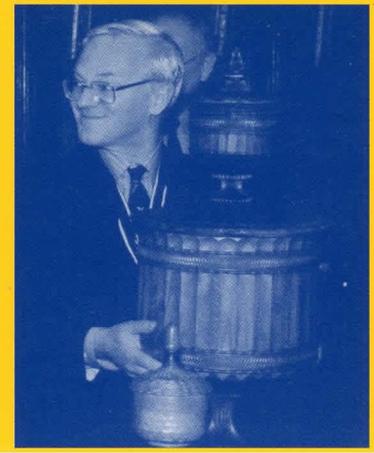




A.D. 2000

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF TURNERS OF LONDON MILLENNIUM A-Z



A

Apothecaries' Hall

In the mid-18th century furniture fashion changed, and turned chair and table legs were replaced by straight legs, or carriage legs and French scroll toes. Turners lost work, the Company's finances suffered. In 1766 the Company sold, for £1,500, their second and last hall, and for nearly 200 years met in local taverns and other Companies' Halls. Sir Stanley Woodwork, Master of the Turners' Company in 1943-44, and simultaneously Master of the Apothecaries' Society and the Barbers' Company - a unique distinction - arranged for the Turners to use Apothecaries' Hall as their "regular domicile" - a most happy arrangement to this day.

Apprenticeship

The Company's Ordinances of 1608 limited members of the Company to two apprentices each, both British born, to be indentured at the Hall and bound for at least seven years. Apprenticeship declined in the 19th century - but still exist (see the Indenture of Charles Field, grandson of Edward, on page 2).

Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

AWGB was launched in 1987 following a seminar at Loughborough and has developed largely under the guidance of Ray Key. Anyone interested in the craft can join. Most of the 2,000+ members belong to affiliated local amateur societies or clubs. One of the AWGB's main achievements is the well-presented exhibitions of members' work at the many woodworking shows.

B

Beadle

Key player in the smooth running of the Company's formal occasions. The Beadle makes sure that the Master and Wardens have their robes and badges,

summons people to dinner, announces guests and speakers, oversees communications between kitchen and dining hall, looks after new members when they come to receive the Freedom or the Livery, shepherds, guides and soothes. He carries a wooden staff topped with a beautiful silver arm grasping a Catherine wheel, made in 1784.

C

Champness

Roland Francis Champness, Clerk of the Company 1934-38 and 1946-62, Master in 1939 and man of remarkable scholarship, wrote the history of the Company given to all Freemen when they are presented with the Freedom.

Chaplain

The connection between the Church and the secular status of the early guilds is hard to establish - religious and business motives were thoroughly intertwined. The Turners appoint an Honorary Chaplain - the photograph on page 3 shows Canon John Oates, with Mrs John Ciclitira at a Company lunch.

Charitable work

With part of Richard Gardner Williams' bequest, the Company set up a charitable trust. Beneficiaries are charities chosen by the Lord Mayor and by the Master, and charities connected with the City, the craft of turning and the armed forces. The Company constantly aims to increase its trust funds (N.B.)

Charter of James 1

On June 12th 1604 King James 1 granted the Turners their first royal Charter. It cost the Company £64 17s 8d, a large sum (and welcome addition to the royal coffers). It is written in Latin on two skins, and is still happily in the Company's possession. It constitutes the Company as The Master, Wardens and Commonalty of the Mistery or Art of the Turners of London, and lays down that

there shall be a Master, Wardens and Assistants, empowered to fine or imprison those who disobey the laws, ordinances and constitutions ordained for the good government of the craft.

City

The City of London's ancient, anachronistic and highly successful system of government is based on the City's 102 Livery Companies (the Turners come in at number 51). The Livery elect the Lord Mayor from among themselves: eight Turners became Lord Mayor between 1874 and 1949. As other Companies, Turners want to enhance the life, relevance and reputation of the City, and support its strong tradition of charitable giving.

City & Guilds

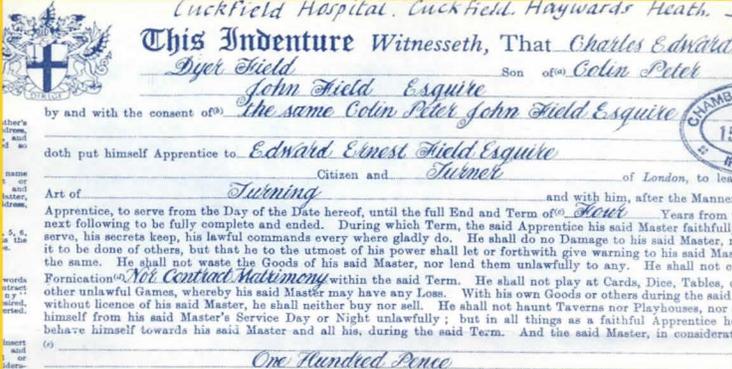
World-famous educational organisation established by the City and many livery companies in 1878. It sets examinations, curricula and standards, and awards certificates, in a wide range of craft subjects.

Clerk

If the Master is the Prime Minister and the Court is his Cabinet, the Clerk is Head of the Cabinet Office - and its entire membership too! He is a one-man Civil Service. A supreme administrator, he organises the Company's events, acts as secretary to the Court, disseminates information, liaises with everyone and solves complex problems while remaining calm, cool and diplomatic. The photograph above (left) shows Richard Woodwork, Clerk from 1985-96, and Master of the Company in both 1961 and 1972. On the right: Clerk Edward Windsor Clive lifting an exceptionally weighty wassail bowl entered in the Millennium Turning Competitions.

Coat of arms

The Company's armorial bearings, authorised by a Grant of Arms in 1634, show a Catherine wheel between two columns, a crown and a hatchet,



surmounted by Saint Catherine, crowned, holding a Catherine wheel and a sword. The motto is By faith I obteigne, "obteigne" meaning "prevail" or "succeed" (photograph page 4).

Committees

The Court appoints committees to run the Company's affairs: the Standing Committee, Finance Committee, Howe Committee - named after master craftsman Fred Howe - which promotes and supports the craft of turning, and the Livery Committee, which organises informal social events.

Competitions

The Company encourages amateur and professional turners, awarding medals, certificates, silver cups and cheques for competitions and examinations. The City and Guilds of London Institute holds examinations in mechanical engineering craft studies and in machine woodworking, the armed services select their craftsmen of the year. Members of the Company's Register of Professional Turners, and of the Company itself, compete too. Every two years the wonderfully high-quality work is displayed in Apothecaries' Hall, and prizes are presented. New bursaries are planned for our Quatercentenary. The photo above shows the Lord Mayor talking to the winner of the Millennium Competition for wassail bowls, Jeremy Soulsby. John Edwards, winner of both second and third prizes, is on the left; and in the background is Leonard Scherock, who won both the Lady Crawford and the HE Twentyman medals. He is an American turner who flew over especially for the competitions, keeping an eagle eye on his magnificent entries by carrying them in his hand luggage.

Court

The Court consists of the Master and Wardens, and between 13 and 24

Assistants, including all Past Masters who have not retired from the Court, and senior Liverymen nominated by the Court for their personal qualities. The Court meets four times a year.

D

Dinners

Turners are convivial and hospitable, and enjoy entertaining guests with good food, wine and conversation. The Livery Dinner is traditionally attended by the Lord Mayor, who is presented with a piece of fine turning, and the Sheriffs. Guests are also invited to the Ladies' Dinner and are given an appropriate memento. The Gardner Williams Commemoration Dinner is for Company members only.

E

Education

As a livery company, Turners are naturally keen to remain in touch with the activities of the City institutions in the field of education. However, our educational aims are rather different from those of the majority of other Companies. Whilst modern education understandably concentrates on progress towards university degrees and management qualifications, the Turners' Company focuses far more on individual, practical skills with lathes.

E-mail

To the bafflement of some but to the delight of Turner-techies, the Clerk now has an e-mail address: clerk@turnerscompany.demon.co.uk

F

Fire of London

All burnt is the sad comment written on the draft inventory of the Company's implements made only weeks before the Great Fire of London in 1666. Plate, linen and books were rescued; but the ivory gavel, the picture of King James, flags, tables and all manner of objects fell to the flames which

consumed the first Turners' Hall in Philpot Lane (and 43 other livery company halls).

G

Gardner Williams

Richard Gardner Williams, a quiet and unassuming mechanical engineer, joined the Company in 1913, died in 1931, and left nine tenths of his considerable fortune to the Turners "absolutely but with a request that they will apply the same in the first place to provide the cost of an Annual Dinner and Banquet to all the Members of the said Company, which dinner it is my wish should be held on the twenty-fourth day of February in each year". This astonishing bequest transformed the Company's financial position. Gardner Williams' memory is toasted at the annual banquet held on or near his birthday. Past Master Alan Fagg, who was also our Chaplain, and Father of the Company, wrote a "Sentiment" for the banquet, ending:
Now Master, if thy will it be,
Let us stand and we shall see
Each other's joy and gratitude
For riches to our Company endued
By one who spreads our bread and
marg with jam,
To Richard - in Piam Memoriam!

Golfing Society

Many of the Company's splendid silver cups are golf trophies, dating from the founding of the Turners' Golfing Society in 1935. Since then the Society has had lows, such as the cessation of fixtures during the War, and is now driving off again.

Guilds

By the end of the twelfth century London had guilds of craftsmen who associated for mutual protection and support. The beginnings of the Guild of Turners can probably be dated to between 1295 and 1310. As the guilds developed into livery companies, the



craft (trade) element mingled with the fraternity (religious) element. Each year all the livery companies congregate in Saint Paul's cathedral for the United Guilds service.

H

Howe

Fred Howe was a soldier who worked on rehabilitating wounded men. Realising that using a lathe would help their muscle coordination, he learned to turn. He developed into a superb turner, was a founder of the Society of Ornamental Turners, won virtually all the Company's awards and medals, became a Freeman Prizeman and was presented with the Livery. The Company owns some of his finest pieces, and displays them on formal occasions.

J

Jones

In the mid-18th century the Company could no longer control its craft. It lacked a *raison d'être*; and it had no hall and little money. Luckily in the 19th century John Jones, a fearless reformer, oratorical giant and colourful personality, together with a small ginger group, shook up the Company. They revived its interest in turning, started national turning competitions, instigated the presentation of the Honorary Freedom of the Company to distinguished men and women (e.g. Baroness Burdett Coutts, H.M. Stanley, Gladstone and Lloyd George) and put the Company on the City's map.

L

Ladies

The first record of ladies being welcomed at a Company dinner is dated 1609, when "the mistery or arte de lez Turners London did perform and make a dynner for the Master Wardens Assistants and Lyvery of the Company and their wyves". Ladies could

become Honorary Freemen; but were not admitted as Freemen of the Company until 1986, after statesmanlike handling of the issue by Master Sir Leslie Tyler. The photo above shows the Beadle with the Company's first Lady Liverymen, Amelia Smithers (left) and Caroline Cowper, admitted in 1987. Since ladies are **Freemen** or **Liverymen**, Turners will never have a Mistress (this will reassure some Turners).

Lathes

Whether a treadle lathe operated by man-power, or the most sophisticated machine-operated lathe controlled by computer, a lathe has a simple basic function: it holds firm a piece of wood (or metal, ivory, soapstone etc) and revolves it at a regular speed while tools are applied to shape it. Craftsmen use their lathe to make useful and/or decorative objects, engineers to make tools and components.

Lignum vitae

"Wood of life" was thought to be the West Indian cure for venereal disease. It contains an oil which makes the wood impermeable; so turners used it to make drinking bowls, goblets and loving cups (with the additional selling point that the wood's curative qualities might pass into the liquid).

Livery

Originally the liveries of the guilds consisted of a hood and a gown, usually parti-coloured. The Turners' colours are blue and gold, the heraldic colours of the Company.

Loving Cup

Our Loving Cup Ceremony centres on the seventeenth-century wassail bowl made of *lignum vitae* presented to the Company in 1936. From this "product of our time-honoured craft" the Master

fills (notionally) the other loving cups which are circulated.

M

Master

Elected by the Court, the Master holds office for a year from Ascension Day. He wears a badge presented by the Livery to the Court in 1877, in appreciation of the Court's great services in the cause of Technical Education. The gold and enamel badge shows Saint Catherine between two shields bearing the arms of the City of London and of the Company. The photo above shows Colin Field wearing the badge when he was Master.

Mistery or art

The medieval crafts had their own skills and secrets, which were a "mistery" to outsiders. A mistery is "any mechanical occupation which supposes skill or knowledge peculiar to those who carry it on, and therefore a secret to others".

O

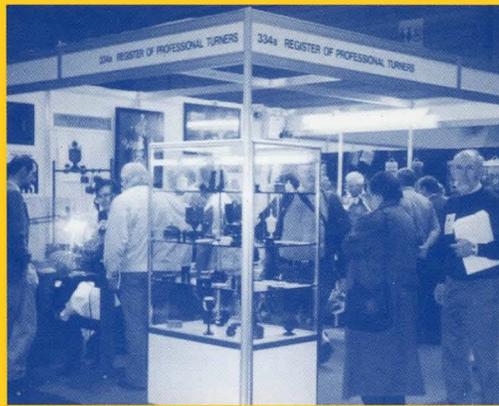
Ornamental turning

Ornamental turning is the creation of intricate decoration using special attachments to a lathe, which enable plain turning to be converted to more complex shapes. Plain turners emphasise the texture, grain and colour of wood, and the overall shape; ornamentals go for complex, highly decorative designs. Ornamental turning was very fashionable in the 19th century, when John Jacob Holtzapffel made extremely precise lathes. The craft is now fostered by the Society of Ornamental Turners.

Q

Quatercentenary

2004 is the 400th anniversary of our Charter. Celebratory events are already being planned, including a special turning competition which promises to be unmissable.



R

Register of Professional Turners

If you want a new staircase baluster and newels, or a special birthday present, or a commemorative piece, consult the Company's Register of Professional Turners, set up by the inspirational Past Master Felix Levy in 1978. It lists craftsmen all over the country whose work is approved by the Company's assessors. The Lord Mayor commended the Register on setting up a website, which has trade links with the City of London site. Visit the Register: <http://members.aol.com/RPTurners>

REME

The Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers are closely associated with the Company. The photo above shows the silver porringer bowl presented by the Company to the Corps on its formation in 1942. Turners support REME apprentice training by awarding a silver medal annually to the apprentice who achieved the highest standards of craft skills during training. We also present the Turners' Shield for the best REME TA team in an annual military and technical competition for units in London and SE England.

S

Saints

Saint Bride's is the Fleet Street church where the Company now holds its Patronal Service on November 25th, the Feast of our patron saint, **Saint Catherine of Alexandria**. According to tradition, she was to have been martyred on the wheel (hence "Catherine wheel"). But the torture instrument was broken by divine intervention (the Beadle's staffhead shows the break).

T

Titlow

In 1613, tough on discipline, the Court fined Richard Titlow 33s 4d for behaving himself "undecently and unrevrently in moste wild speeches" against the Master, referring to him as a "nytty breeched

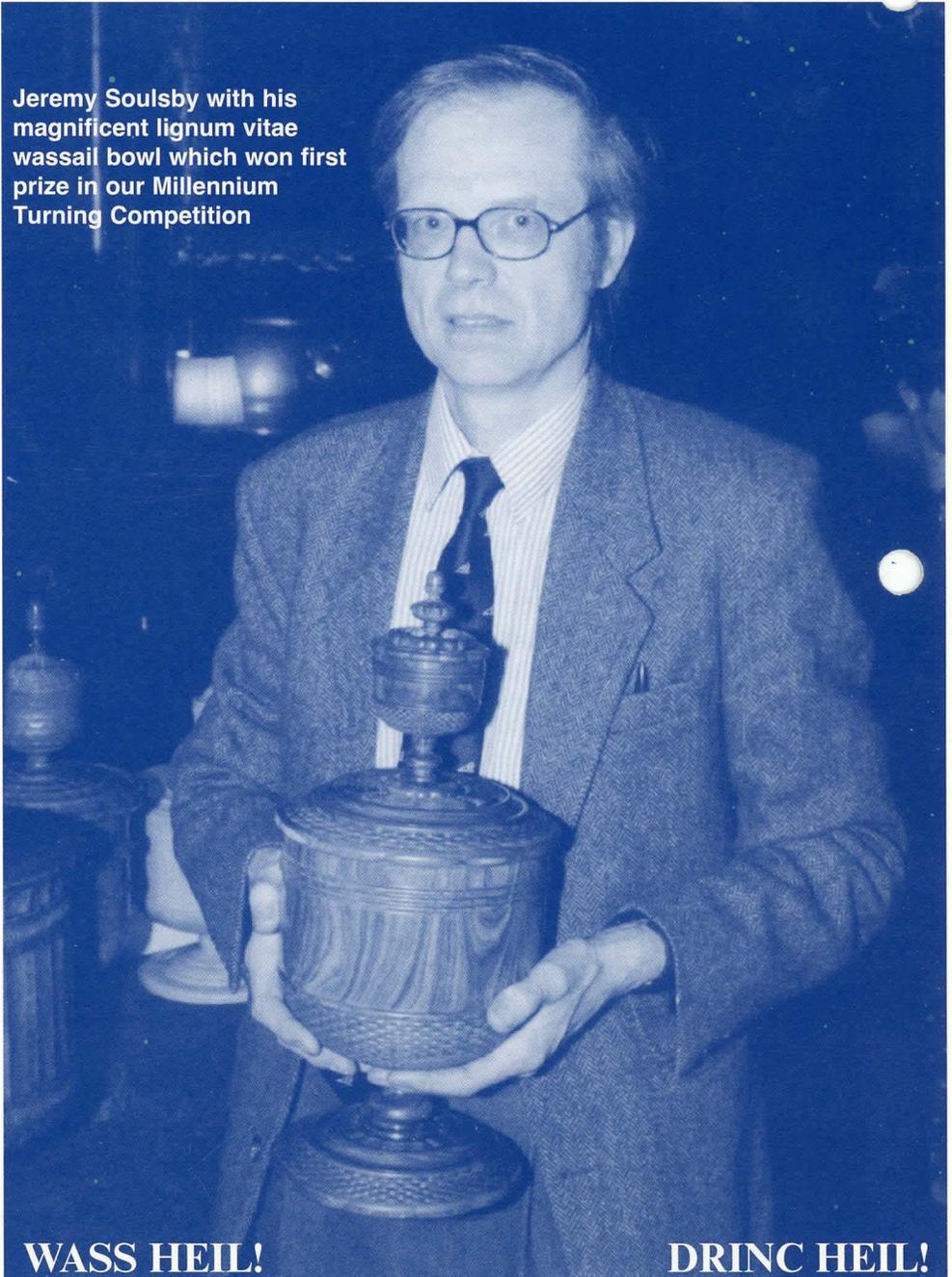
fellowe, a round thinge like a football, and that he could finde in his hart to give him a kick in the breech and tumble him up and downe the street like a football". Attitudes and language have softened since.

W

Website

The Company's registered website is www.turnersco.com. Developing it takes time, money and skill. Able-minded volunteers should contact the Livery Committee (via the Clerk).

Jeremy Soulsby with his magnificent lignum vitae wassail bowl which won first prize in our Millennium Turning Competition



WASS HEIL!

DRINC HEIL!