

Worshipful Company of Turners

Master: Livery Dinner 18 December 2018

Wardens, My Lord Mayor, Your Grace, Sheriffs, Fellow Turners , Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome the full Civic team to Saddlers Hall this evening.

In the commemorative programme to the Lord Mayor's show you each told your "Coming to London" story:

- Lord Mayor you from Surrey via Bristol for university and a start in accountancy, then on to Honk Kong and New York to establish your career in Banking
- Sheriff Vincent from Dublin, was attracted by Big Bang and now, apparently is staying to sort out Brexit. ....Looks like you're here for the long term

- Sheriff Liz, following in family footsteps, you have brought secretarial, marketing and PR skills to the team. The blaze of yellow heralding your election in June was testimony to your organisational skills and charm.

## **You are all most warmly welcome**

The need for brevity on these occasions has been impressed upon me by my fellow Turners, almost to the point where I had begun to take the matter personally.

I am relieved some recent research has now shed light on why the Turners in particular take the point so seriously.

The matter concerns a case when three liverymen were found guilty of a serious misdemeanour and sentenced to be executed. However, it being the week before Christmas, the Lord Mayor had resolved to grant them each a last wish before their execution..... provided they agreed with each other.

The first, livery unknown, a *bonne viveur*, requested that he enjoy one last livery dinner. Beef would be good. The other two liverymen readily agreed.

The second, livery unknown, had recently become Master of his livery. He had worked for many years to be elected; his aging mother was very proud of him and he had drafted a modestly self-congratulatory speech touching on his school, university and city career along with few other points he wanted to air.

The first liveryman could accept, anything for a good meal.

The third liveryman, ALLEDGEDLY a Turner, took a deep breath. He had heard many such speeches. He requested they ALL be executed immediately.

Moving swiftly on, I am pleased to report that the Turners are in good heart and carrying on making; repairing and inventing that marks our history.

Lord Mayor you are keen to “Shape tomorrow’s city today” by promoting innovation and education.

We hope and trust that our spirit of innovation is well and truly alive and our activities are complementary to your initiatives this year.

Our history records not only making true measures for Edward III; working as ship’s carpenters keeping pulleys and other essential gear working from 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century; and later many turners became mill wrights in the early industrial revolution.

Against this background, our recent Competitions day attracted over 200 entries from across the country and included a special class for turners who have

completed the Company's certificate in turning programme and a themed class commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Armistice.

We were most pleased to welcome The Lady Mayoress and the Non-Aldermanic Sheriff along with over 150 visitors from other liveries to view the work and the following day over 600 members of the public visited us at Carpenter's Hall.

Along with many other craft liveries, we are aware that so many schools have closed their workshops and children are denied the chance to express themselves through their hands. However, to help stem that tide, we are pleased to report that the youth training programme run by the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain, supported by the Company, has, since May, introduced over 120 young people to turning.

You will also be aware that Turners have been involved with the restoration of the bells of St Paul's this year:

Not only have we met our financial contribution entirely from fresh subscriptions but also, we have worked with St Pauls to produce some commemorative turning from the headstock wood that had been in use since the bells were hung in 1878.

In taking on the challenge, there was a considerable risk the wood would shatter after 140 years of weather, war and banging about. The good news is that the elm wood has stood the test and some 20 members of the Register of Professional Turners, led by Gabor Lacko and Patricia Spero under the Chairmanship of past master John Bridgeman and with logistical support from Matthew Gaved and Christopher Scott, have produced and sold 56 of 60 turned bells.

May I ask, John, Gabor, Patricia, Matthew and Christopher to stand and acknowledge our thanks.

Now, Lord Mayor, please receive one of those bells as a memento of this evening.

Also, please accept this cheque for your charity appeal and a second cheque supporting the Mansion House Scholarship scheme.

In closing I ask you all to stand and drink the Toast to:

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