



The Guild Newsletter

June 2025



2024-2025 MASTER PATRICIA MURFIN-SNOOK

Master's Update

Dear Guildmen, Apprentices and Friends,

It's been a busy and proud season for the Guild. First, a very warm welcome to our new Clerk, Grace Abba. Since joining in May, Grace has handled her handover brilliantly and brings a calm, proactive approach which we're lucky to have. We are now looking for Deputies to support the roles—if you're looking to get more involved, it's a rewarding opportunity with a valuable boost to your CV.

I speak on behalf of the Guild to extend heartfelt thanks to Biagio, who served as Clerk for nearly a decade. When I asked Past Masters to reflect on his contribution, my inbox was inundated. Biagio has been a constant friend to many, and I'm delighted he accepted our invitation to become an Honorary Guildman.

Over the past few months I have represented the Guild across the City: the Old Collyerians' Dinner, where Collyer's future as an academy was shared, and the grand Stonemasons' Banquet at Mansion House, thanks to a Past Master's invitation.

Our recent tour of Sandhurst, arranged by Jack Armitstead, was a real standout. A personal highlight was spotting my great-great-grandfather's gold naval sword—though I wasn't allowed to take it home! In true City Guild and Livery fashion, while we can't brandish swords in the City anymore, we can still Drive Sheep.

We've secured 20 tickets for the Sheep Drive in September - reserve yours now.

Chris Cullen and Will Jackson hosted a fantastic Speaker Series event, and we look forward to more. Please also save the date for our Installation Dinner on 27 October at Goldsmiths' Hall—one of the City's most glamorous venues. It will be an unforgettable evening.

Thanks to Julia Tucker for her support of new members and delivering a smooth handover to Grace, and to Hannah Moxon for making the Membership Committee possible.

We're delighted to now have our new Declarations Book in hand—a beautiful new volume in our Guild's history. Thank you to all who sponsored it.

A warm welcome to our newest members. Please do drop me an email at trish@theguildofmercersscholars.com and let me know how you're getting on and how we can support you.

I look forward to seeing our members virtually at the Annual Meeting next week (you can attend online too).

Kindest Regards,

Trish

Trish@theguildofmercersscholars.com

Welcoming Our New Clerk – Grace Abba

We are delighted to formally announce that at April's Court Meeting, the Guild of Mercers' Scholars voted unanimously to appoint Grace Abba as our new Clerk.

Many of you will know Grace from her exceptional work as Master of the Guild of Young Freemen, where she brought energy, warmth, and clarity to all she touched. Her appointment marks a new chapter for the Guild, and we are thrilled to welcome her into this pivotal role.

Grace will also be leading the upcoming transition of the Membership Clerk role, as Julia Tucker prepares to step back this October after a phenomenal six years of dedicated service. Julia's contribution has been immense—bringing in over 110 new Apprentices and Guildmen—and we'll celebrate her impact in full nearer the time.

In the meantime, Grace has already made her mark with her proactive, thoughtful approach and collaborative spirit. She's a joy to work with, and we're confident her stewardship will help the Guild continue to flourish.



If you're interested in supporting Grace, the Guild is looking for a team of deputies to assist her in delivering on our ambitions. If you'd like to contribute to the running of the Guild and work alongside a fantastic Clerk, we encourage you to get in touch.

Please join us in extending a very warm welcome to Grace.

clerk@theguildofmercersscholars.com

Get Involved – Join a GMS Subcommittee

We're looking for committed Guildmen to step up and play an active role in the Guild of Mercers' Scholars.

Joining a subcommittee as a Court Assistant is a great way to gain experience, grow your network, and enhance your CV.

We ask for around an hour a month, and around two hours each quarter if attending Court (which can be done remotely).

We're seeking Court Assistants for:

- Deputy Clerk & Deputy Membership Clerk – ideal for those interested in future leadership roles.
- Events Subcommittee – help us plan and deliver standout events.

Interested? Get in touch – this is your Guild, and your contribution matters.

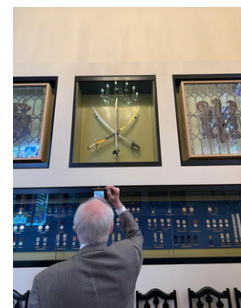


Sandhurst Visit – A Truly Honourable Day Out

A heartfelt thank you to Court Assistant Jack Armitstead for organising our recent visit to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. The tour was full of insight, inspiration, and history, and deeply resonant for many Guildmen given the strong military backgrounds held within our ranks. It was a privilege to walk through the halls where leadership, discipline, and duty are at the core of daily life.

One of the many highlights—and one of sentimental value—was the opportunity to view The Masters' forefathers' beautifully presented gold naval sword, awarded in recognition of humanitarian service. Regrettably, Sandhurst wouldn't let Trish take it home.

Thank you to all who joined us for this special day, and once again to Jack, whose efforts ensured the event ran smoothly and meaningfully from start to finish. We would love to see even more of you at future events. Your attendance and enthusiasm are what keep the Guild's community spirit thriving. If there are specific places you'd like to visit, topics you'd enjoy exploring, or ideas you'd be keen to share, please do get in touch. After all, this is your Guild.



Save the Date: Installation Dinner 27th October 2025 at Goldsmiths' Hall

Join us for what promises to be the highlight of the Guild calendar—the 2025 Installation Dinner to welcome Christopher Cullen as Master, held in the incredible surrounds of Goldsmiths' Hall, one of the most glamorous venues in the City of London.

This Grade I listed masterpiece will provide the perfect setting for a wonderful evening of celebration, connection, and tradition. With a drinks reception, exquisite dinner, and performances from our Mercers' Schools, the evening will bring together the very best of the Guild spirit. Whether you're reconnecting with fellow Guildmen or bringing along guests to experience the magic for the first time, this is your moment to be part of something truly special.

Mark your diaries now—and prepare for an evening to remember.

Save the date: Monday 27 October 2025 // Formal invitation and ticket details to follow.

Renter Warden Update

In 2025 the GMS Membership Committee have approved quite a number of apprentice and direct Guildman applications. The apprentice applications were all of high quality and will ensure the continued flow of young, diverse talent into the Guild continues. All will be excellent additions to the Guild.

Direct entry applications include someone with a lengthy and successful career in financial and operational management with experience across a wide range of business environments, and a storied academic with a wide variety of publications to his name. Such people joining the Guild serve as an apt reminder of the rich tapestry of skills and experience that we have within the organisation. Long may it continue!

In mid February we held a virtual engagement talk aimed at current and prospective apprentices. The primary focus that was centred around the experiences of two recent recipients of a GMS apprentice grant.

The apprentices described how they navigated the application process, how they used the funds and what they learned. In the examples presented the grants were used to support some work experience at a legal firm and in achieving a professional qualification.

Many thanks to Libby and Owen for sharing their experiences and fielding lots of questions in a vibrant and enthusiastic session. If you would like to know more a recording was made and is available [HERE](#). I encourage all apprentices to consider how they might use a grant and put a business case together.

Chris Cullen

Chris@theguildofmercersscholars.com

Mercers' Grant for Apprentices

To apply for the Mercers' Grant, please [click here](#) to download and complete the application form, ensuring your project has the support of your parent or guardian, and your Apprentice Master or School Court Assistant

Commissioning a New Declaration Book

We are delighted to share that, thanks to the generous support of our members, we have now commissioned a brand-new Declarations Book—the next volume in the Guild’s history. This marks a wonderful milestone in our ongoing commitment to honouring tradition while supporting the future of our Guild community.

An incredible total of £625 was raised, and has gone toward the creation of a beautifully bound and bespoke record that will proudly carry the Declarations of our newest Guildmen, Apprentices, Court Members. The names written into its pages will now sit alongside decades of Guild history, recorded with the same care and reverence shown to those who came before.

The book itself has been beautifully crafted by the talented team at Black Cat Bindery, whose attention to detail and exceptional workmanship has resulted in a piece that is as functional with heavy weight pages and it is truly beautiful. It is a fitting continuation of the volume already in our keeping, and will one day hold its place in our archives itself. The previous Declaration Book now sits in the Guild Archive in Mercers’ Hall.

To all those who donated—thank you. Your names are acknowledged in the book itself, a lasting tribute that quite literally becomes part of the Guild’s living memory. It is thanks to your support that we are able to preserve and elevate our traditions while continuing to welcome the next generation into our fold.

We look forward to seeing the first new names added at the next Declaration Ceremony and Membership Court.

