A GALA EVENING AT GREENWICH

The magnificent setting of the Painted Hall at the former Royal Naval College at Greenwich was the setting for the Livery's Millennium celebrations and Annual Banquet held on St Paul's Day, January 25th 2000.

We had the largest attendance on record, very much a family occasion, with 431 people sitting down to dine. The Editor was present and recalls the sheer magnificence of the surroundings on first entering the hall completely illuminated by candles.

The evening had been meticulously planned by the retiring and incoming Masters and the Clerk. In his speech the Master referred to a fire in the kitchens earlier in the day which had nearly prevented any food being served at all, but "It was alright on the night". The staff must be congratulated on devotion to duty.

The evening had started at 6.00 p.m. in the lovely chapel of St Peter and St Paul, where a large congregation enjoyed the magnificent singing of the Temple Church Choir, generously arranged by the outgoing Master, and fully participated in the service.

The sermon, given by our Honorary Chaplain, took the text from Timothy 2 “The time for my departure has come, I have fought the Good Fight, I have kept the Faith” and was a delight for the congregation.

The Choir, under the direction of Stephen Layton, sang the anthem “O Praise God in his holiness”.

The change in the format for St Paul's Day, and the short Court Meeting held at 4.00 p.m. facilitated the installation of The New Master before the Livery. It is planned to make this a permanent feature but the details are still being worked on.

The new Master, Laurence Olins, and his wife Annie received the guests at the pre-dinner reception held in the Queen Anne Ante-Room, and welcomed The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress together with the Sheriffs and their escorts. It was a poignant moment to welcome Mrs Sheriff Pauline Halliday and her husband Peter (a former Assistant Clerk) to our banquet. She must have remembered all the years in which she helped to arrange this event.

The Three Musketeers were resplendent in their finery, as were their ladies. They brought as their guests leading military personalities, Air Marshal M D Pledger OBE AFC, Rear Admiral P A Dunt (C in C Naval Home Command) and General Sir Jeremy Mackenzie GCB OBE with their ladies.

Other notable guests included the president of the NFU, Mr Ben Gill with his wife, The

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Rt Hon Lady Justice Butler-Sloss DBE, with her husband, and the Master Innholder. We were also pleased to welcome two of our honorary liverymen, Sir Peter Gadsden and His Honour Judge Michael Hyam.

The Master, in a welcoming speech, paid tribute to the work of the outgoing Master and his courage and innovation. He referred to his first meeting with The Cryans, when he and his wife, dressed as oranges and lemons, and the Cryans dressed as bananas, took part in the Company’s float in the 1989 Lord Mayor’s Show.

Turning to the Livery, The Master said that it was not just the few who determine the future of an organisation. “The destiny of our Livery is in the hands of all Liverymen,” he said. He pointed to the joint need to foster our relationships with both the Fruit Industry and also The Corporation of London.

The Lord Mayor replied to the toast of “The Corporation of London” and clearly both he and the Lady Mayoress enjoyed themselves, as the timetable substantially over ran.

The Immediate Past Master proposed the toast of “The Guests” to which Lord Moweh of Twysden PC QC replied.

Bernard Sullivan, who has recently celebrated his 80th birthday, was our toastmaster.

It was an evening to remember!

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**OPENING OF FRUITERERS’ PASSAGE**

On January 19th we were privileged that The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor, accompanied by The Lady Mayoress and Mrs Sheriff Poulene Halliday with her escort formally opened The Fruiterers’ Passage in the City.

It is one of the last vital links in the City’s Riverside Walk on which The Corporation has been working for some time, running from The Tower in the east to the Temple in the west.

According to the history of the Company the last hall occupied as our own was in Worcester House, which was near the site of Fruiterers’ Passage, being on the Thames, adjoining Three Cranes Wharf to the west and to the east of Queenhithe. The Company occupied it between about 1587 and 1623.

After we left our own hall we continued to maintain very strong links with that area of the north foreshore of the river. We had a warehouse there and the lane running down to it was known as “Fruiterers’ Alley” in the mid 18th Century and probably earlier.

There is an important reference to the area, the Company and The Lord Mayor by John Stow in 1704, where he wrote:

“At the lower end of the street next to the Thames is a pair of stairs, the usual place for The Lord Mayor and the Aldermen to take water and go to Westminster Hall for the new Lord Mayor to be sworn before the Barons of the Exchequer. This place, with the Three Cranes, is now of some account for the Fruiterers, where they have their warehouses for their fruit.”

A party of some 80 attended the event, which included a party of members from the Vintners Company and their Master, Alistair Buchanan.

Although it is rare to mention personal contributions by members, perhaps the editor will be allowed to make an exception in this case as all credit for following the matter up and negotiating with the developers of the adjoining buildings to bring the matter to such a satisfactory conclusion is due to the Master of the Day, Judge Donald Cryan.
A VISIT TO THE OLD LADY OF PRINCES STREET

Following a highly enjoyable, informal lunch at The Butchers Hall, forty Fruiterers moved eastward to that bastion of financial rectitude and venerable institution of economic policy making - The Bank of England. The visit had been organised by The Master and Learned Clerk and as always the arrangements were precise and punctilious. On arrival the party was greeted warmly and divided into two groups. The event had attracted a great deal of interest from The Livery membership, diverting attention from Golden Delicious to Gold Bullion. As the visitors soon learned, there is far more to The Bank than being just a safe repository for tonnes of precious metal.

The Master's group was accompanied by John Keyworth, The Bank's Curator, who led the visitors on a tour through the inner sanctum of the building, pointing out artefacts of importance while recounting landmarks in The Bank's history and evolution.

It became apparent that The Bank's association with the Livery companies goes back to its roots. In 1694 business commenced at The Mercers Hall and then transferred to The Grocers, situated in Poultry, where it operated between 1694 and 1734. The Bank's first architect was George Sampson who designed and oversaw the construction of the first ever purpose built bank, that was occupied in 1734. Between 1765 and 1788 the premises were extended by Sir Robert Taylor before John Soane completed most of the building on the current site by 1828.

Not only does The Bank fulfill an important national and international role but it houses very many valuable, important and even unique antiquities that have accrued over the centuries.

However, the most fascinating aspect to most of the visiting Fruiterers was the vaults, and their contents. It was an experience to see the various shapes of the 28lb ingots of 99.9% pure gold and fascinating to learn of their origins and of the markings that identify each block individually. There was a confidentiality on just how much warm yellow metal there was resting in EC2 but the security was discreet and tight.

The final feature of the tour was the museum, which provided the complete background to this quite unique and truly British edifice.

THE EPERGNE - ITEM 28

The three tier Epergne seen below was presented by John Poupert of TJ Poupert Ltd, a business well connected with The Company for many years and with which the current Master is also connected. The full description of the piece is "A three Epergne of trumpet shape, the tiers applied leaf and scroll borders on triple horn supports to the bottom tier terminating on pierced scrolled bracket feet".

It was said that the Donor died while in office as Renten Warden, a fact discovered by our present Master when also holding that office.

In 1968 the late Alec Poupert and the then Clerk established the custom of providing a pineapple for the top tier at the Annual Banquet which is the Master's privilege to take home with him. This year the stand can be seen at The Audit Court Dinner, as we did not take our valuable "outside the Square Mile" for the banquet at Greenwich.

THE OLD AND THE NEW

In a review of our Robes and Regalia it was agreed that the old Master's Gown and the Clerk's Gown were unlikely to be used again and they have been offered to The Museum Of London, who have gladly accepted them to add to the collections there. Below is a picture of the previous gown being worn by Past Master Bobby Manners when he was Master in 1972. Both of the old gowns were damaged when being worn.

In The Lord Mayor's Show while the then Master and Clerk were travelling in inclement weather in an open carriage.

The present gown was presented by Bobby Manners on his retirement from Office.

The Company has acquired a new gown for the Beadle who can be seen wearing it at Company functions. On his retirement from office, Donald Cryan presented embroidered bags for the gowns to be transported in.

The Fruiterers certainly are now "well turned out on parade!"

TWO SPECIAL INVITATIONS

The Livery has been pleased to receive two special invitations. The first is from HRH The Prince of Wales (Honorary Liveryman) to send a party of twelve to visit his home at Highgrove in June. "Being conscious that he is unable to accept all the invitations from the Livery Companies of which he is a member, which is a source of frustration and disappointment to him, The Prince of Wales invites a party from each of the Companies to a reception and a tour of the garden" states his Private Secretary.

The invitation naturally places difficulty on the selection of those to be included in the party. St James's Palace recognises that some members may have been before and might therefore not be included this time. We have been fortunate to have previously made two visits.

The Master, in deciding the party, has included the Senior Past Master and those working in honorary roles for the Company in recognition of the time which they give. The Wardens and the Immediate Past Master are also to be included.

The second invitation is from Liveryman Mrs Sheriff Pauline Halliday to visit The Old Bailey "after close of business”. This will be on June 12th and will be detailed by the Clerk shortly.
THE LIVERY PLANTS A TREE AT ST PAUL' S

It is entirely appropriate that The Company should have been privileged to plant a tree within the grounds of St Paul’s Cathedral and we are most grateful to The Dean for permission to do so. He attended the planting on a very wet January morning as will be seen from our photographs. He also assisted in the planting. This was one of the final functions of the retiring Master, Judge Donald Cryan.

A HELPING HAND

As part of the Company’s strategy document there is a stated intention to use part of the income from The Charitable Trust to acquire Fruit for deserving and needy persons within the City. Related to this is the Company’s ability to acquire “added value” when obtaining fruit through the help of Liverymen. The Charity Committee has been working hard to set up regular gifts and two principal recipients have been identified, namely The Salvation Army and St Botolphs Project.

There are five locations now in receipt of fresh fruit on a regular basis.

The Company is indebted to Ivor Robins who is assisting in the programme and he visited St Botolphs Project at Park Lodge Hackney E9 recently with The Master.

Our photograph shows The Master with Mr John Foley (a strange coincidence in names!) when they visited in March.

OrchardWorld Ltd is one of the UK’s leading companies in the marketing of apples and pears. It supplies all the major supermarkets in addition to a range of wholesalers, food service and retail clients. OrchardWorld sees its role clearly as the vital link between grower and client, ensuring satisfaction for both parties at all times.
A FOLLOW UP VISIT TO MOUNT VERNON

Many will remember the Company's visit to Mount Vernon, Washington, USA in the autumn of last year and the help which the Company gave in the replanting there. At the conclusion of our visit we promised to assist in particular with the supply of 9 varieties which could not be located within the United States.

In February this year Will Sibley arranged to send dormant graftwood of 7 varieties and in March he returned to graft these varieties onto suitable rootstocks and to train Dean Norton and his staff the art of grafting so that they may keep up the good work in the future.

A total of seven staff members became very competent over the three day visit with no serious injuries via grafting knife cuts! Will came away with a Mount Vernon Staff hat but has not provided a photo of himself wearing it!

"All the trees planted earlier are doing well. We are held in very high esteem in Washington and it was nice to meet many of our new friends again" Will adds.

A FULL PROGRAMME FOR THE AWARDS COUNCIL

Ahead of the annual meeting at Bradbourne in June, and following a recent meeting of the Fruiterers Fruit Culture Trust, the Council has issued the programme of awards to be offered this year.

Awards fall into differing categories; The Company makes Silver-Gilt medals available for competition at The Cherry and Soft Fruit Show (part of the Kent Show) and the Marden Fruit Show. It awards cash awards to students at seven educational establishments and awards certificates at two RHS shows.

At Marden it jointly participates in the Craftsman Award and gives the Fruit Culture Award.

This year we have also been asked to sponsor an award at the Bath and West Show for a Cider exhibit which we have agreed to do.

Our major work will be the continuing of funding research by two sandwich students at East Malling Research Station Marks and Spencer are generously sponsoring the Environmental Awards for a second year and details are available from the Clerk's office if members have not received the brochure. The presentations will be made at the Mansion House on 25th October on the occasion of the Presentation of Fruit to the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor. It is hoped to mount an exhibition of the work of the winning entries at The National Fruit Show in the autumn.

The Strategic Management Course (in conjunction with the FPC) will again be held at Wye College in the autumn.

The Lewis Award for Marketing is next due for presentation at the 2001 Annual Banquet.

PAST MASTERS ON PARADE

On March 25th, the Master invited all the Past Masters to join him in the grounds of Greenwich University for a tree planting to record The Millennium. The event was particularly different from any of our other tree plantings to date in that, following The Master’s Planting, each of 15 Past Masters named a tree with their names in the grounds of the Library. Four declined the opportunity and one Past Master was unable to attend. Our Senior Past Master, Garth Doubleday, looking very fit, led the way. The trees were named in order of the seniority of the Past Masters participating, whose period of service covers a period in excess of thirty years.

In his Banquet Speech in January (see Page One) The Master said "We owe our survival to many factors not least of all to those who have gone before us, and who have served the livery with such distinction, commitment and loyalty. We owe all of them a debt of gratitude and I salute them and am proud to follow in their footsteps".

A party of some 50 people assembled in the Dreadnought Library for coffee and proceeded to the site. His Worship The Mayor of Greenwich, Cllr John Fahy, and Dr Roger Finney, Dean of Maritime Greenwich Faculty, University of Greenwich, were also present. The Honorary Chaplain gave the Blessing.

Liveryman Will Sibley, who was also present, kindly provided the White Mulberry trees. This species has long historical links with Greenwich. It is said that in error James I ordered the planting of Black Mulberries on the site in an attempt to rear silk worms for the production of silk. His error was discovered when it was found that it was White Mulberries that were needed!

John Dunham, keeper of the ceremonial spade, was on duty.

This was a very happy event and our photograph shows all the Past Masters present.

A MESSAGE FROM THE REMEMBRANCER

Ian Rainford asks us to convey thanks to all those who have contacted him over recent months with news of themselves and other Liverymen. He needs to be contacted if need for help or a visit from the Company are thought worthwhile. Notifications of bereavements should also go to him (020 8948 1698).

"I have been encouraged by the level of communication and by the work of the Contact Network which is working to communicate with all those whom we have not seen recently" he says.
WE ARE BOTH IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE!

This ambition is part of the Company's strategy in relation to the fruit industry and was an appropriate "opener" to his address of welcome to the Livery by Honorary Assistant John Foley when he welcomed a party of some 50 people to the headquarters of Waitrose Limited at Bracknell on February 24th.

The visit was one of a series of industry visits which the Company is organising and it provided an interesting insight into the distribution procedures of one of the Country's leading supermarket chains.

Several Liverymen working in the industry expressed delight at the opportunity to see the inside workings of the large distribution warehouse. It is a feat of logistics and organisation when one sees the short turn round period between produce arriving and then being released for delivery.

The visit started with a visit to the warehouse, where the party divided into groups and each stage (from receipt to dispatch) was explained. The second stage was to visit the Wokingham branch, one of the newest, to see the end result.

The Editor, very much not a fruit distributor, was not alone in remarking on the quality of the working conditions and the friendly atmosphere of the staff in all locations.

Mr Foley concluded the event by a short address and the provision of refreshments before the conclusion of a very successful afternoon. We are all indebted to those involved in making us so welcome.

CITY OF LONDON BRIEFINGS

The Clerk's office has been advised that, due to an unusual lack of response, the briefing on 1st March 2000 was cancelled.

The amended date is 3rd May and others will be held on 14 June, 11 October and 15 November.

These briefings are recommended to all Liverymen, especially the new ones, and if you wish to attend you should contact The Course Administrator on 020 7332 3424

CONGRATULATIONS!

Dick Brighten has been appointed President of the Fresh Produce Consortium.
Tony Redsell won the New Spitalfields Market Hop Grower of the Year Award.

PROMISSORY AUCTION

Details were given earlier of the Promissory Auction being organised by the Fund Raising Committee. Full details of all the lots and how people apply for them will be given in the next issue by Justin Farrington-Smith who is organising the auction.

It is not to late to send or commit a "lot". Justin's address is in the Livery List with his telephone and fax numbers.

GARDEN OF THE YEAR AWARD - 2000

The joint sponsors, The Historical Houses Association and Christies, have announced their award for the year 2000 which has gone to Parhley Manor Garden, Ticehurst, East Sussex.

The garden is owned by Mr and Mrs James Sellick to whom we send our congratulations.

The Company has been delighted to be connected with this award for some years and has established the practice of offering a gift of fruit trees and a formal planting by The Master to the winning garden.

This year's winners have accepted our offer and an invitation has been issued to the Livery for June 6th when the Master will plant trees.

Details of the event will be issued by the Clerk.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to report the death after a recurrence of his earlier illness of Peter Allocca who died on 27th December 1999. The Remembrancer was among those from the Livery who attended his funeral at Knockholt Parish Church on 12th January.

Past Master Derek Tullett represented the Master.

We carried an article about Peter in our issue 27 (December 1996). He became Master of the Upholders Company in the Spring of 1997. He was a regular supporter of the Company and an active member of the Golfing Society. We send our sympathies to his family.

EDITOR'S NOTE

I am pleased to report that Laurence Olins, presently Master of the Company, has offered to take over the editorship in the Autumn. All Liverymen are reminded that we are always pleased to have news and articles for the newsletter.

HONORARY ASSISTANTS

The following have been nominated for election at the Audit Court to serve for a period of two years:

Margaret Charrington, Judge Shirley Anvil, Douglas Henderson and Robert Green.

It is the first time that Lady Liverymen have been nominated.

Acknowledgments

The Editor would like to acknowledge with thanks the contributions to this issue by the Master, Donald Cryan, Dick Brighten, John Dunham, Will Shirley, David Hope-Mason and the Clerk.