

Chocolate Treats



At the Livery Dinner held last December, Assistant Nick Edwards presented a bowl to the Rt. Hon The Lord Mayor David Brewer. It was described by Penrose Halson, then Upper Warden, as being made of a 'rare and special' material, densely textured and coloured dark brown, milky brown and white, known as "chocowood".

The Lord Mayor was delighted with his gift, his fondness for chocolate being well known. The bowl was turned by Nick on a lathe manufactured in 1884 by J.J. Holtzapffel, a celebrated lathe designer who was Master of the Company in 1879. It was filled with separate chocolates with St Catherine motifs, for which Nick also turned a special mould



Future Events

- Company Golf Day**
Tuesday 3rd October
- Windsor Castle Visit and Dinner**
Tuesday 10th October
- Lord Mayor's Show**
Saturday 11th November
- Patronal Service and Luncheon**
Friday 24th November
- Court Meeting**
Wednesday 29th November 6pm

- Musicians' Company Carol Service and Dinner**
Wednesday 13th December
- Livery Dinner**
Tuesday 19th December
- *****
- 2007**
- United Guilds Service, St Paul's**
Friday 23rd March
- Common Hall Gardner Williams Banquet**
Tuesday 27th March

Clerk's Notes

The Court has been enhanced by new Assistants, Nick Edwards and Andrea Cenci di Bello.

In September, the Company welcomed six new Liverymen: Kate Abbott, Sarah Fabergé, Matthew Gaved, Susie Maxwell, Christopher Scott and Nicholas Somers. Earlier in the year, we had the pleasure of raising John Harvey to the Livery, on his return from a tour of Iraq.

This year we have also welcomed April Weiss, Peter Godding, Nick Fisher, Simon Noakes, Neil Doling and Jonathan Farminer to the Freedom.

Our first Common Hall was held before the Gardner Williams Dinner and was a great success. It will be repeated at next year's Gardner Williams Dinner.

The Furniture Makers' Company, who are fellow members of the Wood Group, have just opened a new Hall and the Company presented them with a wassail bowl at the last Court Lunch.

The Clerk receives invitations for the Company to enter teams for various events in the year but, as enthusiasts are not necessarily known, is not always able to respond. There is a Clay Pigeon Team shoot at Holland & Holland in May (team of 4, £140 a head), an annual embroidery competition and an annual dinghy sailing weekend, for example. If anybody would wish to take on the responsibility of running a team or would like to register an interest then please inform the Clerk.

City Livery Yacht Club. This Club, exclusively for members of Livery Companies, may be of interest to some. Details can be found on: www.cityliveryyc.co.uk.

Golf

Newson-Smith Golf Competition

The Turners entered a team of four for this small Inter-Livery Golf Competition held at East Berkshire Golf Club on Friday 8th July. The competition is played between six Livery Companies and consists of an individual "warm-up" game of 12 holes in the morning, followed by the team competition in the afternoon of 18 holes stableford, best three scores to count.

In the morning round, your Golf Secretary surprised himself and everyone else by winning the warm-up by one point. In the afternoon, the Turners team came third behind the Tallow Chandlers and Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators. However, Turner Ian Sands won the afternoon individual prize with a very good score of 38 points. Our team consisted of Brian Cooke, Peter Ellis, Rob Lucas and Ian Sands. It was a most enjoyable day's golf played in brilliant sunshine on a superb golf course.

Turners' Trophy

The Turners' Golf Society will be holding its annual competition for the Turners Trophy on Tuesday 3rd October 2006 at Beaconsfield Golf Club. This will be an 18 hole stableford competition in the morning for Turners and their guests both male and female, followed by a leisurely lunch.

If you have not already heard from our Golf Secretary, Rob Lucas, about the event, please contact him as soon as possible, through the Clerk. This is an excellent day out at a very pleasant and delightful parkland golf course.

Masters in Cornwall



In July the Master wrote a letter to the Company describing her trip to Cornwall with over 60 other Livery Masters. With the Master are six others including Mrs Sally Murray, Master of the Framework Knitters.



THE TURNER



NEWSLETTER OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF TURNERS OF LONDON

Autumn 2006

Dear Fellow Turners

Early on May 31st, six days after the Election Court at which I became your Master, our efficient Clerk and his son, with innovative Chairman Peter Ellis and several of his Howe Committee, arrived at Apothecaries' Hall. They set to, arranging the display tables for our biennial Turning Competitions, logging entries as they were brought in by turners old and young, planning the seating, the sponsors' lunch, the prize-giving, the reception, the exhibition of the finest turning in the country, and the final clearing up.

The day was a microcosm of what the Turners' Company is about: Craft, City and Charity. We supported our Craft by awarding prizes and medals for astonishingly beautiful and inventive examples of the *art or misterie* of turning, and by giving their makers an opportunity to show their work to invited guests. The City was represented by Sheriff Kevin Kearney, who presented the prizes with warmth and interest, and by the Masters and members of other Livery Companies, who wrote appreciative letters afterwards. Charity was evident in the prize-winning entries from promising turners who had won our Bursaries, and in the members of the armed forces who received Company prizes.

In addition, the day exuded the hospitality and friendliness cherished by Livery Companies in general and the Turners in particular. I constantly meet busy, dedicated people: turners, undertakers, actuaries, lawyers, psychotherapists, service personnel, doctors, jazz musicians, insurers and others who are united in working towards the aims of the Livery and enjoying themselves at the same time. Benevolence, gaiety and an insouciance about political correctness (NB I am your *Lady Master!*) are not key characteristics of the wide world, but are flourishing in the Livery world.

As Master, I want to keep promoting the three Cs - Craft, City, Charity - while adding a fourth: Communication. The Communications Committee set up by Past Master Andrew Ciclitira and ably chaired by Assistant Nick Edwards will communicate news to both the Company and the outside world. So too will Common Hall, to which I hope you will all come. Through occasional letters I shall tell you about the life of a Master; and Webmaster Peter Gibson provides much more on our website.

Other allies are my ever-helpful Wardens, George Kieffer and Rob Lucas, and Master's Steward Christopher Roberts, and chairmen of committees: of Finance, Past Master Richard Levy, knowledgeable about both finance and, through his father Felix, the Company; of Livery, Andrea Cenci di Bello, generous promoter of sociability; and of Assistant Selection and Membership, experienced Past Master John Slater. Added back-up comes from our Beadle, Almoner, Archivist, Newsletter editor, Honorary Chaplain, volunteers who serve on committees and in other, often invisible, ways, and a formidable group of Past Masters.

I am astonished to be Master. But I share with my late father, Liveryman Cecil Colyer, a delight in belonging to an organisation steeped in history and yet with modern purposes, which is full of interest, fun and friendship. So I am enjoying enormously promoting the Company and getting to know you at our events.

With best wishes

Penrose Halson



Issue 26

Celebrations of the lives of Sir Peter Smithers and Philip Holden

Historical Notes on Nehemiah Wallington, an early turner

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Sir Peter Smithers VRD D Phil 1913 -2006

Peter Berry Henry Otway Smithers, to give him his full name as a born Yorkshireman, was clothed of the Livery in 1940 and became Master of the Company in 1955, when he was Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister of State for the Colonies. But in 1940 the Livery gown was not the only cloak that Sir Peter was wearing.

In March or April 1940 he was ushered by Lt. Cdr. Ian Fleming RN (yes – *the* Ian Fleming), Personal Assistant to the DNI, into the presence of the Director of Naval Intelligence himself, Rear-Admiral John Godfrey, who became ‘Uncle John’ to him. From there he was despatched to Paris as the MI6 expert on naval matters, under the improbable cover-name of ‘Dufer’ (of iron). It is therefore not entirely surprising that he became in later years an adviser to the Iron Lady, Margaret Thatcher.

He was elected Member of Parliament for Winchester in 1945 and went on to serve the constituency until 1964 when he was appointed General Secretary of the Council of Europe, getting a well-deserved knighthood in 1970.

He was active on the European scene for many years thereafter – sometimes to the frustration of the author, but always unfailingly courteous and good-humoured. Nor did he lose touch with his American connections through his wife, Lady Smithers, who bore him two daughters. We are delighted to see the family tradition continued through his daughter Amelia who is a Liveryman of the Company.

As was to be expected, Sir Peter was prone to some unusual alliances and for the Coronation he hosted Queen Salote of Tonga at his home in Winchester. This link never left him and while resident in Switzerland he gloried in probably the only Tongan e-mail address in that country, which the author can testify did not prove the most reliable link.

It is right to celebrate rather than mourn as full a life as Sir Peter’s, encompassing an enduring passion for botany and the writing of the definitive biography of Joseph Addison. His passing sees Hugh Lindley-Jones (Livery 1945 and Master 1965) become Father of the Company.

George Kieffer Upper Warden

A memorial service for Sir Peter will be held at noon on Tuesday 24th October at St Margaret’s Church, Westminster. Details may be obtained from the Clerk, who has also applied for a number of tickets on behalf of the Company.

Philip John Holden 1925 - 2006

Philip Holden was born on 9th November 1925. He grew up in the Sussex village of Rottingdean, near Brighton. On leaving school in 1940 he worked first as a grocer’s assistant and then in a War Work factory making optical instruments.

In 1943 he joined the Royal Air Force and trained as an air gunner on Liberator bombers. After the war Philip became an apprentice carpenter and joiner, attending Brighton Technical College to learn the theory of carpentry, joinery and general building. In 1953 he used this knowledge to build his own bungalow at Saltdean after which he went into business building bungalows in the expanding villages of Saltdean and Rottingdean.

In 1963 he started a new career teaching woodwork; first at a Secondary Modern school and later at a Technical College.

He owned an Overton ornamental turning lathe on which he did some good work; but he was best known for his fine joinery: he made an altar table and many other items of furniture for his Church, St. Nicholas at Saltdean Vale.

Philip became a Freeman of the Turners by presentation in October 1995. In 2000 he made a fine oak font stand for the church of the Worshipful Company of Turners, St. Bride’s in Fleet Street, a photograph of which is to be found at the top of the front page of this Newsletter. In recognition of this excellent work he was elected a Liveryman of the Company. In the same year he was also presented with the Company’s Gold Medal.

Philip joined the Society of Ornamental Turners in 1970 and in 2000 he was elected President in which capacity he served until 2002 when he was awarded the Brandon Trophy for his services to the Society.

Over the past five years or so Philip took up globe-trotting and he and his wife Shirley spent many happy holidays exploring the world.

Everybody liked Philip; he was courteous, warm-hearted and welcoming and he spent his life helping people. His greatest tribute was to be seen at his Church on the day of the funeral: packed to over-flowing with relatives and friends and displaying many pieces of his woodwork. We who were privileged to call him friend will miss him greatly.

John Edwards



Historical Notes

Nehemiah Wallington was admitted as a master turner by the Company in 1620 “by patrimony” (his father was Master in the same year) on payment of a silver spoon.

The normal fine to become a member was 13 shillings and 4 pence. Wallington may have had to pay extra as he was only 22 and therefore under the required age to be a journeyman, much less a master turner.

One can only assume that the status in the Company of his father was helpful. Given that The Clerk of the Market (an above average accountancy appointment) in 1625 was paid 13d per day, you can draw your own conclusions on the comparative cost of entry into the Company today.

Surprisingly, it is recorded that following in your father’s trade was not common for turners in the seventeenth century. Our records show that whilst the majority of the members had served as apprentice turners, only around one in twenty entered the Company by patrimony.

The standard “proof piece” by which a “Freeman” demonstrated his competence was a simple stool with turned legs. A Freeman was someone who had finished his apprenticeship and was free to seek employment as a journeyman away from his original master.

From the 13th Century the guilds had been given the right to govern themselves, but the Turners was not one of the more prosperous. In 1422 a list of London trade guilds shows the Company of Turners as the 75th of the 111 recorded. Wallington’s biographer describes the income of retail turners at the time as being a level of “comfortable mediocrity” - no change there!

Peter Ellis

The Master’s Year: Deputy Master Andrew Ciclitira reflects on his year as Master

The dinner following the election of the Master on Ascension Day is the very first occasion when the new Master has to stand up and make a speech. It is difficult to remember what thoughts were going through my head that evening, but certainly a mixture of pride, amazement and perhaps even shock that, after attending so many Turners’ functions over the years, I was now standing in front of the Court as the newly-elected Master.

I realised that it would be a busy year, but looking back I don’t think I could have imagined quite how diverse all the different activities really are. They range from the very formal occasions such as a splendid dinner at the Mansion House with the Lord Mayor, with all the other Masters and their wives, to attending the annual garden party at Buckingham Palace.

In a lighter vein, I was pleased to encourage the Turners to participate in the pancake race organised by the Poulterers’ Company at Guildhall. What fun that was. Even if we didn’t win, our team including the Upper Warden and two other members of the Court certainly got into the spirit of the occasion.

Another highlight was my visit to Lord Mayor Treloar College, with the Lord Mayor, who this year nominated the school and its appeal as his special charity. Our Company has a long history with the school having donated two specially adapted lathes for use by the many

Turning Events

On the 12th of July the Company held a reception attended by some 70 Liverymen and guests. The evening also included an innovative and highly amusing demonstration of turning which was in two parts. Les Thorne, a well-known demonstrator and a member of the Register of Professional Turners who is based in Hampshire, undertook the first session.

He conducted a theatre style demonstration, which included television screens to capture the close tool work on the lathe for the benefit of the audience while he produced a delicate bowl. Les has what is described as a relaxed ‘Women’s Institute’ approach, which kept the audience enthralled with both his amazing talent and continuous banter.

Freeman Stuart King, who is also a professional turner and turning historian, conducted the second part of the demonstration. Stuart amazed those present by producing turned ‘flowers’ from hazel twigs. The ‘flowers’ were then mounted on the prongs of a large twig and the finished array was presented to the Master as a memento of the evening.

At the end of the demonstration the Master thanked the turners and organisers on behalf of the Company and indicated that a turning demonstration could become an annual event in the Company calendar. The Liverymen and their guests then repaired to the courtyard for a convivial evening of drinks and canapés in the evening sunshine, which rounded off a superb event.

Peter Ellis

disabled children. We were made to feel especially welcome by the staff and pupils that day and I hope that our Company will continue its support for the school in the years to come.

I was also pleased to attend the prize giving for City and Guilds, where our Company gives awards for Turning. This is a fantastic organisation, originally set up by the Livery Companies and today supporting thousands of students in many different occupations. Our hard-working craft committee established a link with an organisation based in Suffolk called ‘Street Forge’, and I was particularly pleased as Master to formally open their new facility, which is equipped with lathes and tools provided by the Company.

Finally, at the end of a wonderful year, the Company presented a turned ebony ‘Stalking Stick’, made by Paul Coker with silver embellishments by Mike Winter, to Her Majesty The Queen to commemorate her eightieth birthday. It was a very special privilege to visit the Palace to present this in person and for the Company to receive a personal letter of thanks from the Queen.

I hope that my year as Master has continued our Company’s fine traditions whilst beginning some new ideas including Common Hall, which this year took place just before the Gardner Williams Dinner. My thanks go to my two wardens Penrose Halson and George Kieffer and of course our hard-working Clerk, Edward Windsor Clive.

Most Successful Turning Competitions

The Worshipful Company of Turners recently held its most successful biennial Competitions ever. The Turners are probably the most active of all the City of London Livery Companies in supporting their craft and they are to be congratulated on promoting wood turning to a wider audience.

The event was held at Apothecaries’ Hall and by mid-morning the place was buzzing with turners, some of whom who had travelled long distances.

The Master’s Competition for a pair of candlesticks was amazing, both for the number of entrants and for the sheer variety of styles and treatments. Everything was there from pyrography to ornamental turning. In fact it was a pair of ornamentally-turned candlesticks crafted by John Edwards from Lignum Vitae that took the prestigious prize.

This was a fantastic social event for turners, well attended by turning ‘celebrities’ and newcomers alike. There was much discussion on the merits of the judges’ various adjudications and of the technical merits of individual pieces, every turner has a point of view!



Apothecaries’ Hall was full for the formal presentations and prize giving by Sheriff Kevin Kearney. Shown with the Sheriff are the RAF Winners of the Company’s Annual Award for Young Technicians; SAC(T) C.D. Jones won the 2004 Award and SAC(T) N.P. Richardson won the 2005 Award. Both are from the RAF’s No. 4 School of Technical Training, St Athan.

Stuart King

Based on an article which appeared in the August issue of ‘Revolutions’, the newsletter of the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain.