

Distillate

2024



The Worshipful Company of Distillers

IN THIS ISSUE: The Master's Year • 'Spirited' Returns
People of The Livery • Round up of Events



The Worshipful Company of Distillers

The Editor

Ewan Lacey Court Assistant

W elcome to the 2024 edition of
The Distillate.

This year's edition comes with a few exciting changes, inspired by the valuable feedback from our most recent members' survey. You'll notice more visuals and fewer words, creating a keepsake of the year that's perfect for browsing and reflecting on our shared experiences.

We're also proud to feature a dedicated section focusing on the charity, highlighting its vital work and the impact of our collective efforts.

A lot of work has gone into — we hope — improving the look and feel of the publication and we will continue to refine this in future editions.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to the fantastic team at Paragraph Publishing, led by Court Assistant Damian Riley-Smith, along with Tim A'Court and Bradley Weir, for bringing this edition to life. ■

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Diary Of Dates

21 January 25	Burns Supper (<i>with WCS, HCMM, CHRP & WCPS</i>)	Vintners' Hall
6 February 25	Court & Livery Lunch	Mercers' Hall
11 March 25	City Food & Drink Lecture	Guildhall
28 March 25	United Guilds Service	St Paul's Cathedral
10 April 25	Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch	Guildhall
30 April 25	Court & Livery Dinner	Saddlers' Hall
19 June 25	Court Lunch	Watermen's Hall
23 July 25	Spirits Tasting	Vintners' Hall
4 September 25	Scottish Court & Livery Dinner	Signet Library
10 October 25	Distillers One of One Auction	Hopetoun House
17 October 25	Annual Banquet	Mansion House
20 November 25	Installation Court & Livery Dinner	Vintners' Hall

THE MASTERS YEAR

2023-2024

The Master's Year

Lorne Mackillop MW Master 2023-2024

A couple of weeks before I became Master, I was at a dinner in the City and met the then Master Loriner. He told me that “becoming a Livery Master is like trying to hang on to a rocket.” How right he was!

My installation, on 23 November 2023, was the start of a roller-coaster ride, with some great highs, and some deep lows. You come into the role of Master still working out what you have to do, and by the time you have worked everything out, and can manage things more effectively, you are gone, and the new Master is in post.

I have had the benefit of a great deal of kind support, and wise counsel, from a great many people who have devoted their time and efforts in helping me make the changes our Company so badly needed in the Clerk's office, and, then again, when it came to putting together the budget and the proposition to the Court, for our new London offices,

which are now in place. We now have a new Honorary Chaplain, a new Clerk, a new Assistant Clerk, hopefully by the time this is printed, a new Clerk's Assistant, and a new London office.

It would be impossible to list out all the events I have been to, and the excellent hospitality I have received over the year, but it has all been pretty fantastic. I do hope that the many pictures accompanying this article will convey, in image, more than my words can. It has been a great privilege to have been the ambassador for this Company, in the City of London, and further afield. But I do feel that the WCD is now more widely known about than a year ago.

I thank you all for giving me this opportunity to serve this Company we all love. I much look forward to helping and assisting the new Master in his year, as he has so kindly helped me during mine. I am sure that under his leadership, our Company will forge forward from strength to strength. ■



Left: The inspection of Copper Rivet Distillery in Chatham, 14 August
Above and below: Buckingham Palace Garden Party, 8 May.
This photo: Thames for the Ceremony of the Stones, 30 June.





Consort's Year Some 75 events and counting... A truly incredible year

Seana Mackillop Master's Consort 2023-2024

I really didn't know what to expect when I started on this journey a year ago. Was I going to embrace everything? I thought many events would be centred around crafting skills. How wrong could I be.

Everyone tells you it will be a busy and wonderful year and will fly by in a flash. Never a truer word. So, with trainers at the ready — the official travelling footwear of a Consort — let the marathon begin!

I've made many new friends, which has been very rewarding, including the chance to have new "chums" — with a WhatsApp group called Consort Chums 24.

We have shared knowledge, friendships, and guidance — which could span the much-discussed dress code / shoes / suitable evening dresses scenarios, and where to find such garments, following a hiatus of non-formal attire due to Covid.

On a more serious note, before Christmas, we were invited to help the Lady Mayoress, Elisabeth Mainelli, support one of her refuge charities. We donated gift bags of toiletries and toys for women and children who have had to flee their homes. Just a few toiletries and toys for these children can make a huge difference. It was so popular that we repeated the donations at Easter,

so they could have eggs delivered to the refuge centres, with the help of the London Taxi drivers.

As part of that initiative, we were invited to put together hygiene bags for homeless people at St Sepulchre, the home of the Square Mile Hygiene Bank. That was an incredible eye opener of the work that is being done by Rev Nick Mottershead.

I attended an art class (Painter Stainer's Hall). We were tutored by the artist who taught Timothy Spall when he played Turner. I nearly declined this as I'm no artist! It was wonderful and educational, and in a few strokes it had us creating our masterpieces.

At my Consort Lunch in February, held at Innholder's Hall, we were very privileged to have Fiona Adler, the Secondary at the Old Bailey, as our guest speaker. She described the work she does outside the day job to reduce the tragic consequences of serious crime for both victims and families and those who are punished and sent to prison, often for more years than they have lived. We could have listened to her for hours.

The King's Buckingham Palace Garden Party was next. It was a wonderful event and we even struck lucky with the weather.

One of the best ways to explore any city is on foot and that is certainly true

in London. This included a tour of the Coffee & Tea Houses of London, by a licenced city guide, explaining how it all started, the trading of the city, the gossip and daily news, the ships and goods being delivered, and what was due, all of which ultimately created Lloyds of London.

We even had our Masters' weekend in London, a visit to The London Archives which was fascinating. They had prepared many of the historic ledgers of the Livery Companies.

As expected, the River Thames does feature heavily on the agenda, from Mudlarking, the Doggett's Coat and Badge Race, Swan Upping and being rowed on the Jubilant to the London Stones at Staines, an ancient ceremony that the Lord Mayor was keen to resurrect.

There was also music to enjoy from classical concerts to traditional performances in London and Scotland.

So, am I going to pack away my beautifully curated wardrobe now my year is about to conclude? Not a bit of it. The trainers will still be fully utilised to tread the streets of London, as City Consorts will continue to embrace and share their knowledge and retain some of the wonderful friendships we have formed. It's been an absolute pleasure, and great fun. ■

The Court Trip South Devon

Lorne Mackillop MW Master 2023-2024

The Court Trip was held in south Devon, based in Salcombe, and immediately followed the golf match against Churston Golf Club on Monday 20 May. Sadly, the WCD Golf team lost 5-1 against Churston.

DAY ONE 21 May

Hotel: Salcombe Harbour Hotel:

The lunchtime arrivals (18 of us) enjoyed a buffet lunch on the Marine Room verandah in perfect weather (unlike the rest of the UK) overlooking Salcombe

Harbour. By mid-afternoon more of the party had arrived, and so set off walking to the Salcombe Gin Distillery, about a 15-minute walk away from the Hotel.

We were greeted by one of the founders, Angus Lugsdin, and his distiller, Andy. We had a tour and tasting of their range of products, followed by cocktails and canapes in their splendid surroundings.

We then left to walk back to Dick & Wills' restaurant on the way back to the hotel, where more of the party joined as later arrivals. The menu was pre-ordered a while ago, and thankfully Bob Howell's

amazing spread sheets saved the day for those (most) who had forgotten what they ordered.

DAY TWO 22 May

A not too early start in two coaches (actually school buses), and a half-hour drive over to the Plymouth Gin Distillery where we were received by Anita English. Anita and her team of guides split us into two groups to do tasting of the range, a tour of the distillery, and a session of distilling our own Gin. After a buffet lunch provided



Clockwise from left: Salcombe, Devon;
Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC);
Salcombe Gin Distillery



by the Barbican restaurant which is onsite, and quite a few cocktails, some of our party returned to the hotel for some R&R, whilst 17 of us went on to Vault 53, a new Rum Distillery in Plymouth founded by Veronica Barker and her husband Richard, (Veronica is David Grant's niece). We had a very interesting visit and cocktails made from the Rum.

We returned to the hotel late afternoon to a spirits mini-fair where four local spirit producers (listed below) each had a table to lay on their range of produce and showed us a large variety of local spirits and cocktails: ▶

THE COURT TRIP



Clockwise from top: Gala Dinner at BRNC; The Master and Consort ready for another successful event; Liveryman Simon Collins reconnects with a former colleague; Making one's own gin at Plymouth Gin Distillery



- Hattiers Rum – Philip Everett Lyons and Ashley Swain,
- Cove Vodka – Leanne Carr
- Devon Distillery and Dappa (Devon Grappa) – Cosmo Caddy
- Wicked Wolf Gin – Pat and Julie Patel.

They then joined us for dinner in the Marine Room.

DAY THREE: 23 May

Again two buses, this time to the Calancombe Estate owned by Lance and Caroline Whitehead. After a very narrow, and somewhat scary access lane, we had a splendid tour of their winery, and their Dartmouth Gin Distillery, followed by the vineyards and blackcurrant plantation for the Cassis. A tasting of still and sparkling wines preceded a very excellent

lunch in their restaurant provided by their chef, Jonathan Mather.

Our late departure caused some problems for our coach company, but we all returned to the hotel to change into black tie for our gala dinner at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth. We had a guided tour from Colin, a retired RAF officer who taught Navigation at the College — he was most amusing and informative. We then had a drinks reception on the Quarterdeck (outside) overlooking the parade ground, and then on to the River Dart.

We trooped into Dinner in the Gun Room Mess (46 of us), and were hosted by the commander of Britannia, Cdr Daniel Morris RN, and his wife, Genie, who were exceedingly gracious hosts. It being Genie's Birthday, she was regaled

to a rendition of "Happy Birthday" by 40+ well-refreshed distillers, but the timing and tonal quality were nothing to write home about.

We had a much relaxed bus trip back to the hotel.

This was the official end to the tour, but...

DAY FOUR 24 May

A few of the party took up the option, on the way home, of visiting Agatha Christie's home — Greenway, now a National Trust property, in Galmpton, on the River Dart well upstream from Dartmouth. The house and gardens are quite spectacular with great views of the river. ■

The February Lunch

Kim Lyons Assistant Clerk Emeritus



The February Court & Livery Luncheon brought the Distillers' Company back to Vintners' Hall, where Alderman Vincent Keaveny was installed as Renter Warden, and Alex Oldroyd joined the Court. At the Court meeting, Simon Collins and Stephen Russell were appointed as Stewards, with new Livery members Alexis Burgess, Ciarán Russell, and Naomi Laurie also welcomed.

Reverend Canon David Parrott, filling in for our new Honorary Chaplain, delivered a memorable grace. Lunch included a delightful menu of poached sea trout, lamb rump, and rum & coconut parfait, accompanied by Hugel Pinot Gris 2019 and Château de Fonbel 2018.

The event had a military theme, with attendees from the Royal Navy, British Army, and affiliated groups. Matthew Russell, our liaison for 825

Naval Air Squadron, served as Company Speaker. Lt. Gen. James Bashall CB CBE addressed the audience on the state and role of the British Army and the importance of military ties to Livery Companies.

The Master's speech included the presentation of the Distillers' Prize to leading air engineering technician Matthew Spicer, awarded for his outstanding work in 825 NAS. Honorary Steward Geoffrey Bush received the Claret Jug for his third win in the Company golf competition.

Guests later gathered in the Drawing Room for a Stirrup Cup and conversation. Meanwhile, the Mistress Distiller and her guests dined at Innholders' Hall, hearing a very engaging account from Fiona Adler on City roles and community outreach, with reflections on making effort to reduce knife crime among youth. ■

The April Dinner

Edward Macey-Dare Clerk Emeritus

On 25 April, members of the Court, Livery, and their guests gathered at Apothecaries' Hall for the spring dinner.

After a lively reception, our Beadle, Jeremy Smith, called everyone to the dining hall. The Reverend James Titley gave a light-hearted grace, and after a brief confusion about the timing of the Loving Cup, we all settled in for dinner.

The evening included a series of traditional toasts and a memorable Loving Cup ceremony. Afterward, speeches began, with Alderman Alison Gowman giving updates on City charitable initiatives and the Green Finance Initiative, which she has passionately supported. She offered a warm tribute to our outgoing Clerk, Edward Macey-Dare, who had concluded 15 years of service that very afternoon. Alderman Gowman recited a lively

historical grace from Charles II's time, honouring her work with Macey-Dare on the 375th anniversary celebration.

The Master introduced our new Steward, new Company Freeman, and Liverymen, and paid his own tribute to Macey-Dare, prompting a standing ovation. He then welcomed our new Clerk, James Bryan, and announced the Assistant Clerk, Kim Lyons, would retire in November, leading to another round of applause.

The evening celebrated both an end and a beginning, marking nearly 70 years of dedicated service from successive partners in Monier-Williams, who have served as Company Clerks. It was fitting to return to the Apothecaries, from which we originally branched out in 1638, for this significant gathering. ■



FELLOWSHIP

The Mansion House Dinner

Andrew Cox *Liveryman*

The annual Distillers' Banquet at Mansion House, hosted in the grandeur of the Egyptian Hall, offered an unforgettable evening. With chandeliers, high ceilings, and Georgian decor, the venue set a splendid tone for the night.

The reception began with Brut Majeur from Ayala or Plymouth Gin and Tonic, a tippie with an impressive history. Following the Master's Procession, Honorary Chaplain Fr. James Titley delivered a witty grace, and guests enjoyed an exceptional banquet with superb wines. Highlights included Beef Fillet Bordelaise, perfectly paired with Warwick Estate Cabernet Sauvignon.

The historic Ceremony of the Loving Cup added a touch of Anglo-Saxon tradition, with each guest sharing a drink safely "protected" by their neighbour. The London Scottish Pipers accompanied the ceremony, toasting the Master with silver Quaich's.

The Lord Mayor, Professor Michael Mainelli entertained with a speech celebrating the City Livery movement and applauded the Distillers' Company's contributions to education, philanthropy, and industry. He also apologised that Alderman Vincent Keaveny, our very own Renter Warden, was representing him at the Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters banquet so was unable to join us.



The Master, Lorne Mackillop, concluded the evening by honouring retiring Assistant Clerk Kim Lyons for her dedicated service. The Banquet was a reminder of the event's unique tradition, hospitality, and joy, leaving all who attended feeling like royalty. To those who haven't yet attended, it's a memorable experience not to be missed! ■

The Scottish Dinner

Michael Urquhart *CBE Chairman of the Scottish Committee*

The highlight of our year here in Scotland is the Scottish Dinner in September. Held again (for the seventh time) at the Signet Library on Thursday 5 September, this event continues to be the focal point of our annual activities. Demand for tickets was high as expected, and we were joined by 216 Liverymen and their guests on the night.

The Scottish Dinner is regarded as the trade dinner to attend, providing an excellent opportunity to recruit new Liverymen. This year, we were privileged to have Louise Stevenson of Inspiring Scotland, who manages the Youth Action Fund on behalf of The Distillers Charity, as our guest speaker. She spoke about the various charities that transform young lives in Scotland, funded by the Distillers One of One Auction. Her inspiring speech captivated all attendees, emphasizing the positive impact of our charitable work.

The event was a resounding success, enjoyed by all present. As we look

forward to next year, the 2025 dinner is scheduled for Thursday 4 September at the Signet Library. Given the high demand for tickets, we recommend marking this date in your diary and applying for tickets as soon as details are published by the Clerk's Office.

My grateful thanks to the Scottish Committee for their hard work and support during the year and to the Master for joining us on several occasions. ■



People of the Livery

Billy Abbott

Where is home?

North West London, not too far from Sussex where I started out.

What makes up your working day?

As The Whisky Exchange's ambassador, and an occasional freelance writer and educator, no day is the same. Things swing from days in the office writing articles and tasting notes, running training sessions and doing a bit of project management, to travelling around the country running tastings, going to shows, and judging spirits competitions.

As I write, I'm recently back from a week of hosting a Science of Whisky cruise on a tall ship around the Inner Hebrides with New Scientist magazine. Next week, I'm off to Norwich...

How did you get here?

After studying computing at university, I worked in financial data for over a decade. One of my hobbies was learning about whisky, which led to me blogging about drinks. I spoke to The Whisky Exchange about writing about some of their tastings, which ended up with me leaving the world of IT, and becoming a writer and educator in the drinks industry. Not an entirely planned career.

Best bits of the job?

Talking to people. I love talking about my interests, and my job is mostly to find like-minded people and talk to them.

What are your aspirations?

Expand the courses and categories that I teach, and write more books (my first, *The Philosophy of Whisky*, is available in all good bookshops).

Your experience of Livery life?

Along with events (especially the Master's Bar, which I encourage everyone to come along to), I'm a member of the Vocational Training & Education Committee and have recently taken over communications. I also have a Livery mentor and am a mentor myself. Through all of this, I have made lots of great connections with other Liverymen.

What you don't know about me:

My name is not actually Billy. The perils of a nickname that stuck... ■

FELLOWSHIP

The Master's Bar

Chris Porter Past Master 2021-2022

Event

6-8pm Monday 4 November 2024

Venue

Soho Whisky Club, 42 Old Compton Street, London

The third Master's Bar for Livery members and guests took place at Soho Whisky Club on 4 November.

Many Livery members were present with guests from the industry who enjoyed a myriad of whiskies available from the extensive range on offer at the Club.

This included sampling Tobermory Ledaig from the Sinclair Series, Raasay single malts, Masthouse from Copper Rivet and Armorik (Whisky Breton) single malt among many others in our two-hour, pre-dinner get together.

The Master's Bar will be a regular feature going into 2025. Another gathering in January is planned so watch this space. It is a very informal, low-cost alternative event. Above all, it's a fantastic opportunity to get together and meet fellow Livery members and industry professionals and perhaps offers a bit more space and time to chat than

when attending one of our more formal events.

Thanks must go to Adelaide, Kathleen, and all the team at Soho Whisky Club for receiving us so well and providing such a convivial atmosphere for us.

Thank you too to the Master who not only supported the evening but most generously subsidised the first round!

We look forward to returning soon and seeing you and your industry guests in January. ■

www.sohowhisky.club



Marcham gets his marching orders

David Raines Past Master 2013-2014

During the last 23 years, the general manager of the Vintners' Company, Steve Marcham, has been a great friend to the Distillers throughout a plethora of successful and enjoyable events. As a gesture of thanks for all his professional

friendship and guidance before he retires in January 2025, the Court dined him out in style with not only 17 Past Masters raising their glasses, but also 15 Past Mistresses.

To ensure he took the friendship of the whole Court into retirement, a

dumb waiter masquerading a Major in the Grenadier Guards presented him with a bottle of Master's Cask 18 YO Knockando and a pair of engraved Distillers glasses from which to sample the spirit of the Worshipful Company of Distillers — root and branch! ■

Spirited



THE
DISTILLERS'
CHARITY

Street League, one of the charities
supported by the Youth Action Fund



THE
DISTILLERS'
CHARITY

Transforming Young People's Lives

Grant Gordon OBE Chairman

Charitable giving is a cornerstone of the Worshipful Company of Distillers, reflecting the rich history and values of the Company, as well as our enduring commitment to philanthropy as a Livery Company within the City of London

Established in 1955, The Distillers' Charity was created to advance the Livery's charitable objectives. Our dedication to this work remains as vibrant as ever, constantly assessing where and how best to apply, adapt, and evolve our work for the modern day. Our commitment to making a positive impact in society remains constant, through our long-standing charity partnerships.

The Distillers' Charity is wholly committed to a wide range of charitable work, all with the underlying objective of transforming young people's lives. Guided by our vision, we strive to help young people improve their life chances and reach their full potential.

With three separate but integrated grant-making programmes, our charitable funds support **City & Livery Giving, Distillers Vocational Training and Education, and the Youth Action Fund**, which is funded by The Distillers One of One Auction, backed by the Scotch whisky industry. The past 12 months have been a period of further growth at The Distillers' Charity, and we made a record level of grants totalling

£1.2 million across our three focus areas, helping young people who are in need.

By combining our rich heritage of Livery giving with innovative fundraising initiatives, The Distillers' Charity has been completely rejuvenated to sustain its position with its dynamic and connected community. Our charitable work is supported by the time, dedication, and generous donations of Livery members, as well as through **The Distillers One of One Auction**. These biennial auctions generate funds that make a profound and lasting difference in the lives of young people in Scotland, with every one pound in ten raised supplementing our City & Livery Giving and Vocational Training and Education work.

The generosity of the Livery has been instrumental in the Charity's success with donations reaching £107,000 this year. We are grateful to each and every donor who has supported our mission and commitment as a Livery to give back to society. Through our focus on education, employability, and community engagement, your Charity is transforming young people's lives.

Building upon our roots in the Worshipful Company, The Distillers' Charity represents one of the main foundations of our Guild and is here for the long-term. You can read more about our charitable activities in this edition of The Distillate. ■

City & Livery Giving A Force for Positive Change

Richard Watling Lead Trustee

City & Livery Giving is a key pillar of The Distillers' Charity. Aligned with our mission to transform young people's lives, we support a broad range of worthwhile causes through the generosity of our Livery members. Our long-standing commitment to these causes spans three key areas: education, employability,

and helping young people from disadvantaged backgrounds become valuable members of their communities and reach their full potential.

Our success is driven by valued long-term partnerships with numerous charitable organisations and the invaluable direct involvement of Livery members.

In addition to Livery members' donations supporting City & Livery Giving, this year saw funds raised by the Velo Club for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. We also invested in the creation of the exciting new 'Equal Measures' initiative in partnership with The Drinks Trust. Distiller's Charity of the Year, voted for by the Livery, supported London Sports Trust, inspired by the spirit of the 2024 Olympic Games.

Of utmost importance is the time and talent Livery members generously offer as volunteers to support this philanthropic work. We are extremely grateful to all members who contribute to making these grants and activities possible.

With these continued efforts to transform young people's lives and

The Drinks Trust continued to execute its primary goal of delivering improved services to more of our industry colleagues in need. At year end:

- **5,049** beneficiary acts undertaken
- And **1,400** individuals have been able to access career changing skills and an opportunity to thrive within the drinks and wet-led hospitality sectors



David Wilson and Richard Watling presenting our donation to the Lord Mayor

to strengthen communities, we look towards the future with optimism.

Master's Charity of the Year

The Master's Charity of the Year is dedicated to supporting a worthy cause aligned with our central mission. Chosen through vote by Livery members, this year's recipient is London Sports Trust, who were granted a total of £20,000. The Trust aims to inspire positive change in disadvantaged young Londoners through the power of sport, training and life skills.

The Trust supports over 2,500 children every week across all their programmes.

The Lord Mayor's Appeal – National Numeracy

The Worshipful Company of Distillers selects and supports one project each year from The Lord Mayor's Appeal portfolio, best aligned with the Charity's objectives, priorities, and our strong relationship with the distilled spirits industry. This year, we supported National Numeracy, a campaign that

helps Londoners to develop a positive mindset towards mathematics and to be confident and competent with numbers and data to be more effective in their daily lives, in education and at the workplace.

The Talk About Trust (formerly The Alcohol Education Trust)

The Talk About Trust works to equip young people with the life skills and resilience to make safer choices around alcohol. Over 1.5 million pupils in the UK have special educational needs, and young people with learning difficulties are at a significantly higher risk of vulnerability. The Distillers' Charity supports outreach for children with additional learning needs and looked-after children, offering 150 specialist sessions a year with resources delivered by specialist staff.

The Drinks Trust

Close to the heart of our industry, The Drinks Trust was The Distillers' Charity's first beneficiary when our Livery charity was created in 1955.

Run by drinks industry professionals, the Trust provides financial support, wellbeing services, and skills development, delivered with compassion and respect. Our long-standing partnership with The Drinks Trust has evolved significantly over the decades, now offering a wide range of support for young people aspiring to thrive in the hospitality industry.

Equal Measures

Created in collaboration with The Drinks Trust, Equal Measures is a dynamic, new organisation founded by renowned DJ Deano Montcrieffe to support members of marginalised communities. Equal Measures is committed to providing education, mentorship, and support to anyone who has experienced barriers to their progression, helping young people to succeed in the hospitality trade. By supporting this initiative, the Charity has high hopes for making a real impact through an innovative and youthful approach, underpinning our commitment to diversity & inclusion, and our links to the hospitality trade.

This year, Equal Measures became a Community Interest Company and grew their beneficiary pool from 621 to 1,102 including workers from marginalised backgrounds, as well as aspirant industry professionals. Equal Measures have been recognised with several awards including the DEI Innovation Award (UnderOne 2024) and The Spirits Business' Ethical Award 2024.



David Wilson supporting The Distillers' Charity

Future Youth Zone

This longstanding Distillers' Charity partner is a state-of-the-art youth facility in Barking & Dagenham, one of London's most deprived boroughs. Future Youth Zone offers a safe and nurturing environment where young people can explore and discover their skills and passions. Guided by positive role models and able to participate in a diverse range of inspiring activities, from climbing walls to cooking classes, young people find a safe space to develop team skills, challenge themselves and grow in confidence and as individuals. A dedicated careers programme helps to provide a transformative environment for positive changes.

Uniquely, they held collaborative events with the National Youth Orchestra, and were chosen as the borough Mayor's Charity of the Year. ■



Vocational Training & Education Shaping the Next Generation of Distillers

Chris Pitcher Chair of the Vocational Training and Education Committee

Vocational Training and Education (VTE) is dedicated to developing the next generation of talent in the spirits trade. Inspired by the Livery's original purpose of preserving and advancing specific crafts through the setting of standards, provision of training, and passing on of skills to future generations, this centuries-old tradition continues to thrive within the Worshipful Company of Distillers. Through the funding provided by The Distillers' Charity, substantial work and innovation continued this year through a varied and inclusive approach. Distillers VTE works

to nurture talent, support career aspirations, and share the incredible wealth of knowledge within the Livery, meanwhile supporting young people into work.

The Worshipful Company of Distillers has for many years provided a programme of educational support, built from long-standing relationships with our education partners underpinned by Livery donations supporting this important work:

Our Three Education Partners

Our qualification partners — the Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET), the (soon-to-be) Chartered Institute

Dynamic one-day sessions, featuring a number of speakers holding senior positions, blend expertise in distilling with key insights into business and marketing.

of Brewing and Distilling (IBD), and the International Centre of Brewing and Distilling (ICBD) at Heriot-Watt University — each offer a programme of educational support. Members of the drinks industry are supported to acquire knowledge and skills, encouraging new entrants to the trade. ▶



WSET
WINE & SPIRIT
EDUCATION TRUST



The Livery's Vocational Training and Educational Support Programme

VTE and the Livery's educational support programme is a varied and vibrant offering, attracting, retaining and connecting with a wider and more diverse audience for greater inclusion. Our three-pillar approach supports young talent through a mix of grants to

support qualifications, seminars, and mentoring.

Awards and Scholarships

The Distillers' Charity offers a range of awards and scholarships to support individuals pursuing education and training in the spirits industry. In the year to September 2024, we awarded 31 grants across our three education

partners, supporting a mix of courses, including:

- Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET) Level Two and Three Spirits courses
- Institute of Brewing and Distilling (IBD) Diploma in Distilling and General Certificate in Distilling
- A research grant for an MSc in Distilling at the International Centre for Brewing and Distilling (ICBD) at Heriot-Watt University
- An Entrepreneurs Award for a new distillery in Hawaii

These grants help individuals develop their skills and knowledge, and contribute to the growth and innovation of the spirits industry.

Our mentoring programme, launched in 2021, introduces young distillers to Livery members able to share a wealth of knowledge, wisdom and practical advice. In a few short years we have built the roster of ongoing mentorships to almost 50.

The Business of Spirits, our popular one-day seminars taking place in London and Edinburgh, covers a wide range of practical topics relevant to aspiring distilling entrepreneurs. Topics include pricing, segmentation, innovation, and feature talks from successful distillers on their business.

Memory of the Industry, was launched last year by VTE, a new way to capture and share the unparalleled depth of knowledge within the Livery. This series of videos recorded by members offers insights into the industry. Our next stage is to develop the project into a podcast format, to deliver "stories" more quickly and build a unique library of interviews with witnesses and prime movers in some of our industry's most important developments.

Any Livery or Freeman - living anywhere UK/abroad - who would wish to be a mentor, note we have mentees available: contact clive.bairsto@distillers.org.uk if you wish to do so. ■



The Youth Action Fund

Impact greater than the sum of its parts

Geoffrey Bush Youth Action Fund Lead Trustee

During nearly 50 years of being involved with many accomplished charities and community regeneration projects, “helping young people to help themselves”, I have never seen a model as effective as the Youth Action Fund.

— Geoffrey Bush, Youth Action Fund Lead Trustee

Established in 2022 with the support of the Scotch Whisky industry and funded by The Distillers One of One Auction, the **Youth Action Fund** aims to transform the life chances of young people in Scotland facing significant and complex barriers to reaching their potential. A long-term initiative that, in just three years, has demonstrated significant success in creating positive change in the lives of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and their communities.

The key ingredients for the remarkable success of the Youth Action Fund partnership model have been:

- The way in which the Fund was established
- The guiding principles behind the Fund
- The unique way in which partner charities collaborate

The work begins with Inspiring Scotland, a leading social enterprise developing solutions to some of the deepest social problems, who conduct research mapping youth unemployment across Scotland. This helps identify gaps in provision and opportunities for long-term impact. Consulting with leading executives in the Scotch Whisky industry, and advised by Inspiring Scotland we have determined that the

Fund’s target should be to help the “hardest to reach” young people from local communities within the industry’s footprint.

The Youth Action Fund was developed and designed based on key principles: a holistic approach focused on the individual young people, prioritising geographical focus, delivered through a curated portfolio of leading charities to form a complementary and collaborative force:

Aberdeen Foyer, Action for Children, ENABLE Works, FARE Scotland, Street League.

The Youth Action Fund’s vision is a society where young people, irrespective of their background, develop self-belief, confidence, and resilience, enabling them to fulfil their potential.



Photo courtesy of Fare Scotland



Through The Distillers One of One Auction, one of Scotland's most prized and valuable assets in the form of Scotch Whisky is being used to benefit Scottish young people with the least privilege in a collaborative, philanthropic endeavour like no other, reaching young people in greatest need of support."

— Louise Stevenson, Fund Manager, Inspiring Scotland

The portfolio of charities also includes: **The Talk About Trust (formerly The Alcohol Education Trust)**

This portfolio of leading charities work in collaboration with one another, sharing knowledge and generating value that makes the Youth Action Fund's total impact greater than the sums of the parts. Crucial to managing the portfolio is the application of Inspiring Scotland's "Matrix". This tool tracks individual young people's needs and progression through a series of critical stages — soft outcomes, progression milestones and employability outcomes, providing rigorous impact measurement and informing continuous improvement.

The Distillers' Charity Impact Report 2023 (distillerscharity.org/our-impact)

provides a detailed report on the performance of the Youth Action Fund, but in summary:

Youth unemployment in Scotland doubled in the past year to more than 15 per cent and the need for the Youth Action Fund's work has never been greater. The challenges facing young people are increasing. With the cost-of-living crisis, the highest school absence rates since records began, a mental health epidemic, childhood obesity, while public sector services are under pressure, there is much more work to do.

For the young people supported through the Youth Action Fund there are no quick fixes. It takes time, care, expertise, and their pathway to success is not linear. There are setbacks because

Between January 2022 and September 2024, over 2,400 young people have been supported by the Youth Action Fund, and 3,100 qualifications achieved to date. In many cases this is the first formal qualification that they will have attained. This work has resulted in more than 1,600 of these young people achieving an employability outcome such as a job, structured training or a college place helping transform their lives.

their lives remain challenging, but the person-centred, holistic approach that we take, works.

The Youth Action Fund will continue to be a lifeline for many young people during the coming years, enabling them to succeed in spite of these challenges. ■





THE DISTILLERS
ONE OF ONE®
2025

THE WORLD'S PRE-EMINENT
SCOTCH WHISKY AUCTION
10 October 2025

The Distillers' Charity is delighted to announce that The Distillers One of One Auction is returning for a third edition on Friday 10 October 2025.

In partnership with Sotheby's, this is an inimitable auction of ultra-rare, unique Scotch whiskies, created specifically for the Auction.

Once again, the Auction will be hosted at Hopetoun House, a spectacular backdrop against which to showcase the remarkable 2025 collection.

100% of the Hammer Price will be donated to charity, which is transforming the life chances of disadvantaged young people.



If you would like to discuss becoming a donor or sponsor of Distillers One of One please contact

beanie.espey@distillers.org.uk



People of the Livery Natasha Wilson

Where is home?

The Trossachs, north of Glasgow. Our home was a B&B which my parents ran, so it was always buzzing with people — family, friends and new faces from around the world. I've since moved to London, where I do my best to bring the same lively energy to my little flat!

What makes up your working day?

I manage Corporate Communications for Suntory Global Spirits in the UK & Ireland. No two days are the same, but there's a fair amount of writing and editing to get done. My favourite thing is visiting the distilleries, meeting the people who create our whiskies and, of course, sampling a few.

How did you get here?

Right place, right time! I studied French and Spanish at university and was spending some time in Madrid when an internship opened up at Suntory Global Spirits' Spain office. I joined the company there and then had the opportunity to relocate to London a few years ago.

Best bits of the job?

Sharing a dram with my international colleagues who I work with every day over teams, but only get to see once every couple of years. Virtual working will never replace being in-person!

What are your aspirations?

Learning more and more about the industry and the craft. I've had the privilege to share the table with a few seasoned distillers at Livery dinners, which has opened my eyes to a world of distilling history that I'm yet to learn about.

Your experience of Livery life?

Meeting fascinating people and sharing new experiences. It's been great being part of the Velo Club — although I did question my life choices on our 600km through Spain last year! It was worth it though to raise so many donations for The Distillers Charity and make memories with great people along the way.

What you don't know about me:

You'll often see me wearing long, sparkly dresses at Livery events but usually, I'm in running leggings and trainers. I get crabby if I go a day without exercise! ■

The Scottish Committee

Michael Urquhart CBE Chairman of the Scottish Committee

While the Scottish Dinner in September remains a highlight, the Scottish Committee actively supports various other Company initiatives throughout the year. Education is a key area of focus, particularly through our involvement with the International Centre for Brewing and Distilling (ICBD) at Heriot Watt University.

In March, we assisted with the Business of Spirits course for ICBD students and judged the Entrepreneurship Award in the summer, won by Canadian student Ethan Wang, who plans to build a new distillery in Hawaii. Our annual lecture for students faced scheduling issues last year, leading to a January session with Nick Franchino, master distiller at The Cotswolds Distillery. He delivered a talk titled “English whisky: would you Adam and Eve it?”, sharing insights on setting up and developing a new distillery. We were also pleased to host Morag Garden, CEO of the English Whisky Guild, for an industry overview. In October, we welcomed Dickie Cullimore, global brand ambassador for Bacardi, and via Teams, global master blender Astrophel “Troy” Arqiza, who presented on Bacardi and rum production, including a tasting of their products.

The Committee meets five times a year and conducts distillery inspections. This year, we visited Glenturret Distillery in February, Port of Leith Distillery in May, and Aberargie Distillery in August. We are pleased to report that all three distilleries are in excellent working order and producing high-quality spirits. The Master joined us at Aberargie Distillery after attending the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Additionally, we continue to support the MALT Committee and maintain affiliations with 603 Squadron and the newly affiliated 42 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth. Liveryman Stephen

Rankin DL will join the Scottish Committee in December as the Liaison Officer for 42 Squadron.

With the Loving Cup ceremony resuming in London, we decided to commission eleven Scottish Loving Cups, in the form of Quaichs, and Daggers for use in Scotland. Crafted by Liveryman Edwin Stott of Silversmiths Hayward and Stott, these 11 Quaichs feature the Distillers Company Logo and the donor’s logo.

The generous sponsors were: Morrison Scotch Whisky, William Grant & Sons, Ian Macleod Distillers, Glenfarclas Distillery, Gordon & MacPhail, Summerhall Distillery, Tomatin Distillery, Arbekie Distilling, The Borders Distillery, Forsyths and Whisky Magazine.

My grateful thanks to the Scottish Committee for their continuous hard work and dedication throughout the year. ■



Diversity Equity & Inclusion

Chris Porter Past Master 2021-2022

The Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) Working Group have met three times this year to progress our work begun in 2022 to achieve greater diversity and equity within our Livery membership.

The stated intention of the Group is to attract and retain a more diverse membership from the industry, that is sustainable for the long term progressive future of the Distillers.

This outline plan appeared in last year's Distillate. Since then, three planned "pillars" of progress have been rolled out.

Our events — the intention to stage a number of events for our newer Livery members (from the last five years) to come and share a dram with some of the senior members from the Livery. Under the working title of The Master's Bar, Livery members each bring a guest who works in the industry to a less formal, low cost early evening network event. These proved successful and popular and have

so far taken place in January, July, and November.

The Gin Guild's Ginposium in May this year saw a very well received presentation from Court Assistant Alex Oldroyd about the work of the Livery. This gave far greater awareness to a young and diverse audience from the Guild, some of whom will be looking to joining the 'parent' Worshipful Company and the greater, mutually beneficial contribution that could bring.

The Group are also working on a establishing a series of virtual events, a 'Meet the Maker' to be presented by selected distilling companies as an event to which both Livery members and guest can sign up. Access to key figures and distillers from within our Company, via a teams event and access to all — run by the Distillers.

An adaption to the Livery joining process, to expand Freedom Category, is currently being worked on. At the time of writing, this is still subject to formal ratification but the proposals from the

DE&I Working Group will result in greater accessibility to our Livery for a wider ranging catchment from the industry. For the Distillers, such a move will enable us to give a more immediate welcome and greater engagement with the industry which we represent.

With a female membership which is now 12% and an average age that is more than 50, there is still much to do.

However, the work that has and is being done now will enable more women, more people from ethnic minorities, and from other under-represented groups within our industry to join the Worshipful Company of Distillers. It will result in the Company being truly reflective of the demographic mix of today's industry.

The events we have run this year, the plans we have outlined and the adaptations made will make our Livery open and welcome to anyone working in the spirits industry today to contribute and build on the great progress made by us to date. ■

Marketing & Communications Committee

Ewan Lacey Court Assistant

The Marketing and Communications Committee is preparing for an exciting year of transformation in 2025. With the recent establishment of the new Clerk's Office, we have a timely opportunity to reimagine the Livery's marketing and communications approach. This shift provides a unique moment to refresh our strategy and find new, engaging ways to connect with our community of audiences.

As the committee's direction takes shape, there are already key updates in motion.

During 2024, Aaron Jeewood has continued his outstanding work managing our digital communications, ensuring the Livery's online presence remains both vibrant and relevant. Our LinkedIn following is now over 1900 — if you don't yet follow us, please consider doing so.

Meanwhile, development director Clive Bairsto, who has skilfully managed the content calendar since its inception, is passing the reins to Bill Collier. Clive's leadership has been invaluable, and Bill is well-poised to bring a fresh perspective to the role as the committee evolves.

With these transitions underway, the Marketing and Communications Committee steps into 2025 with a renewed commitment to enhancing our communications and building stronger connections. We look forward to the year ahead as we embrace these new directions. ■



People of the Livery

Julia Duckworth

Where is home?

While I was initially born and raised in the USA, I consider London to be my home. I've recently moved to New York City for a two-year secondment with Diageo. Adjusting to life in NYC has been an interesting challenge, but I'm embracing the city's energy and opportunities.

What makes up your working day?

My days are dynamic, filled with collaboration with global teams, leading R&D strategy, and connecting with consumers to push the boundaries of what's possible in the drinks industry. I split my time between leading teams, developing new product concepts, and collaborating with cross-functional colleagues globally. I'm particularly proud of the breakthrough work I've done, including developing non-alcoholic versions of iconic brands like Gordon's and Tanqueray. The best part is when I get to work hands-on in the lab — there's magic in transforming an idea into a drink that can connect with people.

How did you get here?

I've always been passionate about science and creativity, so working in R&D for a major drinks company felt like the perfect fit. I've had the opportunity to work across Europe, leading projects like the launch of Venturo, a Mediterranean-inspired aperitif, and I'm now eager to expand my expertise in the North America.

Best bits of the job?

I love that my role allows me to explore both the creative and scientific aspects of innovation. From

creating innovative products that delight consumers to diving into the science behind flavour and aroma, there's always something exciting to work on. I also enjoy the opportunity to blend creativity with strategic thinking, especially when collaborating with cross-functional teams globally.

What are your aspirations?

I'm eager to deepen my connections in the industry while continuing to learn and grow in my role. I'm passionate about ensuring that our industry is not only innovative but also diverse and inclusive. My goal is to create opportunities that elevate underrepresented voices and perspectives, making meaningful changes that shape the future of the industry.

Your experience of Livery life?

I've found the community aspect of the industry incredibly rewarding. The sense of camaraderie, learning from others' experiences, and celebrating our shared passion for creating incredible products is truly fulfilling. I'm looking forward to getting more involved in events and initiatives as I grow my network.

What you don't know about me:

I have a passion for cooking, travel, painting, and photography. These creative outlets allow me to unwind and explore new perspectives, whether it's capturing a cityscape through my camera lens or experimenting with flavours in the kitchen. ■

The Gin Guild

A Year in Review

Pal Gleed Director General, The Gin Guild

We bid farewell to 2024, the 12th year of the Gin Guild and I am delighted to report we go from strength to strength, both within the UK and internationally, welcoming 63 brand new members over the course of not one, but two installation ceremonies.

The Guild is becoming a worldwide organisation and in 2024 welcomed new members from 15 international countries including our first from New Zealand, Slovakia, Portugal, Brazil and Singapore, and now have members from 34 countries around the world (see chart) representing over 40% of our membership.

Key Events and Installations

In 2024, the Gin Guild hosted two installation ceremonies.

The Spring Installation in May at Guildhall welcomed distillers from across the globe, including our first member from Brazil, bringing the total membership to 526.

The event, complemented by the Annual Gin Industry Dinner (and preceded by the Business of Spirits free one-day course for members), provided a platform for distillers and industry experts to socialise, network and explore trends.

The Autumn Installation in October at Mansion House added 30 more

members, reflecting the continued global growth of our gin industry.

Notably, Renais Gin co-founder Alex Watson was installed as the Guild's 500th member. This year we have also welcomed Cygnet, the gin brand owned by opera star Katherine Jenkins, along with gin companies from the USA, France, Singapore and Japan.

Ginposium and Awards

The annual Ginposium, held in June, continued to serve as a pivotal event for discussing innovations and future trends in gin distillation and other issues of importance to the gin industry.

This year's event covered the following topics:

- Protecting your brand and IP from copycats
- Overview on botanicals supply issues in 2024
- Worldwide gin market analysis
- An update on UK advertising rules
- The Spirits Buyer's perspective with John Vine
- The Rise in ultra-premium celebrity backed gins (with samples)
- Legends slot with Lesley Gracie
- What's new in gins (with samples)
- Sharing experience of entering new markets
- Botanicals sourcing from a global brand perspective

This year we also included a session introducing the Worshipful Company of Distillers (presented by Steward Alex Oldroyd) to our assembled audience. This garnered 20 enquiries which have been passed to the Industry & Membership committee.

Pal Gleed presents the team from Hernö Gin with the prestigious title of Gin Producer of the Year at ISC Awards





(with Justin Smith and Anne Jones and from the ISC awards).

The Guild also supported and sponsored the International Spirits Challenge (ISC) Awards and the International Wine and Spirits Competition (IWSC) Awards, along with attending the Scottish Gin Awards. Read more about the winners at www.theginguild.com/news

Sustainability Developments

2024 saw important sustainability efforts across the industry, with investment announcements including Pernod Ricard owned Ki No Bi's announcement of a new carbon-neutral distillery, and the Gin Guild has recently published our sustainability toolkit for members operating gin distilleries.

This has been a year in the making, working with the best minds from across the membership of all sizes to provide a series of guides and checklists to enhance true green credentials for gin distillers and brand owners.

Jay Dhawan Scholarship Update

Simran Kini is the first recipient of the Jay Dhawan scholarship sponsored by NÄO Spirits and the Gin Guild.

It honours the memory of Jay, a beloved member at NÄO Spirits team and Gin Guild member until his tragic death in 2021 paying tribute to his passion for fostering talent, innovation, and community spirit.

NÄO Spirits, known for its Hapusa and Greater Than gins from India is a proud member of the Guild has partnered with the Guild to create this scholarship in Jay's memory.

Simran, an experienced member of the food and beverage community in Bangalore travelled to Scotland to pursue her studies at Heriot-Watt University, having been selected for her passion for the category and a strong commitment to progressing her career.

Since arriving in Edinburgh in Autumn 2023 she has been busy learning the fundamentals of brewing and distilling, gaining invaluable insights

INDUSTRY

and guidance from the team including Matthew Pauley and Dr Annie Hill.

Reflecting on her studies Simran said "The Scholarship is a profound honour for me to continue my studies and pursue positive change. It's humbling to carry forward Jay's legacy with the support of NÄO Spirits and the Gin Guild."

Industry update

We've seen several notable gin brands launched in the UK in 2024, including Brad Pitt's The Gardener, Margot Robbie's Papa Salt as well as (and I'm pretty sure this will be a first for Distillate) Still G.I.N. from West coast rapping legends Snoop Dogg and Dr Dre.

John McCarthy

In October, the Guild and the wider distilling world mourned the loss of John McCarthy, a much-respected figure and head distiller at Adnams, who passed away suddenly at 55. Since joining the Gin Guild in 2013, John was a great supporter of the work we do to create a community for the global gin industry and was a regular attendee and contributor to Guild events who will be sorely missed.

Dates for your diary:

8 May 2025 Spring Installation and Gin Industry Annual Dinner

13 June 2025 Ginposium Seminars

17 October 2025

Autumn Installation and Distillers Banquet

So all in all a busy year in gin and plenty to look forward to in 2025 and beyond. ■



The City Debate

Nick Morton Steward

September saw the return of the Distillers' City Debate, featuring "Age is Over-rated" as this year's Motion. A typically rowdy audience calmed somewhat at discovering the topic related to Spirits Maturation rather than wider social attitudes, and settled back to enjoy compelling arguments from an extremely knowledgeable panel.

Chairman Trevor Stirling established via an opening audience vote that 29% supported the Motion, 31% opposed and, surprisingly for these polarised times, 40% abstained.

Johnnie Walker master blender Emma Walker opened in favour of the Motion, arguing that the real over-rating of age lies in its adoption as marketing shorthand for quality, often at the cost of other important contributing factors such as quality control and cask quality/rejuvenation. Whilst accepting that Age is one tool in the master blender's box, Emma ventured that technical advances had reduced modern production's reliance on it, with exponential improvement in the quality of non-aged spirits reflected by its popularity, at nearly 60 per cent of the global whisky market.

Emma's second argument focused on the inefficiency of the ageing process: requiring and tying up large numbers of barrels from slow-growing trees, whilst the Angels simultaneously deplete the liquid stocks.

Observing that age statements were originally self-imposed by the industry (rather than demanded by consumers), she expressed concern about hindering innovation by 'boxing ourselves in', and finished by urging producers and consumers to prize flavour over age — given flavour appreciation is democratic and instinctive, rather than requiring knowledge — and remarking that, instead of being the dominating feature of a spirit, age should simply be a mechanism to deliver certain taste profiles.

Speaking against the Motion, Angus MacRaild, of Kythe Distillery and Decadent Drinks renown, argued that age fully deserves its focus, being the primary contributor to flavour and a natural process fundamental to all distillates in a container. Age statements enable an informed assessment of the liquid, he said, helping us assess age-enhanced characteristics and identify the exciting anomalies which stand out in drinking memories, citing here a Laphroaig 1967 Samaroli.

Angus posited that any and all age is important to a Scotch — whether 3 years old or 30 years old — but cautioned that greater Age is no guarantee of greater whisky.

The importance of age as an emotional factor was also referenced. The thought of spirit sat in oak for a decade-plus is, for many, an almost mystical counterbalance to hectic modern living, whilst current attempts to accelerate or artificially compress the ageing process fail to produce either the spirit character or romantic resonance. And, even if fast-ageing ultimately solves the liquid challenges, Angus asked, would the emotional draw of a great whisky remain unchanged if we knew it could be produced no differently to Irn Bru?

Concluding that the special fascination of whisky is age as the hook and flavour as the lens through which to examine that age, Angus emphasised that the ultimate spirits formula remains 'characterful distillate plus age'.

Philip Everett-Lyons, founder of Hattiers Rum, replied for the motion, contending that ageing in spirits is overrated from commercial, environmental and evolutionary standpoints and negatively affects both industry and consumers.

Investing 30 years in a spirit which, when finally opened, may fail to deliver on quality or to match market trends, cannot be viewed as efficient, he said; neither can 'pushing' a portfolio released

based on historic inventory, rather than distilled to cater for contemporary tastes. Philip finished by acknowledging that age has a place and a value but insisting that it is over-rated, encouraging the industry to embrace a more varied template to cater for a broader church and new consumers, via judiciously and responsibly applied technology and more open-minded attitudes.

To conclude, Olivier Nicolai from Goldman Sachs responded with a factual argument based on excellent slides, some of whose data may have eluded the less eagle-eyed of the audience.

Nicolai opened with the observation that the value of Brown Spirits has outgrown White Spirits globally since 2000, suggesting this is in major part due to the ageing potential. At the same time, he recognised that the long maturation business model put 'aged availability at scale' beyond the reach of all but the largest producers.

On a broader level, Nicolai identified key market value drivers as provenance and scarcity — through both of which age is interwoven — referencing the exalted top-end auction prices attained by the very old and rare. However, on a more positive note for smaller producers, he also emphasised the importance of brand equity to value perception, including the price variances between 12 year old whiskies from various producers.

All speeches concluded, the Chairman's post-debate re-vote revealed that, whilst those who supported the motion remained consistent at c. 30 per cent, the nay-sayers had recruited many abstainers to achieve a majority decision against the motion of 45 per cent to 30 per cent.

Following a vote of thanks and closing comments from The Master, Lorne Mackillop, the audience retired to enjoy the generous hospitality of debate sponsors: Johnnie Walker, Hattiers Rum, Warner's Gin and Everleaf N/A Aperitifs. ■



The Distillers' Annual Spirits Tasting

Damian Riley-Smith Court Assistant

September saw the return of the Distillers' City Debate, featuring "age is over-rated" as this year's motion. A typically rowdy audience calmed somewhat at discovering the topic related to spirits maturation rather than wider social attitudes, and settled back to enjoy compelling arguments from an extremely knowledgeable panel.

Hosted once again by the World Drinks Awards, the annual Distillers' Spirits Tasting filled the Vintners' Hall with more than 170 visiting Masters, Clerks, Liverymen and other guests.

More than 200 award-winning spirits from all around the world were available for tasting, arranged by country and then by style of drink, all encapsulated in the World Drinks Awards tasting guide.

From France to Scotland, the USA to Mexico, the evening included every spirit style you can think of, from gin to whisky, liqueurs to brandy, cognac and beyond. Fine spirits weren't the only order of the evening, with a large array of pre-mixed cocktails poured from the cocktail room, and a selection of light food from the Vintners.

The event was coordinated by liveryman Damian Riley-Smith and his awards team from Paragraph Publishing. Both Damian and the master distiller made brief speeches of welcome to the guests, reminding them of the now annual end of evening tradition of inviting guests to take away two random bottles drawn from the tasting in exchange for £20 donated to the Lord Mayor's Appeal.

The 2025 date is set for Wednesday 23 July 2025, so mark your calendar now. ■

Distillers & Marketers Event

Clive Bairsto Development Director

The evening before Halloween, around 100 Liverymen and guests from the Distillers and Marketers Livery Companies gathered for the fifth annual “panel event” at HMS President, alongside the iconic lights of Tower Bridge. These popular events spotlight a spirits category or country of origin, and this year, the focus was Japan, with the theme, “Will the Rising Sun continue to rise in 2025?”

The event began with classical Japanese music, setting the stage for master distiller Lorne MacKillop’s welcome, and included dignitaries such as the Minister for Financial Affairs from the Japanese Embassy. Vicky Illankovan, CEO of the Distillers’ new charity partner, Equal Measures, briefly introduced her work in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in the drinks industry. Past Master Martin

Riley then explained the event’s focus on Japan, highlighting the country’s growth in spirits and popularity within UK metropolitan areas through Japanese cuisine, lifestyle goods, and travel.

Moderator David Wethey led the panel which discussed sake, noting its unique category and suitability for food pairing. Nick Temperley shared insights into the growth of Japanese spirits in the UK, though noting their 0.25% market share in whisky. He praised the Japanese focus on quality, akin to their car-making ethos. Hibiki whisky, embodying these values, was later showcased in the adjoining bar.

The panel discussed “Brand Japan” and effective strategies for marketing Japanese products. Bruce Perry emphasized the importance of product variety in launching new offerings. When an audience member asked about licensed production in the UK,

the panel agreed that while Japanese drink consumption will likely grow, the authenticity of using Japanese water and distilling in Japan will remain vital.

The event concluded with remarks from Past Master Riley and a round of applause for the panel. Guests then enjoyed pre-poured cocktails, including Hibiki whisky, Roku gin, Toki whisky, sparkling sake from Marussia, and Erika Haigh’s special sake from Mai Sake. These drinks were complemented by Far Eastern canapés and satay bites, with Marussia offering a small tasting table featuring various sake types, including Junmai, Ginjo, Honjozo, and an Umeshu liqueur.

As attendees made their way back to Tower Hill, they reflected on a remarkable evening that deepened their appreciation for Japanese spirits and left many confident that the “Rising Sun” will indeed continue to rise. ■

ICBD Lecture

Kenny MacKay Past Master 2019-2020

Rum was the topic for the Worshipful Company of Distillers 2024 Lecture and we were very privileged to have Bacardi deliver the presentation.

Dickie Cullimore, Global Brand Ambassador for Bacardi Rums, joined us in the room and Astrophel “Troy” Arquiza, Bacardi Global Master Rum Blender, joined us on teams from Jacksonville, which was even more remarkable as Hurricane Milton had just passed through Florida and it was touch and go if he would have a working internet connection.

To start with we were given some of the of the impressive Bacardi backstory from the insight of the founder Don Facundo Bacardi Masso, the early days in Cuba then the move to the current Bacardi rum distillery in Puerto Rico.

The students were then taken through the process with Dickie setting the

scene and Troy providing the technical detail when required. We discovered that Bacardi rum has a unique yeast strain that has been used since the beginning, the importance of cask selection in maturation and the role charcoal plays in shaping the final products.

The discussion on the process was taken up a level when Dickie produced a couple of aces in the form of two separate distillates from the Puerto Rico distillery. The first was aguardiente, literally fire water in Spanish, the second, redestillado, a smoother lighter tasting spirit. The former provides body and depth to the rums with the latter more refined and being used to balance the aguardiente. To produce the final rums, the master blenders will mix these spirits from different ages and cask types to create the final Bacardi rums.

Like all spirit drinks, sustainability now plays an important role in the

production process and Dickie shared some examples such as the work done in converting to Biogas from fuel oil and the work being done to reduce water usage.

All in all, a fascinating insight into the production process and although Troy had to leave us at this point, the night was far from over.

There were a lot of smiling faces by the end of the evening, and while it may have had something to do with the wonderful rums we tasted, it was clear to me that the knowledge and professional approach of Dickie and Troy really made the difference.

On behalf of the Worshipful Company of Distillers, I’d like to put on record our thanks to Bacardi, in particular Dickie, Troy, and Sorcha Gall (supporting Dickie). I’d also like to thank our military affiliate 603 Squadron for the evening. ■

The Business of Spirits

Martin Riley Past Master 2018-2019

The Business of Spirits is a one day seminar designed to offer an introduction to the business side of the spirits industry for students studying distilling at the Institute of Brewing and Distilling (IBD) in London and at Heriot Watt University (International Centre for Brewing and Distilling (ICBD)) in Edinburgh.

This initiative was designed by our Liverymen with the objective of sharing the business experience of the presenters.

There is a core team who have given their time and expertise to develop the one-day seminar and presenting it.

To date, four seminars have been given to the IBD in London and two to the ICBD in Edinburgh and this year, a seminar took place with the Gin Guild.

One seminar per year will be given on an ongoing basis to the IBD, ICBD and to members of The Gin Guild.

The first seminar was given four years ago and was designed to answer the question: "What would be helpful for a distiller starting out in the industry to know in terms of other departments in a company with regard to finance, pricing, sales, marketing and innovation, and the challenges of setting up a distillery from scratch?"

We recognise that only top line information can be given in one day but the objective was to explain business vocabulary used by the industry and to give examples of the kind of issues distillers could become involved with in company-wide discussions.

Time is made available for participants to ask questions of the presenters and there is an opportunity to reflect on the key messages of the day.

At the end of the seminar participants are invited to have a drink



with the presenters and to continue networking and to ask further questions.

The feedback we receive from participants after each seminar has been consistently very positive.

Suggestions on how we might focus more on certain subjects have been taken on board and integrated into the content. ■

London and Scottish

Jamie Barklem Liveryman, MALT Secretary & London Scottish LO

I am delighted to take on the role of MALT liaison officer to the London Scottish Regiment. I had the privilege of serving as Officer Commanding A (London Scottish) Company, the London Regiment from 2017-2021 and I am delighted to assist with strengthening this important relationship we have. By way of background, the affiliation with the London Scottish was the Livery's oldest military affiliation, dating back to 3 March 1965. Following the defence review in 2022, A (London Scottish) Company redesignated to G (Messines) Company, the Scots Guards. The London Scottish Regiment remains in suspended animation, with the notable custodians of its history and traditions being the pipes and drums of the London Scottish. It is this part of the London Scottish that the Livery will be most familiar with today, with

the majority of our events featuring an impeccably turned out piper (or two!) wearing the distinctive Hodden Grey uniform, and cap badge featuring the Lion Rampant with the motto "strike sure!". Most recently, you will have heard the familiar sound of Pipe Major Jim McLucas and Pipe Sergeant Andy Parsons at the Mansion House Banquet.

The Pipes and Drums were once again out in force at the Lord Mayor's show, where the Distillers' banner was worn. As you will see from the photos of each of these events from last year, the long-standing and cherished relationship between the Livery and the London Scottish remains as strong as ever.

Strike sure! ■





Our military affiliate 825 Naval Air Squadron (NAS) has been extremely busy not only training a growing number of Naval aviators and engineers for front line duties in the Royal Navy, but also assisting our allies enhance their own capabilities considering the number of global events of late. The last few months have been a difficult time for the entire Fleet Air Arm following the crash of a Merlin helicopter operating from HMS Queen Elizabeth and the tragic loss of one of its crew. This crew were based at Yeovilton which as you can imagine is a close-knit family. This is a reminder as to just how much our friends in the military do for us all. The Master kindly shared a note of condolence with our affiliate on behalf of us all in the Worship Company of Distillers.

Having said this, our friends based at RNAS Yeovilton have still managed to find the time to host us to some amazing days at their home, HMS Heron.

On the 7 June a cadre of distillers and their guests were warmly welcomed and hosted by Commander Ben Dando (Commanding Officer 825 NAS) to a rare opportunity of gaining an insight to the Royal Navy and the Fleet Air Arm. The day was largely organised by Liveryman Chris Nadin as Chair of the South West region committee. We began with a tour of the Navy Wings

hangar and the aircraft that have served in the Fleet Air Arm over time. Former CO of 825 NAS and current CO of HMS Heron, Captain Duncan Thomas (also a Liveryman!) and Liveryman Commodore Jock Alexander kindly gave us the tour of the hangar and provided an in-depth insight into each of the amazing aircraft that were at the cutting edge of aviation in their time.

Commander Ben Dando then hosted us in the crewroom of 825 NAS where we were introduced to a few of the squadron and briefed on current Royal Naval deployments across the globe and given a confidential briefing on how they are protecting security and defence on behalf of us all.

The Master took the controls of the Wildcat, conducted an effortless take off from the land-based airstrip

before flying us over the channel, calmly banked to come alongside a Royal Naval frigate, adjusted his airspeed to match that of the ship before hovering to starboard and landing in textbook fashion on a travelling ship.

In more recent news, it was the tenth anniversary of the re-inauguration of 825 NAS this year and to celebrate this, a squadron luncheon was held on 17 October. The Master and Mistress were invited as the honorary guests alongside Steward Simon Collins, former, Commanding Officer of 825 NAS and Chair of the MALT, and myself. This was an opportunity to meet and speak to many of the engineers and technicians that are vital in keeping the Wildcat in the air, enabling it to perform its missions on land or at sea, night or day, in all weathers. ■



42 Squadron (Torpedo Bomber) Royal Air Force

Matthew Gammel Steward

The Military Affiliates Liaison Team (MALT) was tasked with increasing our affiliations and it was identified that expanding our Royal Air Force affiliation in Scotland, perhaps with something at RAF Lossiemouth, would be a good fit. Our existing affiliation with the RAF was inaugurated in 2017, creating a relationship with 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force, who provide RAF Police and RAF Regiment (Force Protection) in support of the regular service. We have been able to bring two of their Officers Commanding into the Livery and had significant opportunities to see their training and understand their role, equipment, and ways of operating. Past

Master Richard Watling and Liveryman Air Marshal Sir David Walker had a few exploratory conversations, one with Squadron Leader John Chappell, who is responsible for the affiliations between Livery companies and RAF units. We became aware of interest by 42 (Torpedo Bomber) Squadron based at Lossiemouth.

42 Squadron has been recently reformed as the Operational Conversion Unit (OCU) for the new P-8 Poseidon and E-7 Wedgetail aircraft as part of a very large investment in maritime patrol and early warning and control aircraft. PM Richard Watling and I were invited to RAF Lossiemouth on 27 March where we meet with the

Officer Commanding 42 Sqn, Wing Commander Colin (Col) Bostrom, and Squadron Leader Matthew (Blakey) Blake. I am delighted to report that we were hosted superbly.

Our positions were very much aligned, and we welcomed 42 Squadron as our latest military affiliate at the Scottish Dinner where the Master and Wing Commander Colin Bostrom signed the Memorandum of Understanding. We very much look forward to integrating and growing the affiliation and this was kicked off with three members of the Scottish committee attending the Squadron's official Stand-Up dinner in mid-September which was a great night and we were warmly welcomed. ■

603 Squadron

Matthew Gammel Steward

A high tempo year for 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force with RAF Regiment and RAF Police Reserve personnel engaged in UK based training, operational support in the UK and supporting operations overseas. One of our RAF Regiment Gunners spent three months deployed with No 1 Squadron RAF Regiment, operating alongside his regular colleagues providing protection for RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. Our RAF Police personnel have provided UK based operational support to a few RAF Stations this year including RAF Lossiemouth, Halton and Spadeadam, responding and dealing with a variety of incidents.

November 2023 again saw the Squadron tasked to provide the RAF Marching Contingent for the Scottish National Remembrance Parade in Edinburgh.

June 2024 saw the annual golf match take place at Kinross golf club and

after a fantastic day the Squadron was victorious in regaining the trophy.

In September, the Squadron participated in three Annual Continuous Training exercises, where the reservists deployed for 15 days of continuous training and operational support. Our RAF Police personnel were based at RAF Lossiemouth, having had to cancel their initial plans to deploy to Cyprus due to operational demands related to the situation in the Middle East. Focussing on law enforcement, policing skills, and team building, the team supported the physical security of the station over the period. They also managed a Force Development trip to volunteer in an environmental protection activity at the battlefield on Culloden Moor. Our RAF Regiment personnel were split between two training camps; one at Otterburn Training Range in the UK and the other at Sennelager training area and Holzdorf Air Force base, a Luftwaffe station in Germany. There they operated with our NATO allies to participate in a blank firing field exercise

centred on improving interoperability through delivery of challenging, realistic, and retention positive training. The highlight of the year has been the presentation of the Squadron's new Standard on 5 October 2024. Standards are awarded to RAF flying or RAF Regiment squadrons to mark 25 years of service; 603 Squadron was re-formed in 1999, so this year's presentation fits exactly. The consecration parade at the Tower of London saw four RAF Reserve squadrons receive their Standards and took place in appropriately sunny weather. The end of the training year once again sees the Squadron involved in Remembrance activities across the central belt. As 2024 ends, they have two reservists mobilised and deployed on operations; one RAF Regiment Gunner on security duties in Cyprus and an RAF Police reservist working as a dog handler in the Falkland Islands. We look forward to 2025 where our Reserve RAF Police and RAF Regiment personnel will be supporting both UK based and overseas operations and training. ■



New Affiliation: HMS Campbeltown

Marcus Pickering *Liveryman*

With the great success of the Distillers' affiliation with HMS Montrose, now decommissioned, we were delighted to be nominated as one of the affiliates for soon to be built HMS Campbeltown. Construction will take place at Rosyth, shipyard of the new Inspiration Class Type 31 fleet of five frigates: HMS Venturer, HMS Active and HMS Formidable underway, and HMS Bulldog and HMS Campbeltown soon to follow.

The new HMS Campbeltown is set to bring both advanced capabilities and rich historical associations to the Royal Navy. Named after the famed WWII destroyer involved in the daring

St Nazaire Raid, HMS Campbeltown symbolises resilience and tradition. The frigate, expected to enter service by 2028, is part of the Royal Navy's future-focused Type 31 program, which combines modular design with automation, enabling a streamlined crew of 120 and adaptability across various missions. With enhanced weapons systems, a Sea Ceptor air defence system, and expansive flight deck, HMS Campbeltown is primed for global deployment, embodying British naval prowess.

Its upcoming affiliation with the Worshipful Company of Distillers will continue to strengthen connections between the City of London and the

Royal Navy. The affiliation promises to bolster the crew's values, with the Distillers offering support in the form of welfare initiatives, events, and professional development opportunities.

This relationship looks at blending the Company's centuries-old craft with the Royal Navy's commitment to excellence. For the crew aboard HMS Campbeltown, the affiliation provides not only practical support but also a lasting link to the history and traditions of the UK's renowned distilling industry. Together, the Worshipful Company of Distillers and HMS Campbeltown will be a partnership that honours tradition while supporting those who protect the future. ■

Halloween Dinner of the London Scottish

Jamie Barklem Liveryman, MALT Secretary & London Scottish LO

On 31 October 2024, the Master attended the London Scottish Regiment's annual Halloween dinner with Liveryman and former Officer Commanding of A (London Scottish) Company the London Regiment, Major Jamie Barklem.

The London Scottish Regiment and the Worshipful Company of Distillers have a strong bond, dating back to the original military affiliation entered into on 3 March 1965.

The Livery is represented at the annual event, which is attended by members of the London Scottish

Regimental Association, the London Scottish Pipes and Drums and soldiers of G (Messines) Company, the Scots Guards (formerly A (London Scottish Company, The London Regiment).

This year was particularly poignant, marking 110 years since the London Scottish Regiment, the first Reserve Battalion to march into battle in the First World War, fought at Messines Ridge.

We also heard from Lord Robertson, a former Colonel of the London Scottish and former Defence Minister and Secretary General of NATO,

bringing the reality of the challenges our Armed Forces face today, and the significance of its role, into sharp focus.

The Pipes and Drums, who we enjoy the company of at the majority of Livery events, were in fine fettle and Major General Marc Overton, President of the London Scottish Regimental Association reaffirmed the important relationship between the London Scottish and the Worshipful Company of Distillers.

As the London Scottish motto goes, strike sure! ■

The Distiller's Golf Society

Ian Harris Honorary President, Distillers' Golf Society

2024 was a busy season for golf at the Distillers, with a full programme of matches, all thanks to our excellent Hon. Secretary Graham.

We all look forward to the knockout competitions both North and South of the border, and once again the England finals were played at Sunningdale, thanks to the generosity of Past Master Brian Morrison. In the Championship, Nick Abell beat Farren Drury in an exciting match which went to the first extra hole. The Plate Competition was won by Geoffrey Bush who beat Mike Campbell 2&1.

North of the border, the trophies for the Scottish competitions were presented at the Scottish Dinner in September to Nigel Mills who beat Gordon Doctor in the Championship, with the Plate won by Stephen Bremner beating James Campbell.

The inter-livery matches started in April with the Distillers versus Vintners contest played at New Zealand GC, resulting in the match being halved 3-3. Big thanks to Terry Barr who stepped down as Match Manager after many

years, and who hands over the reins to Mike Keiller for 2025.

May witnessed the annual Distillers versus Churston match in beautiful Devon weather, but once again John Smith's team of Churston ex-Captains was too strong for the Distillers team, many of whom were staying on for the Court Trip. The usual evening festivities ensued with an excellent speech by Past Master Charles Minoprio preceding a Cognac and Armagnac tasting from Ian Harris, who is handing over the Match Manager duties for 2025 to Paul Varney.

After many years at West Hill, the Distillers versus Brewers match in June was switched to Berkhamsted, with Mike Campbell leading the team to a 5-1 victory. Big thanks to Mike who now hands over to Nathan Last after 12 years of running this match.

Unfortunately, the Distillers versus Coopers match did not take place due to low availability on both sides, so we are looking to move this match to a different month for 2025.

Big thanks again to Graham Franklin, who facilitates a season of golf which is undoubtedly the envy of other Liveries! ■



SPORTING INTERESTS



The Distiller's Car Club Driving The Open Road

Paul Finch DCC Secretary

2024 was yet another memorable year for the Club with a rich variety of different trips to suit our membership. Shaking off Christmas and to start the New Year we organised our usual February dinner at the Club's favourite London Italian restaurant Carrifini. What a buzz and terrific atmosphere as 22 of us had a good old catch-up and chin wag.

Showcasing A Rare Private Collection For Charity

Robert and Tanya Lewis only started their collection in 2006 buying cars as art. The first car was a black Mercedes 300SC, but it has now grown to over 70 of the world's most famous and rarest cars with over 1000 pieces of memorabilia all at their beautiful house in Churt just outside Farnham in Surrey.

Each year Robert opens his collection to the public in aid of the local charity, "Challengers", whose aim is to offer respite for disabled children, their carers and their families.

Many of the cars are priceless, so not surprisingly they are all kept in air-conditioned premises. All are in pristine condition, but all of them are used frequently. For those of you who missed

The Robert Lewis Collectio. Below from left: The Mermaid Gin Distillery; Rowing the Atlantic. Opposite from top: Hampton Court; The 1937 Rafale hydrofoil.



it this year, put it in your diary for next year. Its unmissable.

Coachbuilt Elegance At Hampton Court

Perfectly manicured gardens, the gentle mist of fountain water and the rumble of 100 years' worth of automotive history. This was the backdrop as we joined up with the Worshipful Company of Coachmakers to enjoy a jaw dropping display of exquisite privately owned competition and road cars from across the world. Best in show was a 1937 Rolls Royce. Second and a big favourite was the 1960 Aston Martin DB4GT Zagato, valued at £11m. Hey Ho. We had a thoroughly great day out bringing our cars to the club area where everyone had brought a picnic in lovely sunny weather.

Visit To The Isle Of Wight

In September 15 of our members and wives met at The Portsmouth Naval Dockyard to start our trip to the Isle of Wight. Some of the group visited HMS Victory and the Mary Rose, others just relaxed or visited the D-Day Museum at Southsea. On Saturday, we woke to brilliant sunshine as we caught the ferry across the Solent. On arrival at Fishbourne, our first port of call was a visit to The Mermaid Gin Distillery where we were guests of co-founders Xavier Baker and Conrad Gauntlett. Malcom, the sales director, took us through a tasting and spoke about how through innovation and provenance the business started and has now blossomed into a national and international business, this was followed by a delicious lunch. We were then treated to the story about how Xavier and his team of rowers crossed the Atlantic. A story of endurance, bravery and determination. Looking at the boat, it was hard to imagine how this small team of men achieved this epic adventure.

Onwards, we travelled to our home for the next two days at The Royal Hotel Ventnor, a splendid Victorian hotel set above the stunning cliffs. After a delicious dinner and a lot of fun on Saturday night, we gathered on Sunday morning to be briefed by Steve Wilson about the "Car Treasure Hunt" across the island. With notes in hand and a fair wind we all took off. We lost no couples



on the way, and everyone appeared to be still "married" as we arrived at the amazing HUT restaurant for lunch. Overlooking a calm sea to the shores of Lymington and in bright sunshine, we all enjoyed local seafood. Steve then announced the winners of the treasure hunt who were Andrew and Susan Cox, in their Aston Martin just narrowly ahead by only one mile from runners up David and Cara Wilson in their beautiful 1955 Austin Healey.

In the evening, we hit the local night spot called THE MET for tapas, live music and dancing. "Strictly" talent scouts could be seen lurking on the dance floor, eyeing up Allan and Annabel Westray and Andrew and Susan Cox as they let it go! An amazing end to a memorable weekend.

P&W Wood And The Rupert Marks Bugatti Collection

In October 10 of us visited P&A Wood, the renowned restorer of Rolls Royce's and Bentleys. Sparkling clean

workshops and a proud and enthusiastic team of skilled engineers combined with countless and meticulous hours of preparation is why P&A Wood is the best of best. It was hard to choose which one to take home.

The next day, we were guests of Rupert Marks to see his very personal collection of Bugatti's, hydroplanes, a gyrocopter and even a combine harvester. Rupert kept us all totally enthralled as he told us about what it was like to drive a 1902 Stanley steam car in the London to Brighton to racing a Bugatti type 59 grand prix car. Rupert really loves his cars and we did too.

The committee is already working hard on the 2025 programme which will be announced in due course.

If you like driving the open road, visiting places of interest with like-minded people, enjoy good food and fun company and would like to join the Club, please contact me:

finchpj@btinternet.com ■

SPORTING INTERESTS



The Distiller's Velo Club Spey 2 Day Challenge

Kenny MacKay Past Master 2019-2020

The Velo Club organised another great charity cycle run in Speyside in late August and were blessed with some amazing weather as they tackled a demanding two-day challenge.

A team of nine riders containing six Liverymen rode a total of 133 miles and climbed over 7,000 feet during the run which took them from a start at the recently opened Cabrach Distillery via an overnight stop in Nairn back to a finish at Glenfiddich Distillery with stops along the way at Dalmunach, Ballindalloch, Glen Moray and Auchroisk Distilleries and drive by views of many others.

Organised by new Liveryman Alan Winchester and velo veteran Charity Chair Grant Gordon the ride was, as always, a great chance to meet new friends and catch up with old. Liverymen Natasha Wilson, David Wilson, Scott Allen, Grant Gordon, Kenny MacKay, Alan Winchester were joined by Lawson Doe and William Spurgin (both previous participants) and this year's new addition Olympic Sailor Luke Patience.

A Silver medallist at the London Olympics, Luke commented in an interview afterwards:

"It surpassed all my expectations. Everyone has been really friendly. It was a privilege to be part of it. It combines my two passions: sport and whisky. It's why the whisky industry is such a cool thing."

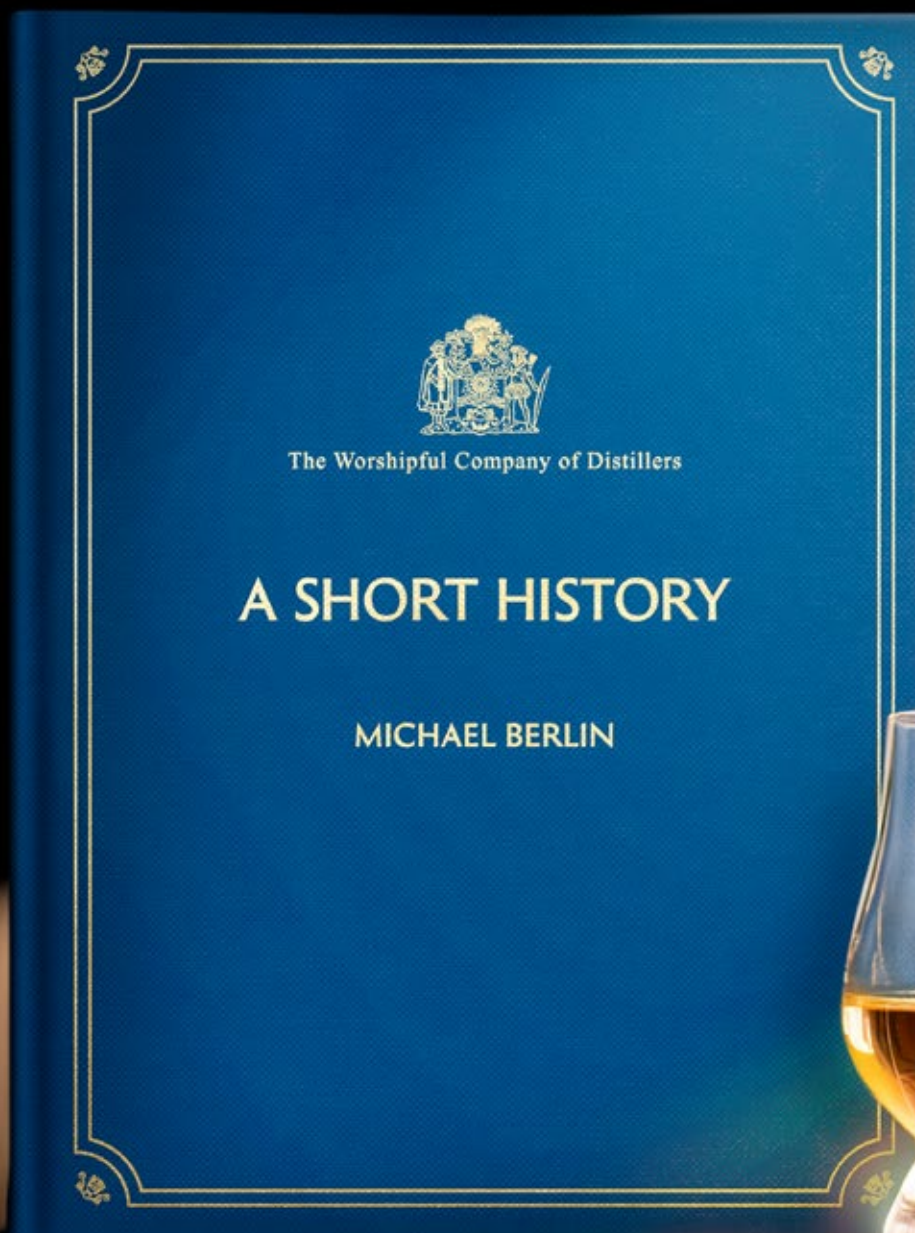
Back up was provided by Past Mistress Kathy MacKay and moral support and sustenance provided by

Scottish Chair Michael Urquhart and his wife Ailsa. Great thanks to all of them!

At the time of writing, the fundraising stood close to the target of £10,000 and represents another great effort on behalf of the Livery in raising money for The Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme. ■



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Meet the Renter Warden Kirsten Grant Meikle

I am delighted to be elected as Renter Warden of the Worshipful Company of Distillers and will be the first female to hold this position in the 350 years history of the Company.

I have been a member of the WCD since 2007 when my Uncle, David Grant was Master and since that time have held a number of positions within our family business, William Grant & Sons and currently working in Procurement. Previous to this, I worked for seven years with Matthew Clark in a variety of commercial and category roles.

Although based in Hampshire and London, I was brought up in Edinburgh and travel to Scotland on a regular basis both for both work and leisure where I still have a strong connection to the Scotch Whisky industry and the many great characters within it.

Since my time in the Distillers, I have seen the Company grow and change enormously with many more female and younger members coming on board and huge advances in our charitable, vocational and educational programmes.

I am very much looking forward to the year ahead. ■

Meet the New Master Nick Carr

Born in Hessle, East Yorkshire, I was brought up with an enthusiasm for the outdoors which included dinghy racing on the North Sea from the age of four and cycling across the Wolds of East Yorkshire and the North Yorkshire Moors from the age of 12 — staying in Youth Hostels when a coin and a phone box was the only way of letting ‘home’ know you had arrived safely. Summers ‘Swallows and Amazon’ style in the persistent rain of the Lake District completed the exposure to the outdoors by hiking, canoeing and swimming in all weather. I always enjoyed these activities building my self-reliance with the requisite resolve!

Gaining a BSc in Industrial Technology and Management at Bradford University,

I took up the invitation of a scholarship to become a Post Graduate Research Assistant working for two Professors at the Business School of Wright State University (now Ohio

State) in Dayton, Ohio. In between working on the reliability of parts for the USAF F14 Fighter Jet and lecturing to mature under graduates, I completed a two-year MBA with a focus on marketing. This led to my rewarding life-long career in the drinks industry starting with Bass Plc. Progressing through Brand Management of Lagers and Ales (Carling Black Label, Tennent’s Extra, Worthington Bitter and more). I then joined International Distillers and Vintners (IDV) in 1989 as a marketing manager.

Subsequent roles spanned local and global marketing and commercial positions within IDV, Seagram and Diageo. I was simply never bored, and my experience included strategic planning manager IDV Europe, marketing director roles in Greece, Spain and Japan, regional VP marketing Asia Pacific, global scotch portfolio director, global malts director and anti-counterfeit and global pricing director at Diageo. Throughout this,

I was lucky to work on many great brands with great people, brands including Smirnoff, Malibu, J&B, Baileys, Archers, Chivas, Martell and Scotch and Whisky innovations namely The Singleton, Windsor 17, Buchanan’s, Talisker, Johnnie Walker Double Black and Masterblend.

More recently I have enjoyed sharing my experience becoming an independent marketing consultant to clients including Heathrow Airport, Twining’s, Proximo (Cuervo Tequila) NOS (Portugal Telecom), Schweppes, Robbie Williams and many more. The variety is always stimulating.

Joining the Livery as a Diageo Corporate Freeman in 2012 I then stayed on as an enthusiastic Liveryman from 2014 and until recently was secretary of our dynamic car club.

Being very involved in the various Vocational Training and Education initiatives, is really rewarding as we as a team regularly deliver full day



seminars to students of our education partners at the Institute of Brewing and Distilling, the MSc. Distilling Course at Herriot Watt University and members of the Gin Guild. Participating in the rapidly growing mentor programme is a pleasure along with supporting the work of our Industry and Membership and Marketing Committees. I would urge anyone to try the “joy of giving back” (time or money!)

Our Livery has made amazing progress in the last few years transforming ourselves from being a relatively small charity giver to one which now gives 30 times more than just a few years ago – now at over £1m per year. The biggest thanks go to all the teams and selfless volunteers that have made this possible. We can rightly be proud as our charity contributions now “transform the lives” of so many young people.

I would also like to extend my personal thanks to our Immediate Past Master Lorne Mackillop who has led us brilliantly this last year and is a privilege to know and work with.

We have an opportunity to further capture this transformative power of our friendships and passion. My theme is “raising our relevance” as we aim to be, and be seen as, the most dynamic Livery Company adapting to, and fit for, the 21st century. Relevance to our industry will enable us to continue to grow our good charity and other works. We can significantly enhance our relevance and connectivity to one another by sharing our skills and knowledge much more. Not only can we help each other much more than we do but also our military affiliates, our charitable beneficiaries, and the wider industry — building the bond between all of us.

Encouraging the richness that diversity brings will enhance all our

experiences and generate great new ideas as we aim to better reflect the multi-cultural global and diverse industry we are at the epicentre of.

Finally, by raising the understanding of our Livery we can be proud of what we do and communicate it widely.

In any spare time, should I have any, I will continue to be a keen dinghy sailor, skier and a hopeful golfer!

Thank you so much for your support to Louise and myself. Louise a teacher, comes from Natal in South Africa and we live in South West London not far from the wonderful City of London. Our son Thomas was born in Tokyo and is passionate about golf and cars — now working for Jaguar land Rover.

It is a great honour to become Master of this fantastic Livery and represent the industry which we all share a passion for. ■

FELLOWSHIP

The Installation Dinner

Bill Collier Assistant Clerk

On a slightly cold 21 November, 153 Distillers and their guests came together in the warmth of Vinters' Hall to witness the installation of the Company's new Master, Nicholas Carr. Alongside the new Master, Daniel Szor was sworn in as Upper Warden, Vincent Keavney as Middle Warden and Kirsten Grant Meikle as Renter Warden.

The Court also thanked Charles Minoprio, who stood down as the Father of the Court.

At the reception, we were treated to a choice of Henriot Brut Champagne NV or No 3 London Dry Gin. The Beale kept us in good order and gavelled up for dinner. The newly minted Master, Wardens and principal guests then processed into the Hall (the long way round), after which the Immediate Past Master, Lorne Mackillop, gave a toast in whisky (Jonny Walker Gold Label) acclaiming the new Master. Our Chaplain gave his first Installation

Dinner Reflection and Grace, and the evening festivities began.

We were treated to a sumptuous menu of Salmon & Lamb, which was finished with a rich and warm chocolate fondant pudding. This was all accompanied by an outstanding selection of wines (thanks to our Wines and Spirit Committee); I've attached a copy of the menu for full details.

The beadle then brought us together once more with the strike of three gavels, the Master rose and proposed the Toasts to the King, The Royal Family and the Lord Mayor and City. We enjoyed both Graham's 2012 Port and The Singleton of Dufftown 12 year old Single Malt Speyside, a nod to the new Master's career. The Company then partook in the passing of the Loving Cup ceremony — with a beautiful Bloomsbury Sloe Gin from the Thames Distillers in the cups, and daggers were drawn!

Liveryman Beanie Espey welcomed our guests, including members of the

Master's immediate family, our seven new Liverymen, and our new Corporate Freeman.

The Master's guest speaker, Alastair Barron, A Past Master of the Merchant Adventurers, replied and gave a fascinating and humorous insight into the Master's life before work and his career, which had seen him travel around the world before returning home to the UK.

The Master's speech highlighted the Company and Charity's excellent work over the year, and how he wanted to champion this in the year ahead. This concluded the formal part of the evening, and in true form, the Beadle brought the dinner to a close with his gavel, but not before the Master invited guests to join him in the Drawing room for a stirrup cup. With the cold evening setting in and the night's festivities concluded, 153 Distillers and guests collected their coats very orderly and made their way home. ■



A portrait of Aaron Jeewood, a man with short dark hair and a slight smile, wearing a dark blue polo shirt. He is standing in front of a white wall with a wooden shelf holding various bottles in the background.

People of the Livery

Aaron Jeewood

Where is home?

I was born in North London a few years after both my parents had emigrated from Mauritius. I spent almost all my life studying and living in Hertfordshire, Leicester, and London, but that changed three years ago when I moved to Dubai with my partner.

What makes up your working day?

I design and develop digital experiences. Working within a media company I oversee the design and development of our new websites and help manage the creative campaigns of some of our clients. It's a fast-paced world and always rewarding when I get to see my designs in production!

How did you get here?

As with most people, not in a direct route! Having studied architecture at university I moved into product design in London, helping to create and design some exceptional items in silver and gold for Mappin & Webb, a leading jewellers and silversmith and warrant holding company. With a passion for digital technology, I adapted my practical skills to the online world and the move halfway around the world ended up being the perfect moment to fully pursue digital design.

Best bits of the job?

I love making digital experiences feel natural to users. Having someone use something I designed and be so

comfortable with how it feels that they do not notice it is the best praise I can get!

What are your aspirations?

It would be amazing to use my skills in the drinks industry. I hope my career path lets me make an impact in some of the amazing spirits brands out there.

Your experience of Livery life?

Although I am not from a traditional spirits background, I fully embrace Livery life and try to give back as much as I can. I am on the marketing committee and help with social media activity and website posts. The Distillers are an incredibly fun and welcoming community and whilst I no longer get to as many functions as I would like, I thoroughly enjoy the ones I can make it to.

What you don't know about me

I previously designed trophies for Royal Ascot. This amazing privilege was capped off by the fact that Queen Elizabeth II's horse, Estimate, won my design of the Queen's Vase and Gold Cup trophies in subsequent years. This was the first time a reigning monarch had ever won the Gold Cup at Royal Ascot and incredible that the Queen ended up with two of the designs she approved in her trophy cabinet! ■

List of appointments 2024

Court Assistants

Ewan Lacey

Freemen (By Redemption)

Ian Chang
Koji Shimako

Liverymen

Euan Campbell	Mark Eames	Norman Murray Cbe
Ray Clynick	Fergus Hartley	Ruchira Neotia
Christopher Coates	Jaspreet Hodgson	Manish Rungta
Jane Cumming	Samantha Kirk	Ciaran Russell
Andrew Dane	Naomi Laurie	Veronica Spofforth
Jolyon Dunn	Kirsty Mckerrow	Claire Warner
Alexander Driver	Benjamin Murphy	Alan Winchester

Corporate Freeman

Nuno Teles

Stewards

Simon Collins
Marcus Pickering
Ed Pilkington
Stephen Russell

In Memoriam

Sir George Bull
Patrick Darlington
Ross Gibbons
John Mccarthy
Francis Pearson
Edward (Ted) Palmer



The Worshipful Company of Distillers

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