

# Gildhall Aews



Fun in the bouncy castle, Garden Party 2024



THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL
OF THE
LEICESTER GILD OF FREEMEN



Number 103

August 2024

Armed Forces Day June 2024

## GILD OF FREEMEN OF THE CITY OF LEICESTER



#### Number 103

August 2024





LEICESTER GILD OF FREEMEN



Patron: Colonel Robert Martin OBE DL President: The Lord Mayor of Leicester

#### OFFICERS 2023-2024

Master: M. Ballard Deputy Master: L. A. Roffee Clerk: (VACANT) Chamberlain: (VACANT)

#### WARDENS

N. Cave, J. D. Lewitt, S. Freeman, K. Mardon (co-opted) & Jean Mardon

#### GILDHALL NEWS August 2024

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#### **Editor's Comments**

"Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans."

- John Lennon



Well, it seems that summer has finally arrived – thank you Mother Nature, better late than never.

Both the Gild and the Board have been kept busy over the last few months with various events, including the Damask Rose Ceremony, Armed Forces Day, a Making Free Ceremony, the Garden Party and Afternoon Tea with the Lord Mayor.

As usual, thank you everyone for your contributions - it's always good to hear from you. If you'd like to share your memories or something about your family history, or perhaps you've got a pastime you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you – so please put pen to paper, or fingers to keyboard. My contact details are on page 25.

Val Moore

#### Report by Malcolm Ballard, Master of the Gild



We have had very mixed weather with heavy rain and strong winds and a few sunny days (I don't think we will have hose pipe bans this summer).

The Gild with robed Freemen have been invited to functions by the Lord Mayor, the first of which on the 16<sup>th</sup> May was the Election of the new Lord Mayor at a council meeting in the town hall, I was unable to attend due to illness.

On Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June we were invited to the Damask Rose Ceremony which started at the Town Hall and five Robed Freemen processed with the Lord Mayor to the Crown and Thistle pub (this is now known as O'Neills).

The Lord Mayor was given the rent for the year of Old Pennies and a Damask Rose.

On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> of June we were invited to the Armed Forces Day



Damask Rose Ceremony

Parade where the Troops marched from Belgrave Gate to Jubilee Square and a Drum Head service was held; six robed Freemen attended.

On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July myself (representing the Gild) and Lynn Roffee (representing the Deputies) were invited to a swearing in ceremony which was held in the Mayor's Parlour in the Town Hall. The Freeman, who formerly lived in Leicester, was visiting his family and now lives in Tasmania and he was able to get the service performed whilst here.

We have two further swearing in services in October which we have been invited to attend.

I am hoping to arrange some interesting activities for those who would like to join in, along with a Fish and Chip Supper and Afternoon Tea. We could have games evenings or day visits out that people would look forward to taking part in. I would be grateful for any suggestions that Freemen, their families and friends would be interested in either setting up and or taking part in, or just coming along. Maybe things like card playing clubs and Bingo evenings, keep-fit and other activities that can take place at the community centre at Freemen's Holt or in and around Leicester and neighbouring villages and towns. Craft days and evenings such card making, knitting sewing etc., even a garden club for the enthusiasts. Of course we could include trips further away for a day out too.

Please feel free to make any suggestions which you feel would be interesting and fulfilling for yourself and or others to enjoy. Anything within reason will be considered. So get your thinking caps on!

You can either phone or text me on 07775791144 or write on a note and drop it into the office at any time for me to collect.

I hope you are all keeping well and enjoying this lovely weather, do keep yourselves safe in the sun, drink plenty of water and cover yourself if you are sitting in the sun.

Regards to Everyone Malcolm Ballard Master of The Gild

#### Report by Chair of the Board, Lynn Roffee



I hope this edition of the Gildhall News finds you well and in good health. You will see an excellent article on the Garden Party written by one of our Deputies, Sue Pallett. This was the first Garden Party event Sue had organised, and I would like to thank her on behalf of all the Freemen for the effort she put into making the event a tremendous success. Thanks must also go to the Garden Party Sub-Committee (who assisted Sue) which

comprised Adam, Sharon, Deputy Robert Staines, Lesley Daniell (Deputy Barry Daniell's wife) and Residents Barbara Bramley, Jane Laurence and Val Moore. The Garden Party Sub-Committee had met regularly over a period of months to plan the event.

#### **Afternoon Tea Event**

On 17<sup>th</sup> July we hosted the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Mike Sandys DL, and the Lord Mayor of Leicester, Councillor Bhupen Dave, and Lady Mayoress Usha Dave for an Afternoon Tea Event with the Deputies. Two of the Residents who were involved as part of the Garden Party Sub Committee, Barbara and Val, also attended. The afternoon tea event is held annually to raise awareness of the activities of the Charity.

The Lord Mayor was presented with a cheque for £200 for his nominated charity during his year in office which is PASIC (Parents Association for Seriously III Children).

Helen Lee-Smith, a representative from LOROS, also attended the event and was presented with a cheque for £1,500.00 which was the funds raised from the Garden Party.

The Lord Mayor was presented with a cheque for £200 for his nominated charity during his year in office which is PASIC (Parents Association for Seriously Ill Children).



#### **Making Free Ceremony**

A Making Free Ceremony was held at the Town Hall on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July for Daniel Wright who was visiting from Tasmania. Daniel was accompanied by his son Samuel, and they were visiting family members during their month's holiday. The Civic Office kindly held this special one-off ceremony for Daniel.



Making Free Ceremony 8<sup>th</sup> July

Congratulations
Daniel!

L-R:
Malcolm Ballard,
Daniel Wright,
Lord Mayor,
Lynn Roffee and
Kamal Adatia
(City Barrister)

#### Survey

The Board would like to thank everyone who responded to the survey. A separate letter regarding the survey is enclosed with this edition of the Gildhall News.

#### Projects on the Estate 2024

Deputies completed the Annual Inspection of the estate in April. At the inspection, Deputies decide and prioritise which areas of the estate require attention and improvements.

You will hopefully have noticed the gates, railings, lampposts, and office cladding which have all been painted, which look much smarter for it. We recently improved the picnic area which overlooks the river; a new table and seats have been purchased, and festoon lights have been installed – we hope this will be a beautiful spot for our residents to enjoy on the summer evenings, with a glass of wine or two. Less rain and more sunshine would be a bonus!

The upcoming larger projects include renovating a bungalow wet room, replacing all the lighting bollards, replacing the flat roof of a bungalow, a full renovation of a vacant bungalow and renovating the shower room and guest rooms in the office building. Other smaller issues across the estate will also be dealt with during the coming months.

#### **Bungalow Vacancies**

We have a standard bungalow available which is ready to be allocated. Please contact the office if you would like more information. You are more than welcome to view the bungalow and estate.

From June 2024 the Monthly Maintenance Contributions will be:

Standard Bungalow - £174.68 Extended Bungalow - £244.51

#### **Charitable Payments**

We currently have two people who receive a monthly Charitable Payment. If you would like to apply for a Charitable Payment or want more information, please contact the office.

#### **Becoming a Freeman of the City of Leicester**

It is important that we encourage eligible family members to take their Freedom and to become involved with the Charity. This will ensure continuation of our traditions and activities in the years to come.

To support an application, information about ancestors and the date they took their freedom is required depending on how far back you need to go. This is not onerous as there are Registers which are in alphabetical order, so it is easy to find your family name. You might already know the relevant details and just interested to learn how far back your ancestors first obtained their freedom and what their occupations were. If a generation or two have missed taking their freedom, details of your Freemen ancestors will/may be in one of the Registers of the Freemen of Leicester in the following editions:

- 1196–1770 including apprentices sworn before successive Mayors of Leicester and enrolled for certain periods, 1646–1770.
- 1770–1930 including apprentices sworn before successive Mayors and enrolled 6 August 1770 to 23 February 1926

There are few of these Registers in general circulation, however there are copies held at Leicester Central Library, Bishop Street, Leicester. The Registers cannot be borrowed, and you must ask to see these two Registers as they are not located on the shelves.

There are two more recent Registers which are available to view on the shelves in the Leicester Central Library and The Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society (LRFHS), whose Research Center is based in Every Street, Leicester (Facing the Town Hall). Non-members can use the Research Centre for a small fee. These two Registers can also be purchased, and you should contact the Office at the Holt if you want one.

One Register dates from 1931–1985 and costs £3.50, and the other Register dates from 1986–1996 and costs £2.50. Stocks are low.

The University of Leicester, David Wilson Library also holds a copy of the 1196–1770 Register. However, a Readers card is necessary to access the reading room to view the Register.

The State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia also holds a copy of 1196–1770. Anyone visiting the library can access the Register for use in the library.

It is important before you travel to any of the above locations that you check opening times, access, and availability of the required register. The information above is accurate at the time of going to press.

Adam and Sharon also have access to the Registers. They cannot undertake research of your family history but can look up dates when your ancestors were made free if necessary.

Any application to become a Freeman of Leicester should be made to the Member & Civic Support Office:

0116 4540020 lord.mayor@leicester.gov.uk Member & Civic Support Office Leicester City Council, City Hall, 3rd Floor 115 Charles Street Leicester, LE1 1FZ

#### **Becoming at Deputy (Trustee)**

We are always in need more Deputies (Trustees) to join the Board to enable the Charity to continue implementing the aims and objectives contained in the mission statement and for its on-going management. Can you spare a few hours to attend committee meetings held each month on a Monday evening each month, plus 5 or 6 further times a year which includes quarterly Board meetings. We know people have busy lives — but volunteering can be very rewarding, and you would be supporting your heritage to continue for future generations. We need people who are willing to make decisions and manage the Charity for the benefit of the Freemen of the City of Leicester, their widows, widowers, and future generations of Freemen. Our current Board of thirteen people come from a wide range skills, knowledge and experience and work well as a team. Please consider joining us — a warm welcome awaits you.

If you are resident in Leicestershire, you can apply to be appointed as a Deputy (Trustee). Further information is available from Adam or Sharon, at The Holt.

#### **Meeting Dates 2024**

The Board Meeting dates for the rest of this year are as follows: Wednesday  $11_{...}^{th}$  September, 19:30

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 19:30

All Freemen are very welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings. The meetings are held in the Community Centre at Freemen's Holt. Freemen can request copies of the minutes of these meetings - please contact the office if you would like a copy.

#### **Contact Details**

Telephone - 0116 2834017 Email - office@leicesterfreemen.com Address – 32 Freemen's Holt, Aylestone, Leicester, LE2 8NH Website – www.leicesterfreemen.co.uk

> Take care. Lynn Roffee Chair of the Board

#### **Programme of Future Events**

Board Meeting Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30pm

Annual Pantomime Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024, starting at 7pm (see booking form, centre pages)

Annual Freemen's Carol Concert at St Andrew's Church on Monday 16th December 2024 at 7pm

(Also see Derek Austin's report on page 23 for other events around the country)

If you have any suggestions for what you would like to see in future editions of the Gildhall News, or a story you would like to contribute, please write to the Editor

## Freemen's Garden Party June 9th 2024



Sue Pallett

The biennial Garden Party was held on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June and despite chilly weather, it was a very successful day raising an amazing £1500.00 for LOROS. Quite a feat in three hours! LOROS had their own representative selling raffle and lottery tickets, they managed to sell 83 raffle tickets and four people signed up to their lottery.

Whilst everything was carefully planned and organised, sadly the sun did not behave and come out to play. Lynn Roffee formally declared the Garden Party open and almost 400 people, Freemen and

their families, attended with only a very small number put off by the weather, thankfully. Brian Roffee was on hand to take photographs which are included in this edition, thank you Brian.

The purpose of the Garden Party is to bring the community of Freemen and their families together. We hope over the years Freemen will acquire a connection and fondness with Freemen's Holt. It is an opportunity to showcase Freemen's Holt to potential bungalow applicants and encourage Freemen to become Deputies. We also hope it will encourage eligible family members of Freemen to take their Freedom to ensure our traditions and activities are passed on to future generations.

Steve Brittain's band Sum Fing Else and singer Sue Eato provided excellent musical entertainment throughout the afternoon. Peter Staines kept those indoors entertained playing his Barrel Organ, thank you Peter, I hope your arm has recovered now?! Sue Freeman was on hand to share information about the Gild, answer any questions and had Gild mer-



Music from Sum Fing Else

chandise for sale. All Gild items are listed in the Gildhall News and can be ordered at any time. Thank you Sue, I hope you managed to gain some information about the 'missing Freemen?'

Fun and laughter rang out across the lawn from the children totally enthralled watching the Punch and Judy show, who also provided balloon modelling, and I saw many a 'sausage balloon dog' around and about. The roving magician "The Great Adamos" wowed the guests performing magic tricks and Sam, the face painter, was busy all afternoon transforming cherubs into all sorts of creatures.



Sweets and cartons of juice were provided for the children to keep their energy levels up for the bouncy castle, coconut shy, Giant Jenga and Connect 4, so these disappeared fairly quickly!



Peter & Jean Bates served the strawberries & cream

In the Community Centre, Peter and Jean Bates were kept busy serving cakes, cookies, strawberries and cream, whilst Lesley Daniel quenched everyone's thirst with much needed teas and coffees. Thank you all for your help and support and also to those who helped Lesley out in the kitchen too. There were constant queues for the hog roast, which is provided for all guests and also for the ice cream van, both proved very popular again.

Linda Norman cultivated plants during the early part of the year for sale on the day, all of which she sold along with some plants donated by Robert and Judy Staines. Linda was very glad to get her conservatory back, thank you Linda, I saw many people walking about with plants purchased from your stall and I'm sure they will provide much pleasure in gardens, baskets and containers. Robert Staines provided the PA system and the gazebo for the band, both gratefully received so thank you Robert.



Janet & Pauline ran the tombola stall

Tombola prizes had been donated during the last eight months by residents and deputies, which we were extremely grateful for. Again, very popular with attendees, many seen walking about with their prizes. Thank you to volunteers Janet and Pauline for running the very busy Tombola stall so brilliantly.

Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society (AMAS) asked if they could have a stand to share historical and local information about their society. They enjoyed the day and were able to inform residents and visitors about the locality and its history.

We introduced three new competitions this year. Name the Bear. Guess the Number of Sweets and Treasure Hunt, which worked really well and raised a significant amount of money. Alfie Eldridge was the winner of Name the Bear, whose name turned out to be Wally. Sadly, he wasn't there to claim his prize and take the enormous bear home. Alfie, I hope you're enjoying him? There were 187 sweets in the iar and the winner of all of those sweets was Ollie Clarke, who guessed 184. Ollie, I hope your dentist will forgive us?! The treasure was buried beneath square D7 on the treasure island map and the winner of the 'treasure' was Joan Findley. well done.



Alfie, who won Wally the Rear



Val, Barbara & Maureen with Wally the Bear

Thank you to Barbara Bramley and Barry Daniell for manning the competitions stall and anyone else who helped out here too. Barbara totally fell for the gorgeously soft bear and she desperately wanted to win him, better luck next time or perhaps one for your Christmas list?!

The raffle was well supported and we were very grateful to all donors particularly Leicester City Football Club for donating the main prize, a tour of the KingPower Stadium for four people courtesy of Jane Laurence's contact – thank you Jane. Other prizes were donated by Asda, Jennos, Next, The Black Horse, Amoretti Cafe, Andy's Barbers, Walkers Crisps, whilst alcohol, a foot spa, chocolates and wine were donated by the Board and volunteers. Lucy Manship sold raffle tickets indoors, I was roving about outdoors and between us, we raised a third of the overall funds raised, thank you Lucy and to all of those who bought tickets, your generosity was overwhelming.

Dave Hill won the main prize from LCFC - I hope you enjoy the tour, I know they will look after you very well. Other prize winners were: Penny Durcan, Lisa Staines, Peter Bates, Joan Rowbottom, Davie (AMAS), Emily Lake, Nigel Jackson, Sue Freeman, David Smith and Maureen Dean, who won two prizes! So, as you can see, a great day was had by all and we look forward to seeing you all there again in 2026.



Lucky winner, Dave Hill with his raffle prize

Finally, none of the above happens by accident, it takes months of planning and organisation, so a big shout out for the Garden Party Planning Committee, who ensured you all had an enjoyable day, you know who you are. Special thanks to Adam and Sharon, who contributed and administered for the GPPC, keeping us on track and within budget, your support was invaluable.

Looking forward to the next one already......

Sue Pallett

Garden Party Planning Committee Chair

#### It's all in the prep...





Strawberries hulled and washed





Barry and Barbara on the competitions stall and Linda at the plant stall



Joe ready to commence with the coconut shy

#### Let the party begin!



Adam does some last minute checks, then Lynn Roffee declares the Garden Party open



Live music from Steve Brittain's band, Sum Fing Else; Peter Staines with his home-made barrel organ; and singer Sue with sax player Rob









#### There was fun and laughter...



Elijah amd Zendaya in the bouncy castle and Elise with her painted face









...and
Punch &
Judy

#### Refreshments in the community centre...



Peter & Jean Bates selling strawberries & cream

Helpers Lesley Daniell, Sue Freeman and Wayne Manship in the kitchen



Busy in the community centre



Tahlia Linnell & Lucy Manship selling raffle tickets



#### The lucky prize winners...







Joan Rowbottom



Jean Bates



Lisa Staines



Sue Pallett with Dave Hill

#### ...And more winners!









#### With help, advice and support ...



St John's Ambulance were on hand if medical support was needed...

...and the Local
Police Community
Support Officers
(PCSOs) joined us, as
did the Aylestone
Meadows
Appreciation Society
(AMAS)





A big
THANK YOU
to everyone
involved—you
helped to make it a
smashing day.

## News from the Freemen of England and Wales Association (FEW)

#### Forthcoming local events

If this Journal reaches you in time, the Warwick Court Leet are organizing a free pre-1990 Classic Car Show in Warwick's Market Place on 18<sup>th</sup> August from 8am to 5pm. Over 100 cars of all types were on display at previous events, so well worth a visit.

Coventry Guild's Annual Dinner and Installation of the Lord Mayor as Guild President had to be postponed – as Mayor making was delayed due to the death of a Councillor necessitating a local election. New date is 12<sup>th</sup> October, same venue: Coventry's Hearsall Golf Club at 33 Beechcroft Avenue CV56DF. Cost £42, choice of menu – and free parking. Contact is Guild Clerk Tony Archer on 01926-851439 or e-mail anthonaa@hotmail.com

The annual Coventry vs. Leicester Skittles match at Barnacle Village Hall has no date at present – as the Hall's contact is not answering calls currently. We are still hopeful an autumn event can be arranged, again Tony Archer will be the contact.

#### **FEW Annual General Meeting**

This national event is held by invitation from member Guilds & Courts Leet. Last year it was held in Lincoln, this year it will be in Berwick upon Tweed near the Scottish border. Leicester Gild's individual FEW members will have received full details with their Summer Journal. As the FEW President Charlotte Yeates tells me it's a six hour car journey from the midlands, I suspect it will be a bit out of range for most of us. Last time it was held in Leicester was 2007, and Gild Master Mick Ayres, organizer Roger Allen and team, held a memorable event including a visit to the National Space Centre.

#### Round up of other Area Member NewsAustin

Northampton Freemen Trustees unveiled a plaque in the town's General Hospital to Freemen John Mallard, the Professor who led the team that invented the MRI scanner.

Warwick Court Leet have organised several Beer & Cider festivals to raise funds for the restoration of the medieval Guildhall of Warwick. A recent Court Meeting there was probably the first since 1571 – when the Guildhall was commandeered by the Queen's favourite the Earl of Leicester as a home for old soldiers – now known as the Lord Leycester Hospital.

Henley-in-Arden Court Leet held their annual Court Leet day in June,

with robed officers sampling local purveyors of beer, fish, cheese and butter – and then a plastic duck race down the river.

Derek Austin



#### **GILD VACANCIES**

If you have a little time to spare, the Gild has the following vacancies, and would appreciate your support:

#### Chamberlain for the Leicester Gild of Freemen

We need a Gild Chamberlain to take over the Gild's book-keeping, and to organize social activities and outings for Gild Members and their families, residents of Freemen's Holt and, indeed, the Freemen of Leicester in general.

#### Clerk for the Leicester Gild of Freemen

A Gild Clerk is needed to liaise with Gild Members, the Lord Mayor's office and other Special Guests, to arrange events and meetings, and to pass on relevant information.

We also need someone to take over from Sue Freeman, who will no longer be responsible for selling the Gild Products.

Anyone interested should contact Malcolm Ballard on 07775 791 144 for an informal chat about what's involved

#### Have you changed your address?

In the event that is necessary to inform the Gild or the Board of any change in circumstances, the information should be sent to:

Leicester Freemen's Deputies 32 Freemen's Holt Old Church Street Aylestone Leicester LE2 8NH

Telephone: 0116 283 4017

E-mail: office@leicesterfreemen.com

Leicester Freemen website: www.leicesterfreemen.co.uk

## Copy for the next issue should reach the Editor by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Write with your suggestions and contributions to:

Val Moore 24 Freemen's Holt Leicester LE2 8NH

Telephone: 0116 429 3947

E-mail: valmoore2@gmail.com

Leicester Freemen website: www.leicesterfreemen.co.uk
Gild e-mail address: leicester\_gild@outlook.com
Facebook: search for "Leicester Gild"



The Lord Mayor visits Freemen's Holt at the Afternoon Tea Event, July 2024

Helen Lee-Smith, a representative from LOROS, attended the Afternoon Tea Event and was presented with a cheque for £1,500.00 which was the funds raised from the Garden Party





The Lord Mayor visits Freemen's Holt at the Afternoon Tea Event, July 2024



Damask Rose Ceremony June 2024

## The Gild of Freemen of the City of Leicester GILD PRODUCTS ORDER FORM

1.	Tie- navy	at £10.00 each	= £			
	- green	at £10.00 each	= £			
2.	Gild Scarf	at £15.00 each	= £			
3.	Lapel Badge	at £2.50 each	= £			
4.	Cufflinks	at £16.00 per pair	= £			
5.	Gild Pens	at £3.00 each	= £			
6.	6. Gown, made to measure,					
	(includes delivery)	price on request	= £			
7.	7. Register of the Freemen of Leicester 1986–1996 £2.50 each = £					
8.	Register of the Fre 1931–1985 £3.50	eemen of Leicester each	= £			
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Tel: 0116 286 1507 or email: romalc@btinternet.com
\*Please note that any orders at and above £20 will need to be sent by
recorded delivery at £7.25 (contact Malcolm for further details)

Malcolm Ballard, 5, Snowdrop Close, Narborough, Leics LE19 3YB

#### Booking Form: See over for booking information





#### FRIDAY 13th DECEMBER 2024

Join us for this year's pantomime ...



The Fairytale Castle is thrown into dismay when Princess Aurora's happiness is threatened by the nasty Fairy Carabosse. With her evil spell cast, the princess becomes destined to prick her finger on a spinning wheel and fall asleep for a hundred years. All spinning wheels are banished from the kingdom, but is this enough to save our Sleeping Beauty from her fate?

An array of colourful characters will try and protect her, including Dame Nanny Night Nurse and Tickles, the hilarious court jester. Oh... and of course the vain Prince Valiant will turn up (eventually) to lend a helping hand.

All the usual fun and frolics combine to guarantee Sleeping Beauty as the Pantomime of your dreams – a perfect family treat!

- \* Time: 7.00PM \* Running Time Approx. 2.5 hours \*
- \* Tickets: 30 reserved be quick! \* Adult: £18.00 / Child: £15.75 \*

### Visit to the Little Theatre, Dover Street, Leicester, to see "Sleeping Beauty"

#### On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024, starting at 7pm

Please reserve adult seats at £18.00 each
children's seats (under 16) at <b>£15.75</b> each
Name 
(capital letters)
Address(capital letters)
Postcode Telephone
Email address
I enclose a cheque/postal order for £

Made payable to "Gild of Leicester Freemen"

Please send to:

Malcolm Ballard, 5 Snowdrop Close, Narborough, Leics LE19 3YB (or speak to Jeff Lewitt)

Please print your address in capital letters – we don't want to send your tickets to the wrong address!

Applications will be dealt with strictly on a first come, first served basis