



THE TURNER



NEWSLETTER OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF TURNERS OF LONDON

Summer 2007

Dear Fellow Turners

It is a humbling thought to know that on Ascension Day I joined a list of Masters stretching unbroken over 403 years to John Turner, our first Master by that title. As I walk through the City I often reflect that the streets I pound are very different from those that John Turner walked and yet equally vital and vibrant, if a little more fragrant. The East India Company was founded barely 4 years before the Company received its Charter and it can be said that this great trading enterprise laid the foundations of the modern City commercial and financial and, some say, of globalisation.

The Craft too has changed in the intervening centuries, with the production of utensils moving to the creation of works of art. In a small way the Company's regulatory powers are today reflected in the seal of approval quality that organisations like the Register of Professional Turners, supported by the Company, give to individual craftsmen.

Little did my great-uncle, Lt Col Francis Griffin, or I think that I would one day become Master of this great Company when he sponsored me for the Freedom. It is to me immensely encouraging that there are so many family links with several generations among the membership. This makes us as a Company different, because our traditions are not just founded on professional interests but also on family connections and I shall be delighted to raise our son, William, to the Livery during my year in the Chair.

Many members of other Livery Companies have commented on the friendliness and companionship that the Turners enjoy and offer to their guests. This is one our great strengths and it is you who make our gatherings so cheerful and companionable. No Master has much influence over this and all I can do is to thank you for the personal friendship that you have shown me in the past and to ask you to continue to support the Company with the inimitable fellowship that you have shown hereto.

I hope to build on the work of my predecessors who have done so much to advance the Company in the City and the Craft. In 2008 we shall have another "Wizardry in Wood" Exhibition, the first of which coincided with our Quatercentenary. It is my intention to make contact with overseas turners so that hopefully we can give this exhibition an international dimension.

In July we shall have a Summer Party in the courtyard of Apothecaries Hall – weather permitting – where we can demonstrate the craft of the Turner to friends old and new and I hope that you will bring your own friends to introduce them to the Company.

There are some other events and initiatives that I am planning but to reveal too much would spoil the surprise.

The Court has elected me to succeed the Company's first Lady Master. That in itself is a historic milestone, but Penrose is much more than that. During her year she has worked enormously on behalf of the Company and has been one of the most active Masters we have had the privilege of serving. Her achievements have contributed greatly to our progress and I should like to thank her, both personally and on behalf of all the members of the Company, for setting a very high example for her immediate successor.

I look forward to sharing many happy moments with you during my year as Master.

With best wishes



The Master when Upper Warden and George Lucus, now Upper Warden, in the courtyard of Apothecaries Hall on the occasion of the Ladies Dinner [date] April 2007

Issue 28

Turners' demonstrate pan skills in new Guildhall yard tradition

Rolls Royce treatment to see ornamental turning collection

Nehemiah Wallington and this history of 17th Century turning

Penrose Halson on her year as Master, sheep and shooting

Turning Exhibitions in 1897 and plans for the 2008 at our next Wizardry in Wood

Our 2006 Turning Competitions

Future Events and the Clerk's Notes

Deputy Master Penrose Halson reflects on her year as Master, sheep and shooting

There are Livery Companies both ancient and modern, rich and poor, with a hall and without, with an active craft or profession and without. The smallest has 75 members, the largest over 1,300. The oldest date from the Middle Ages, the youngest from the 21st century. Some Freeman and Liverymen come from generations of Livery members, others first heard of Livery Companies last year. Some are from traditional professions, others are hedge fund managers, in IT or PR.

With all the variations, the common emphasis is constant: tradition, charity, support for Craft and the City, and hospitality. The welcome I have found everywhere has warmed my year, adding to the delight of new experiences. I have feasted at lunches and dinners in glorious halls, had tea in the garden of Buckingham Palace, heard wonderful music in churches and cathedrals, listened to lectures and presentations, visited schools and hospitals, museums and factories.

Picking out highlights is almost impossible but there are some moments which are fixed in my mind's eye: the Parish Clerks' Company dinner, when members toast one another using not their own name, but the name of the saint of their church, so that a middle-aged, respectable-looking man rises, glass in hand, and calls to a similar man "Saint Mildred toasts Saint Anne!". The blazing June heat in which robed Livery Masters paraded around the ring of the Royal Cornwall Show, after the sheep and before the horses. The poignant silence as Masters planted their crosses and poppies outside St Paul's in remembrance.



Space for Caption

The Guildhall packed out for the Guild of Freeman's banquet, presided over by our own Barbara Newman. The patient, kindly REME sergeant who helped me fire the only gun I've ever touched, during Operation Southern Craftsman. The charming and funny speech made by William, aged 12, son of our Bursary-winner Joey Richardson at the opening of her superb exhibition. The joviality of the golfers at the Turners' Golf Day. The visit to the Gunmakers' Company, where bundles of guns lie alongside boxes labelled *Blanc de Blanc*, and the third bang of the beadle's gavel is synchronized with an astonishing *bang!* from the sealed room where guns are proofed. The excitement of seeing Freeman Stuart King, dressed in an apron and pantomime hat, win his heat in the Poulterers' Company's pancake races.

It has been my amazing good fortune to be Master of the Turners, and I have tried in return to spread the word about our Company and our

Craft, to increase our charitable giving and to make sure that you, the members know what is

going on and enjoy yourselves. I have had the benefit of constant backing from members, the Court, Past Masters, my invaluable Wardens George Kieffer and Rob Lucas, hard-working committees, and our knowledgeable Clerk. Plus, at home, my husband Bill. It has been a team effort, and I give heartfelt thanks to all who help to make our Company of Turners such a vital organisation. May it keep flourishing, root and branch, for ever.

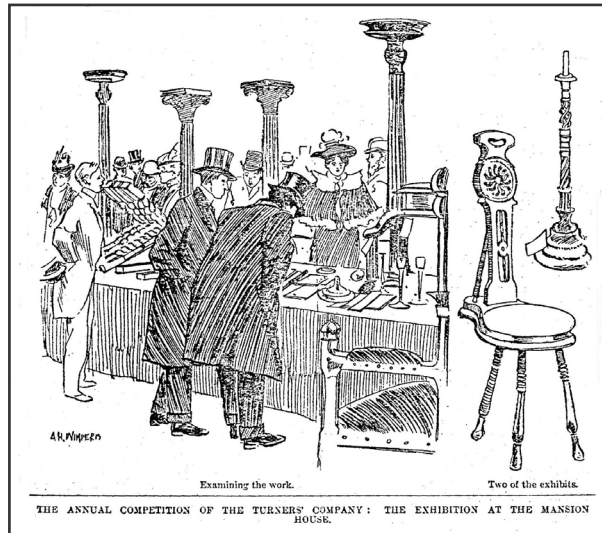
Turning Exhibitions: Ellison scores in 1897 - Wizardry in Wood in 2008

This delightful sketch appeared in the "Daily Graphic" of 1897 and is an evocative record of the activities of the Turners' Company 110 years ago. It is also a timely reminder of our next "Wizardry in Wood" to be held on 4-6th June, 2008 at the Carpenters' Hall.

The event was the 27th annual Exhibition and Competition of the Turners' Company and was held at the Mansion House. The judges included the Lord Mayor himself together with Mr W Burdett-Coutts, a past-Master of the Company, and Mr A Murray, the City Surveyor. The judges reported that "the work has been well up to the standard of excellence they usually expect".

One sign of the times is that "The work of the apprentices is particularly admirable" whereas in today's environment there is regrettably a paucity of this form of training not only in turning but across all skills. The main prize of a Silver Medal and the sum of five guineas went to a Mr W Watson for "a very varied and eminently useful collection of spiral, square and oval turned balusters". He was also awarded the Freedom of the City and the Company.

In the Amateur Section, the main prizes were awarded to one of the best-known turners of the time, the Reverend Charles C Ellison of Bracebridge, Lincolnshire. He had been a winner for several years previously. Ellison was a County cricketer, angler, shot, rose and fruit grower (with 2000 apple and pear trees in 200 varieties including his own breed of Ellison's Orange).



A contemporary commentator in "The Star" refers to him as "the hale old cleric who scarcely looks his three score years, has the good fortune to possess ample private means, and as his Lincolnshire village comprise only about two thousand souls, he has ample time for leisure...it would probably be short of the truth to estimate the value of his tools at between £2,000 and £3,000".

The style of clothes may have changed since 1897, but neither the obvious interest of the visitors nor the appreciation of the excellence have dimmed in the intervening years. We look forward to these sentiments being revealed again in next year's "Wizardry in Wood". **Nick Edwards**

Wizardry in Wood

Art • Beauty • Skill • Mystery



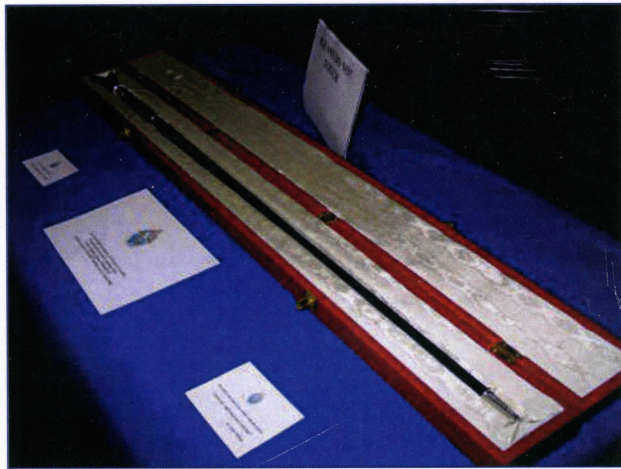
4-6 June 2008
Carpenters Hall,
City of London

Following the Company's highly successful 400 year anniversary and first Wizardry in Wood exhibition in 2004, plans are well underway to hold our second exhibition in 2008. Organised by a group led by Upper warden Rob Lucas. The Carpenter's Hall provides greater space for a wide range of displays, including Collectors' pieces of US-inspired wood art, museum pieces of rare antique treen, turning demonstrations, prize-winning turnery from the Company's Turning Competitions, the work of winners of the Company's Bursary awards, the finest plain turning by the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain and virtuoso turning by the Society of Ornamental Turners.

Special Gifts to the Queen and Lord Mayor

There is no finer craft than ours for making magnificent commemorative gifts for special occasions. The Company has recently given two particularly splendid turned pieces: a stalking stick to the Queen, to mark her 80th birthday last year, and an ornamental turned covered box of African blackwood to the Lord Mayor when he came to our Livery Dinner.

Both pieces were ornamented with silver, a striking addition to the beautifully-turned wood.



The stalking stick, conceived by Past Master John Ciclitira, was made by Freeman Paul Coker RPT, one of the finest ornamental turners in the country. His website, www.cpaulcoker.co.uk, shows some of the astonishingly beautiful things he makes.

The Lord Mayor's covered box was made by Cecil Jordan, one of the most experienced of our ornamental turners. Contact him (Tel: 01242 226 496) for that special present or to commission a unique turned piece.

The Original Bert Marsh



Bert Marsh was one of the exhibitors at last year's Origin Craft Fair, organised by the Crafts Council and which has replaced the Chelsea Crafts Fair.

Bert will also be exhibiting at this year's Origin during the second week (9-14 October) on Stand 2-K9. Over 320 craftsmen will be exhibiting their work at Origin, which includes glass, ceramics, jewellery, furniture and textiles.

Other wood turners taking part are (Week 1; 2-7 Oct) Ray Kay, Kenneth Behr Menczer and Roger Bennett and (Week 2) Sarah Thirwell. Origin is held in the Courtyard of Somerset House on the Strand. Full details at: www.craftsonline.org.uk.

Turners visit one of the City's oldest private houses



In March, an Informal Lunch was hosted by Assistant Andrea Cenci di Bello at his historic and wonderfully restored house in Cloth Fair, which dates back to 1583. Those attending included (left to right) Nic Somers, David Axson, Penrose Halson, Andrea, Edward Windsor Clive, Brian Cooke, Kate Abbott and Rhidian Jones. Last September, many more Turners and their guests were invited by Andrea and his wife Penny to guided tours of the house and an evening of their hospitality.

Clerk's Notes

The Court has been enhanced by a new Assistant, Andrew Neill, who was sworn in at the July Court.

The company had the pleasure of raising Kate Abbott, Sarah Fabergé, Matthew Gaved, Susan Maxwell, Chris Scott and Nicholas Somers to the Livery.

We have also welcomed April Weiss, Peter Godding, Nick Fisher, Simon Noakes, Neil Doling, Jonathan Farminer, Tony Howard, James Dunn, Richard Jordan and Stuart Mortimer to the Freedom.

For the second year, a Common Hall was held before the Gardner Williams Dinner and was well attended. The Chairmen of each Committee had produced a synopsis of their committee, which was circulated.

The synopsis has been posted on the Company website, if you would like to see it. It has been agreed that a synopsis of future Court and committee meetings will also be made available to the Company in this way.

We are sad to report the death, on 20th August, of our honorary Liveryman Theo Fabergé and, on 7th September 2007, Past Master John Ciclitira. We hope to have obituaries of them in our next edition.

New Liverymen and appointments for our Beadle



New Liveryman attending the September 2006 Livery Lunch included (l to r) Christopher Scott, Kate Abbott, Nicholas Somers, Sarah Fabergé and Susie Maxwell, together with our Clerk, Edward Windsor Clive. In a photograph taken the same day (right) is our Beadle Stephen Grundy. Steve has also been Beadle of the Worshipful Company of Engineers and has now been appointed Assistant Clerk of the Company. So highly do the Engineers value him that they have also made him a Freeman of their Company. We congratulate him.

