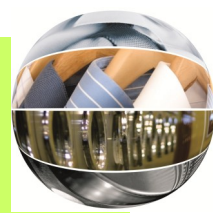




**GUILD
OF CLEANERS
& LAUNDERERS**

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Guild of Cleaners and Launderers



September 2013 E-Bulletin

**Guild Wetherby
Seminar
Sunday 27th
October 2013**

**At the Murcure
Hotel,
Leeds Road,
Wetherby, Yorks.
At 10.00 am**

**Contact Secretariat
For bookings**

Guild Membership Renewal? If you have not already paid your Membership Subscription for the year 2013/2014 it is now seriously overdue. You can pay on line by visiting the Guild Website at www.gcl.org.uk, or alternatively, Telephone 01698 322669

Master of the College of Fellows Brian Pearce who also has a seat on the Guild's Council.



Brian is a partner in ITAS international consultants

**Guild of Cleaners
and Launderers**

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Obituary for Peter Ross

It is with sadness that we hear of the death of a prominent launderer, and London Centre member, Peter Ross, owner of Watford Laundry and Dry Cleaners at the age 64.

Peter comes from a long line of successful launderers who have played a dominant role in our industry and who have also been keen innovators. In the early days of the Xeros system of waterless cleaning Peter had welcomed trials at his Watford laundry and this followed a long tradition of his family being early in trying out new and interesting ways of improving technology, and this was his way of following on from the tradition of his late father, Michael Ross, and of previous generations, of pioneering. They both shared a passion for the Guild and encouraged membership amongst management employees many of whom carried on to become fellows of the Guild long after leaving Watford as careers took them to other employment.

The Ross family are held in great respect by their peers in the laundry business and the industry has lost, not only an innovator, but an advocate of high quality and a true friend and a gentleman. Watford laundry has always remained at its premises in Sydney Road, where it was started by the Ross family in 1907, and it is one of the largest employers in the town. Peter's Great Grandfather, John (Albert), started the business, after working for another Watford laundry, and started the tradition of innovation by having a water well drilled on site to enable them to extract their own water. John ran the company until he was 78 years old and left it to his son Robert and wife Edith, but she also was no ordinary woman and was well ahead of her time being the first woman to have a seat on what was then known as the Institute of British Launderers. She ran the company during the Second World War and her sharp business sense made her a formidable and respected figure in the world of commerce. Eventually the company was handed to Peter's father Michael Ross, who saw it through one of the most difficult transitional periods of the company's history during the 1980's when the age of the washing machine heralded a new era. New technology in home appliances meant the domestic market was diminishing as scores of launderers in the region went out of business.

Innovation was synonymous with Watford Laundry as Peter's father Michael was then one of the first to install a tunnel washer when he took delivery of a Baker Perkins Jaxons continuous flow Streamline 7-stage machine, which operated successfully for many years. In 1975 the laundry installed its first batch tunnel washer which was a 12-stage machine that offered operational efficiencies that many small and medium sized laundries might struggle to match today. Peter then decided, in 2010, to install a new Girbau TBS-50 batch washer system comprising a TBS-50 10-stage tunnel washer, and SPR-50 press and five ST-100 tumble dryers and they now produce over 400,000 items of laundry every week, the prestigious Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, a distinguished and prestigious client. Quality was always important to the family and Watford Launderers was one of the few companies to retain a collar press when most others had had them removed to make room for other pieces of equipment. This type of press has not been made since the 1950's and is so scarce for laundries to still have one in operation the company received orders from around the world, and it was once reported that a lot of High Court Judges asked them to clean and press their collars. It was also reported that "There is a judge, who now lives in New Zealand, who cannot find anyone who can press his collars properly, so he sends them (to Watford) to be pressed."

Watford Launderers employ around 180 people and is still regarded as one of the biggest employers in the town, boasting a good track record for retaining their employees for a long time, with some working there all, or almost all, of their working life. It is a successful independent laundry business that specialises in servicing London's most prestigious and demanding four and five-star hotels and it currently produces around 400,000 pieces every week, predominantly flatwork, and by maintaining the highest standards of quality and service it has developed a very loyal customer base. Previous to taking over the business from his father Peter had been working for the company for most of his life and he ran the Watford Launderers with his wife Penny and they have no children. The now late Peter and wife Penny live in Rickmansworth and have known each other since they were six years old and lived on opposite sides of the road in Cassiobury Park Avenue while they were growing up. Wife Penny also went to Northfields School in Watford with Peter's sister. Peter and Penny married in 1975. Penny is currently the company Managing Director.

Peter was not only a Guild member but also a Worshipful Company of Launderer's Member, and a supporter of the TSA. We understand the funeral will be on Friday the 13th September at Chorley Wood.

Stain Removal Training Course

Being organised now is a Sunday morning training session in Reigate, Surrey, at the business of Churchill Dry Cleaners, on the 22nd of September, for those who want to improve their skills and abilities. Interested in attending? Pass on your details to the secretariat soon as places are limited at only £75 including lunch tea/coffee and biscuits. Bookings on a strict first come first served basis. Professional Guild Trainer in attendance.

The Guild have available a series of technical books for sale all written by members with experience in the business. To get a copy all you need to do is to contact the Guild's secretariat at enquiries@gcl.org.uk or telephone 01698 322669 or visit the Guild's web site www.gcl.org.uk

Good News! At the Guild's AGM in June the President announced that the Guild's Amber Alert Service was available to members with an e-mail address registered with the Guild. If you are not receiving a monthly Amber Alert via your e-mail please contact the secretariat on enquiries@gcl.org.uk and they will be happy to register you so that the Guild can send on to you advance warnings of problems with fabrics and garments that are giving other members difficulties and it may save you money also by helping you to avoid these problems occurring for you. This month we will be publishing the sixth in the series.

- Date for your diary
- February 23rd 2014
- Guild Professional Clothes Care Conference at the Belfrey Hotel Mellors Way Nottingham NG8 6PY

10.00 am start