed, with the appropriate fees. (See handbook section 4.1)

### **Butchers' Joke**

A lady went into a butcher's shop complaining about some chipolata sausages that she had just bought. "The middle is all good pork" she exclaimed, "but the tips are all bread crumbs and seasoning!" "Well," said the butcher, "as you know, in these days of austerity, it's difficult to make ends meat!"

## **Master's Diary Jottings**

**Carnifex** is always pleased to receive articles from Gild representatives and the following from the Master is a splendid contribution. The Master is certainly having a very busy year and we trust that members are pleased that Gild life is so strong in the rarefied social atmosphere of Mastership. Herewith Andrew's report:

I would like to let the members know what the Master has been doing for the first six months of his year,

- March 24<sup>th</sup> Sarah-Jane and I were guests of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff at the Mansion House for a Civic Dinner when the Army were having a practice run for the meal they were serving to the Queen on Maundy Thursday.
- March 29<sup>th</sup> We were at Bedern Hall for a reception with canapés and wine where the new Masters and Clerks get to meet each other.
- April 5<sup>th</sup> We were invited to York Minster for the Maundy Service. All the Gild Masters had to be in the Minster at 9.30a.m. in our robes. When we arrived at the Minster, the crowds had started to gather. We were sat with the Civic Party in the Minster, so we had prime seats. We were only about three feet away from the Queen when she was handing out the money. We had to follow the Royal Party out of the front of the Minster and then process to the Mansion House. This was a surreal experience as there were tens of thousands of people cheering and taking pictures of us. A day both of us will never forget.
- April 19<sup>th</sup> I was at Merchant Taylor's Hall for the Company of Merchant Taylor's annual dinner, whilst Sarah-Jane was at a dinner at Bedern Hall.
- April 21<sup>st</sup> We were at the Merchant Adventurer's Hall for the Guild of Freeman's dinner.
- April 22<sup>nd</sup> We were at All Saints' Church for the Guild of Freeman's service and parade.
- April 23<sup>rd</sup> We were at Richmond for the Guild of Fellmonger's St. George's Day parade and church service, followed by a reception at the Town Hall.
- April 29<sup>th</sup> We were at St. Martin's Church, Coney St. York, for the Baedeker Raid 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service
- May 5<sup>th</sup> We were at Merchant Taylor's Hall for the Guild of Cordwainer's Annual dinner.
- May 6<sup>th</sup> We were at All Saints Church for the Guild of Cordwainer's service and parade.
- May 8<sup>th</sup> Gild Court of Assistants, at Jacob's Well.
- May 13<sup>th</sup> I attended the Combined Guilds' Church Service at All Saints' Church.
- May 22<sup>nd</sup> Ray Ballard, George Stonehouse, David Brown and I spent half a day at Jacob's Well, repairing the Gild's furniture.
- June 7<sup>th</sup> We were at Richmond for the Guild of Mercers, Grocers and Haberdasher's Annual Church service and parade followed by a reception at the Town Hall.
- June 14<sup>th</sup> We were at the Company of Merchant Adventurer's Festival of Flowers.
- June 16<sup>th</sup> We were VIP guests at the Queen's Birthday Salute in Museum Gardens followed by lunch in The Officers' Mess at Fulford Barracks.
- July 12<sup>th</sup> We were at Merchant Adventurers Hall for the York University Honorary Graduates' Dinner, hosted by the University Chancellor, Greg Dyke.
- August 5<sup>th</sup> This was my Master's Day at Thirsk where the Gild visited The World of James Herriot, followed by a Bar-B-Que at Thirsk Hall when we were blessed with fine weather and had a great afternoon of fellowship.
- September 1<sup>st</sup> We were at the Past Master of the Merchant Taylor's house for a Bar-B-Que (which we cooked) with all the Masters and partners whom he had met during his year of office.

So as you can see we have had a very busy and most enjoyable six months.

**Andrew  
Master**

All that **Carnifex** can say is that there appears to be far more events that the Master has attended than I did in my year in office (sometime in the ancient past of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century). This is good news, indicating how much Guild Life is growing in the traditional calendar of the ancient Cities of Yorkshire.

Returning to the sustainability theme, is there any way that can this be extended over the membership of all our guilds in some form of wider fellowship?

## **The Italian Job, or Waggon Trail to Orsogna**

The history and difficulties of the project, to take up the invitation to take some Waggon Plays to Italy has been reported in previous issues of **Carnifex**. Finally, the Butchers Play was the only one to get to Orsogna in August. The delays and date changes meant that no members of the Gild were able to escort our waggon, so we are grateful to Roger Lee, Simon Tomsett, and the players of St. Chads, for their efforts and success.

The following is an extract from the report of Roger Lee, Chairman, York Festival Trust, to the Gild. The full report is available from Gild Authorities.

“The Butchers waggon was adapted to fit into a Luton Box Van, along with all necessary costumes and props, and set out on a 1300 mile journey on the 11<sup>th</sup> August. It arrived in Orsogna at about the same time as the rest of the cast flew in two days later. We were welcomed by the Mayor of the Commune of Orsogna in the Town Hall and gifts were exchanged commemorating the achievement. We were treated to supper in the Commune Club.

The next few days saw rehearsals in 30°C – hard for the actors. Our Italian friends helped with supplying missing actors, including Christ, and in smoothing the way. At the same time they had their own production to worry about.

The performance took place at 8.00pm on Ferragosto, (the Day of the Assumption), an Italian national holiday, in the centre of the Piazza in front of a crowd of over a thousand people. The Play was well received with the audience watching as an act of devotion. It’s possible that the actors felt an element of penance in the heavy costumes and the heat! The play was filmed by RAI 1, the main national TV station.

By funding this project, The Company enabled York Festival Trust to create opportunities for eight people aged between 16 and 65 to experience the cultural and artistic differences and to make friends and contacts for possible future exchanges. Two of our group were able to perform on the Italian waggons – a completely different experience.

The people of Orsogna will warmly welcome any members who would like to make the trip at Easter 2013 to see the Italian production and enjoy the region. I would be happy to facilitate this.

Financially the project was very successful; the funding from the Company\* plus that received from City of York Council was sufficient to pay for all central costs of transporting and staging the play. Other donations from individuals have meant that we are in a position to make some small payments to those who took part to offset their travel costs and to reward their faith in the project and their hard work.

The Company can be proud of its achievements and certainly the event will be talked about in Orsogna for a long time to come. I hope that the Company may wish to continue and extend the links created, perhaps we could investigate links with the local butchery trade?”

\* Our Gild funded this project directly and also through the Charitable Trust. Participants paid their own costs.

**Please see photographs on page 5**

## **Dates for Your Diary**

### **2012**

- 27<sup>th</sup> October **Ladies Feast** 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm – Merchant Taylors’ Hall, Aldwark
- 28<sup>th</sup> October **Butchers’ Gild Annual Church Service**  
Members, 10.00 am procession at St. Crux, Shambles for 10.30 am – All Saints’ Church (where Spouses and Guests should assemble beforehand, by 10.15 am), followed by **Gild Parade and Reception** – join in as we parade to Jacob’s Well and host a reception for the Lord Mayor of York, the Civic Party and Dignitaries from other Guilds
- 4<sup>th</sup> December **Court of Assistants** 7.00 pm – Jacob’s Well, Trinity Lane, Micklegate. New 2012 members are invited to observe at this Court and join the supper, by prior notice to the Providitor
- 19<sup>th</sup> December **Guild of Freeman Carol Service** 7.30 pm – All Saints’ Church, Pavement  
Members are cordially invited to attend, with our Master giving a reading

### **2013**

*The Master requests the presence of all officers and members (or apologies) on*

8<sup>th</sup> January **Full Court** 7.00 pm – Jacob’s Well, Trinity Lane, Micklegate

*The Master requests the presence of all officers and members (or apologies) on*

12<sup>th</sup> February **Shrove Tuesday Court** 6.15 pm – All Saints’ Church, Pavement  
and **Shrove Tuesday Feast** 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm – **Merchant Taylors’ Hall**, Aldwark

5<sup>th</sup> May **United Guilds of the City of York Parade and Church Service**

26<sup>th</sup> / 27<sup>th</sup> October **Ladies Feast and Annual Church Service Weekend**

### **2014**

Spring & Summer **York Gilds’ Waggon Plays** – play and waggon preparation and, in July, play production