

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF TURNERS OF LONDON

Newsletter Summer 1994 Issue 4



Dear Fellow Turners

It is with a great sense of honour that I write a few thoughts on our Company following the privilege you have all bestowed on me in my election as your Master on Ascension Day.

In the high days of Livery Companies, being Master meant considerable power within the craft. Not quite the power of life or death but certainly the power to make sure you had difficulty continuing working should you offend the Company's rules and regulations. Hints of these powers are in the Master's Declaration. Such phrases as "... all fines and amerciaments ... " and "tax, rate or assess ..." hint of what a Master could do.

Even if these powers still exist, you will be reassured that this Master does not intend to fine and tax the Livery. What he does intend is to continue the traditions of the Company and the Livery movement.

Today, without a Livery craft tucked around you in the narrow streets of the City, the Livery Companies stand for something more. Support for the craft certainly: we support professional turners, encourage others to take an interest through prizes and awards, enable the disadvantaged to take up, or continue, turning.

Support for the City of London: there are Livery Companies elsewhere - Sheffield, York, Bristol - but the Livery movement is strongest in the City and the Companies are ingrained into much of City life, notably the elections of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs.

Support for the Company: the mutual support



of friendship which we bestow on each other. Feasting has always been part of English life and Livery dinners follow that tradition.

Finally, the support of others: Livery Companies have always seen it as their duty to support those of the craft who have fallen on hard times, the old, the sick, widows and orphans. Today, these can be any of us.

Maintaining traditional values is not just a return to basics. We must remember the values of the past and maintain them in today's world. Some need no change, others must be brought up to date. I find the Turners in good heart and I hope my successor will also find them so.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Hamilton

COMING EVENTS

Court meeting (afternoon) - Thursday 21st July 1994

Golf Day - Friday 2nd September 1994

Evening visit to King Edward Buildings (Post Office) - Monday 12th September 1994

Court Meeting (morning) & Livery Luncheon - Friday 7th October 1994

Court Meeting (afternoon) - Monday 14th November

Patronal service and Buffet Luncheon - Friday 25th November 1994

Livery Dinner - Tuesday 20th December

Awards Court - Tuesday 14th February 1995

Gardner Williams Dinner - Friday 24th February 1995

Court Meeting (morning) & Court Luncheon - Thursday 16th March 1995

Craft Meeting - Friday 24th March 1995

Ladies' Dinner - Friday 28th April 1995

Election Court - Thursday 25th May 1995

The Turner

The Turner

THE MASTER'S YEAR

Peter Venn reports on his crowded year as Master.

On Ascension Day 1994, I completed one of the most prolonged, hectic and enjoyable years I can remember. Tempus fugit - as my predecessor Edward Sawney told me in May 1993. Edward also gave me some good advice which he himself had followed: to try to move the Company forward, and accept every invitation I could. I hope that as the Company pursues an ever-increasing range of Livery objectives, recognition is growing of the need to increase its financial resources. I hope that, by establishing two new committees - Charity and Education - the Company has taken a step towards using more of the talent within it. And I hope that through the Turning Competition, the Newsletter and the Court's widening of attendance at the Awards Court, the importance of the Howe Committee is becoming fully recognized.

There have been many opportunities to represent the Company: leading a small delegation to Princess Marina College, joining the Clerk to present prizes, including the Turners' Shield, at Operation Southern Craftsman and enjoying their marvellous curry lunch afterwards, attending Princess Anne's Installation Court dinner as the guest of the Woolmen, and dining in splendour with Heather at the Mansion House. But the highlight will remain visiting Treloar College to set in operation the lathe presented by the Company: an unforgettable experience.

My year ended with two glorious evenings: our Ladies' Dinner when Heather and I were delighted to be surrounded by family and old friends; and the Election Court and Dinner held, through the good offices of the Governor-General - and member of the Turners' Court - Christopher Tyler, at the Tower.

I thank you all for your support through the year and wish Andrew Hamilton every success in the year ahead.

THE MASTER: THE FACTS

Andrew Charles Hamilton, born 10th August 1943, educated Malvern College (school prefect, Head of House, cadet officer, 5 A levels) lives Putney, married to Valerie, magistrate on Wimbledon bench. Daughter married to serving officer, son Charterhouse, another son and daughter working London. Interests: woodwork, DIY, travel & the good things of life.

Chartered accountant, qualified 1966 with Viney Price & Goodyear, Partner there & with BDO Binder Hamlyn. President, Croydon & District Society of Chartered Accountants 1987-88. Member various committees including training course & Institute Examiner. Now acts for smaller companies & charities. Secretary Association of Printing Machinery Importers. Ten years on Electricity Consumers Committee for London.

Hon. Secretary Farringdon Ward Club; Hon. Treasurer Aldersgate Ward Club (Master 1984-5); Treasurer Victim Support Kensington & Chelsea. Valerie member Royal Society of St. George & Langbourn Ward Club; Liveryman Worshipful Company of Scriveners.

THE FATHER OF THE COMPANY

The Reverend Alan Fagg, the Company's oldest Liveryman and its chaplain, Master in 1951, is now named as the Father of the Company. In his long and varied career he went from office boy to director of a shipping company in the City: that meant docks and ships and cargoes, frequent travel to British, Continental and Scandinavian ports, to Australia and New Zealand, Panama and Pitcairn. At the same time he founded and lived as warden in hostels for boys living on the streets in times of unemployment and homelessness. A permanent camping site was established in Surrey and equipped as a weekend escape from London.

He also ran a dining room on the dockside, and at lunch-time used to rush over London Bridge from Leadenhall Street to carve the joint. He became involved in a nursery for babies in Southwark and established a series of seaside outings for youngsters, 400 at a time in private cars and coaches. He managed his father's business of textile valuation and auctioneering in Cheapside. As he says, he always wanted to do everything. At 48 he was ordained into the priesthood.

Penrose Halson talked to him at his home in St. Albans.



Alan Fagg in a Victorian chair he rescued from an empty house in Blackfriars which he made into a hostel for homeless boys.

Did you always feel it was the right decision to be ordained?

Yes. Something happened, I don't know what it was. I'd spent most of the war years on shipping affairs at the War Office. I'd always been a churchman, in some way helping with church affairs: scouting, clubs, drama. I was a frequent visitor to City churches, especially St. Ethelburga's, which was recently bombed (that is not very far from St. Katharine's Cree, where once we had a Turners' service on St. Catherine's Day, followed by lunch in the Baltic Shipping Exchange which was destroyed by the St. Mary Axe bomb. There, drinking cocktails in the enormous reception room, luncheon was announced, and a whole wall gradually sank to ground level, and we just walked across into the dining room! In the Baltic Hall there was the Turners' shield, presented by one of our past Masters who was a member of the Baltic, as I was in later years.

The Turner

How did you come to be a Turner?

With Roland Champness, whom I met in Toc H, I started a Concert Party called the Toc Howlers, giving dreadful concerts for old people in slum areas of London. He asked me if I had ever thought of becoming a Liveryman and I replied "What's that?" At that time I lived in Tower Hill (I also lived in the Docklands of Canning Town. For experience of London I mixed with and slept alongside tramps and down-and-outs and peered into the poorest places). I was very interested in the City, so I became interested in Livery Companies.

Were the Turners very different then?

In 1929, oh yes. I had an awful shock, I was ushered into an enormous room to make the vow, and there was the Court, 25 or 30 men sitting round an enormous big table with long grey and white beards, gazing at me. I thought "What have I done? All these old men!" I was only 23. But I found Turners a very lively and interesting lot.

Did you become Master?

Oh yes, in 1951 when I was 45. The City was still recovering from wartime. The patronal service was held in Westminster Abbey and was conducted by the Dean at the site of the medieval but ruined chapel of St. Catherine. We lunched in the Abbey precincts and held the Court in the historic Jerusalem Chamber. The Port of London Authority loaned to me their large motor yacht which was named St. Catherine, and the whole Company was invited with their wives to travel the River to the London Docks.

When did you become chaplain to the Company?

In 1954, when ordained into the priesthood. It remains a great privilege to continue on the Court and to act as chaplain.

Do you think Livery Companies are important?

Indeed I do, because of history, their service to the City and maintenance of its crafts, and the wonderful buildings - it was a Mercer who built the Royal Exchange - and marvellous charities, like the Vintners', which they initiate and maintain. After serving as a curate in a Camberwell slum I became a prison chaplain in Maidstone, then in a Sussex prison; next, I became a country vicar, then tutor and chaplain to Whittington College, an almshouse "village" founded by Richard Whittington in 1414. Under the auspices of the Mercers' Company I wrote the centennial history of a shipping company, then the biography (not published) of Richard Whittington.

What happened to the Turners during the War?

We still met, though not much happened, there was a minimum of festivity. The dinners improved after we inherited from Richard Gardner Williams. It took a very long time to decide how to manage the bequest. In those days Company finances were very slender, then this wealth came, and many of the Court wanted to invest it in government stocks, but others wanted to put it into equities and make it earn more money. There was opposition, four members of the Court resigned. In the end it went into equities and has been carefully and wisely

nursed by very good financial people on the Court.

Do you still go to many Turners' occasions?

To some, not all. I went recently to the most wonderful Election Court, held in the Tower of London. We met in the Fusiliers' mess in the centre of that big courtyard, then we went into the Governor's house and had champagne in Anne Boleyn's last room, with her bed and a little tiny window she looked out of, and after dinner we watched the Ceremony of the Keys. After the Keys, my great joy and blessing, my son, came to the Tower to take me back to St. Albans.

WHO IS LOUISE?



Who is Louise? What is she doing? Find out on page 4.

SUPPORT THE LIVERY!

The Master, Andrew Hamilton, exhorts all Turners to turn up at the Livery Companies Exhibition. The City Corporation is sponsoring another exhibition on and by the Livery Companies, after the successful one of 1989. It will be in Guildhall, in the heart of the city, on 12-14th July, 9.30 am - 5.30 pm, admission free.

The exhibition aims to show the wealth of history and tradition of Livery Companies and related organisations, together with their modern-day activities. It highlights their support for traditional crafts and trades, and the important role they play in newer professions, education, training and charity.

The Turners, together with the Society of Ornamental Turners, are as usual fully supporting this exhibition with a stand showing details of the Company and interesting examples of our craft. There will be a Holtzappfel ornamental lathe on the stand being demonstrated to show this important aspect of our craft.

I suspect that many Turners, like me, will have heard of such lathes, but never seen one working. This will be the opportunity. Just TURN UP (Get it! Ed.)

I do encourage all Turners, and their families and friends, to go to Guildhall to see this exhibition and particularly our stand. Support from members of the Livery will be much appreciated by those who are putting in so much effort to make this a success.

Also go to a fascinating exhibition, Seal of Approval, of royal charters and grants of arms of City Livery Companies. At Guildhall Library, May 9th - September 30th, 9.30 a. m. - 5.00 p. m.

The Turner

A LATHE FOR TRELOAR COLLEGE

Andrew Hamilton and Gordon Sloan went with other Turners to a school in Hampshire, to present a lathe. Andrew writes:

In April one of the most significant events in recent Turner history took place: the gift by the Company of a lathe to the Lord Mayor Treloar College. This is a school for severely disabled students aged 8 to 18, who are taught a full range of academic and practical subjects. Most of the pupils are full boarders and all are supported by their local authorities.

The lathe is a Boxford I60TCL Training Bench lathe: a small bench-mounted lathe with a computer attached. The student, possibly with severe movement difficulties, uses the keyboard to set up the desired design via the program. After the insertion of the work piece, the computer takes over instructing the lathe to use the various tools to produce the finished piece.

Gordon writes:

The Master, Wardens and Assistant Colin Field were met by Colonel Lindsay, Director of the Treloar Trust. He described to us the work of the college and role of the Trust, and then led us to the craft teaching area. There we saw students, under the direction of teacher Harry Wilson, operating the lathe.

We very much enjoyed our visit and were both moved and impressed by the dedication and skills of the caring, teaching and administrative staffs who work so hard and effectively for the severely handicapped youngsters in their charge.

GOLFING EVENTS

This year the Turners' golfers have already enjoyed two events, the Prince Arthur Cup which was played at Walton Heath Golf Club and the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators' Society Day at West Byfleet Golf Club. The result in the Prince Arthur competition was our best for many years. Turners finished in the top half of the field of fifty-four entries, thus assuring an invitation to next year's event. The Captain, Peter Ellis, would like to thank Richard Woodwork, Dennis Shaw and Peter Worlidge for their splendid efforts.

The Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators' Society Day incorporated a competition for the Smith-Newson Trophy which the Turners have held for the last two years. However, despite equaling last year's winning total, we were beaten into second place by the Basketmakers with a total of 105 points from their best three cards. However, Ian Cowper produced for us a splendid score of 40 points to take the individual First Prize for the second year in succession. The day was enjoyed by all and the Captain thanks everyone who attended. It was particularly good to see Michael Pragnell and John Slater join us.



Louise is one of the College's GCSE Technology group, pupils with the intellectual ability to understand and design the elements they need, but lacking co-ordination and hand strength. Harry Wilson (second from left, standing) says: "They're all marvelling at the lathe. Using it has given them a lot of confidence, and the accuracy means they can produce beautiful work. They use it all the time, it's tremendously popular!"

(Photo: JRP Photographic)