

Livery Dinner

My Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Masters, Prime Wardens, [Distinguished Guests, Liverymen,] Ladies & Gentlemen

I am **delighted** to welcome the **full** civic party this evening and to **thank** them for joining us here at **Skinners'** Hall.

The **annual** cycles of the **Mayoralty** and the Sheriffs and, indeed, of **Masters** and Prime Wardens, allows the **City of London** to combine **innovation** with **continuity; individuality** with institutional **longevity; modern** thinking with **ancient** traditions.

My Lord Mayor, you and your two Sheriffs are all members of **old Livery** companies and of **new** ones. You are promoting **inclusion and diversity** as well as the Livery movement's **historic commitments to philanthropy**.

Your **personal** background includes a degree in **architecture** followed by a switch to accountancy. For over 30 years with Price Waterhouse Coopers you have been offering opinions of **truth and fairness** on company accounts. Such opinions would matter little if they are not **trusted**. Hence your work at PwC and now as Lord Mayor on rebuilding **trust in business** and promoting the **Business of Trust**.

Another important skill brought from your **personal** life to your **City** life is an interest in **herding sheep**. As **our head shepherd** for this year, we wish you good luck in keeping your flock **heading** in the right direction.

The **Aldermanic** Sheriff, **Tim Hailes**, is a history graduate from King's College London. He went on to qualify as a solicitor before joining JP Morgan Chase. He is now a senior lawyer there, specialising in financial derivatives and wider, international financial **regulation**. Tim is also an active campaigner for **inclusion and equality of opportunity**.

The **Lay** Sheriff, **Neil Redcliffe**, also started his career as an accountant at Price Waterhouse before running his own property businesses. He then set up a foreign exchange business that must have tied in well with his love of **travel**. Five years ago, he was **Prime Warden** of the **Basketmakers**, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather.

This leads me to a brief diversion, if I may. **I also** am a third generation Master. My father, past Master **Sir Brian Neill**, had been looking forward to being here tonight **exactly seventy years to the day** when he was sworn in as a Freeman of this Turners' Company.

Unfortunately, he has been ill for the past month but he asked me to **send you all** his affection and best wishes.

Returning to the theme of combining old and new, **this Company** is another example. We continue to promote the **evolving** (or should that be “**revolving**”) art or mysterie of **turning**. We support all the main craft organisations covering the amateur clubs and, many years ago, we established the **Register of Professional Turners** that now has nearly **200 active** professionals.

Last year the company’s charity ran the **highly** successful **Wizardry in Wood Exhibition** and attendant competitions. **This** year the charity has focused on awarding six **bursaries** for turners looking to move **up** to the next stage of their career. As usual, we have also given **equipment** to schools and clubs. Our **biggest commitment** this year, however, has been to the **refurbishment**, during 2018, of the **bells** of St Paul’s Cathedral ahead of the **centenary celebrations** next November of the **end** of the **Great War**. The bells are being returned to Loughborough, where they were originally cast and **turned 140** years ago.

We shall be appealing to members of the Company for **special** donations in support of the twelve bells of St. Paul’s, **four of which** were funded by our Victorian forebears and are **embossed** with the Turners’ coat of arms.

Meanwhile the Turners’ charity **always** likes to support the **Lord Mayor’s Appeal**. **Your** Appeal has **four pillars** as it seeks to build a **City** that is **Inclusive, Healthy, Skilled** and **Fair**. Unusually, it has been agreed that the Appeal will continue across **three** years through to 2020. This innovation should allow for greater **long term impact** across the charities that you are supporting.

In addition to the support of the **Livery Companies**, your Appeal has attracted over **400 commercial** firms within the City[, including my own Investec Bank].

Therefore I am **delighted** to be able to present you now with this **cheque** for your Lord Mayor’s Appeal.

In **addition**, as a **personal** gift for you, we should like to present you with this lovely **Platter** made by Liveryman **Patricia Spero**, who is one of our registered Professional Turners. It has been turned from **Olive Ash** and the centre is inlaid with **Carnelian**. We hope you will find it a **suitable** home in **London** or in **Suffolk**

I now ask you all to stand and to toast

The Lord Mayor, The City of London Corporation and the Sheriffs