



THE TURNER



NEWSLETTER OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF TURNERS OF LONDON

January 2008

Sixty Years of the Gardner Williams Dinner

This year sees the 60th Anniversary of the Dinner commemorating our benefactor, Richard Gardner Williams. Born on 24th February 1866 and educated at the King's School, Chester, he became a premium apprentice at the LNWR locomotive works at Crewe and then worked in the drawing office at Laird Brothers, shipbuilders in Birkenhead. Some time later he joined the Vacuum Oil Company as an engineer, later acting as the sales representative in the North.

The General Manager of the time was Charles Wakefield (subsequently Viscount Wakefield of Hythe) who joined the Livery in 1906 and the Court in 1912. Based in London, Gardner Williams became Wakefield's special railway representative for South America. Doubtless he was introduced to the Company by Wakefield and came to the Livery in 1913.

From the records, he apparently had little contact with the Livery or Court and it came as a complete surprise, therefore, to find that when he died on 13th February 1931 he had bequeathed a huge sum to the Company. He died childless but had made generous provision for his widow and sister during their lifetimes.

Some seventeen years later, the major portion of his estate of some £40,327 finally came to the Turners. The Company's general investments at that time stood otherwise at £4,329. It was bequeathed "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... on the 24th day of February in each year".



A familiar scene as the Clerk proffers the Loving Cup at the last Gardner Williams Dinner

The Finance Committee of the day recommended that the capital be invested in first-class equities, thus changing the wealth of the Company dramatically.

The first Gardner Williams Commemoration Dinner was held on 22nd April 1948 and has been held every year since, whenever possible on 24th February, Richard Gardener Williams' birthday.

The rationale for Gardner Williams to make the bequest has never been totally explained. Roland Champness, the Company's historian, concludes that it seems to follow a thought process of other benefactors that here was an organization that had already survived for 600 years and could evidently be relied upon to make good use of it.

On drinking a toast to our benefactor at our next Dinner, made possible by his wonderful legacy, we should perhaps reflect on that sentiment and also on the first Dinner attended by 64 of the Livery almost 60 years ago.

Company Gold Medal awarded to Tony Johns

At September's Livery Lunch, the Company's Gold Medal was awarded by the Master to Liveryman Anthony Johns. In his speech presenting the award, the Master explained how Tony's association with the Company began in the early 1980s when he was nominated by the Institution of Production Engineers as an eminent professional to judge the Company's Design Award Competition. Tony became a Freeman by presentation in 1991 and a Liveryman in 1993. Tony's commitment to the Company has been "resolute and positive throughout his 25 years' service" and includes his work with the Howe Committee, which provides the Company's link to the craft of turning.

The Master also explained how Tony has written himself into the Company's history, as over the last ten years he has laboured at the monumental task of capturing and recording our age-old procedures in the Court Manual. This outstanding achievement provides a guide for the officers of the Company and particularly the current and future Masters.



Issue 29

Celebrating the lives of Past Master John Ciclitira and Honorary Liveryman Theo Fabergé, grandson of Carl.

News of the 'Wizards in Wood' exhibition which starts 29th January at LINLEY in Mayfair, featuring the work of Stuart Mortimer and Joey Richardson. Ends 16th February.

Update on the Company's plans for the Wizardry in Wood 2008 exhibition in June plus key dates for your diary.

Clerks' Notes: nine new Liverymen appointed.

African explorer and opponent of the slave trade, Stanley was an Honorary Freeman and awarded the Company's medal. Tim Jeal's new biography tells the story.

John Nikolas Ciclitira 1926 - 2007

Past Master John Ciclitira was born on the 19th of May 1926 at Westcliff on Sea. Other than for a short period during WW II, when he was evacuated to Belper in Derbyshire, John always lived at Westcliff. He was educated at Westcliff High School and on leaving school he went to work in London as a quantity surveyor. It was during his daily journey by train to Fenchurch Street that he met Mim, his future wife and, following a long engagement, they were married on the 28th December 1950.

John also joined the army and was commissioned as a young lieutenant in the Essex regiment at the Royal Military College in Sandhurst. Indeed, his was the last passing out parade before the college changed its name to the Academy, as it is known today.

The dried fruit industry played a significant part in John's life and he was particularly proud to be able to build a headquarters for his company in Leman Street. He also spent much time helping to set up the association for the dried fruit industry and was three times its chairman.

Throughout his life John loved the sea and sailing, so he bought a half share in an Essex yacht with a close friend and the extra crew member was Mim. It was a fellow member of the yacht club, Greg Walker, who introduced John to the Turners' Livery Company.

He became a Freeman of the Company in 1968 and a Liveryman in 1969. His election to Master came in 1996, an achievement of which he was justifiably proud. He loved the traditions of the Turners and of the City of London. Indeed, although John's mother's Company was the Turners, he was also a Fruiterer and a Blacksmith.

John could be resolute and tenacious but always formally correct. Indeed it was his tenacity and energy which guided the project to give a gift, from the Company, of a thumb stick, to her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her 80th birthday.

John had the additional satisfaction of seeing his son Andrew, then Master of the Company, presenting the gift at Windsor Castle. Latterly John's energy was spent in raising funds for the inshore City of London lifeboats. John also had a keen and sometimes mischievous sense of humour and he will be greatly missed by Mim, sons David and Andrew and all in the Company.

Peter Ellis

Theo Fabergé 1922 - 2007

Theo Fabergé, the last surviving grandson of Russian Imperial Jeweller Carl Fabergé, passed away peacefully on 20th August 2007 in St Leonard's-on-Sea in his 85th year.

Carl Fabergé had five sons, the last of whom Nikolai - always referred to as Nicolas and so named to mark the death of his deceased infant brother also Nikolai - was sent to England to represent the family business in 1903.

When the Russian revolution took place Nicolas understandably elected to remain in London, and following the closure of the Bond Street shop established himself as one of England's first fashion photographers. Nicolas's only child Theo was born in 1922.

Theo Fabergé was brought up in Twickenham and served in the RAF in North Africa in World War II. He established a successful engineering business in the 1960s.



He had developed an early interest in decorative objects and was a prolific craftsman long before he was aware of his ancestry. It was only in 1969 after a family funeral that he was given a clue as to his true origin. A visit to Somerset House confirmed his father's identity and Theo, with his passion for objets d'art, found from his birth certificate that he was Theo Fabergé.

Theo furthered his turning skills, particularly with an 1861 Holtzapffel ornamental lathe which he restored. He made an ivory casket for the Silver Jubilee in 1977, resulting in the award of the Gertrude Crawford Medal and in his election as Freeman Prizeman of the Turners. He developed techniques employing precious metals, enamel and gemstones.

He established a workshop but initially refused to make eggs in deference to his grandfather.

It was only the chance comment "Why, Mr Fabergé, you're making eggs!" by a visitor who saw him turning a piece of yew-wood as a gift for an 8-year-old boy, that persuaded him.

The result was an early collection of objets d'art, each one personally made by Theo Fabergé - even grandfather Carl had rarely crafted his fabulous creations himself.

Given complexities surrounding the use of the name 'Fabergé', 'St Petersburg Collection' was the name chosen in 1986 for the business established to represent Theo Fabergé's designs and creations.

With a Gallery at 42 Burlington Arcade, a stone's throw away from Nicolas Fabergé's premises, an enthusiastic group of collectors was formed and the production of small-series limited editions flourished.

Marshall Field's department store in Chicago witnessed the launch of the collection in the USA which became a thriving market for Theo Fabergé, who made many visits to America where he was very popular.

A proud moment in Theo's career was when, accompanied by his daughter and grandson, he attended the White House for the launch of the White House Egg commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the building of the Presidential residence.

A quiet and unassuming man, Theo Fabergé's modesty belied his delight both in his distinguished ancestry, and in his favourite craft of wood-turning.

Determined never to copy his grandfather Carl, the first wristwatches in the family history contained the ultimate Fabergé surprise - unlike every other product in a strongly commercialised market-place, they bore no brand-name; just an egg in the guilloché enamelled dial, to reveal this most distinguished of provenance.

Theo displayed his watches alongside a magnificent fob watch made for the last Tsar by his grandfather at his 80th birthday party in London, at which the Turners presented him with their Honorary Liverydom - the first such award since Prime Minister Gladstone's.

In 2003 Theo experienced the first of a series of small strokes and came to live in a home near his daughter and grandson. He maintained a keen interest in the art of turning. His only daughter Sarah bears forward the Fabergé name, and continues the family tradition.

Sarah Fabergé

Wizards In Wood: Stuart Mortimer and Joey Richardson

To transform a piece of rough wood into a covetable work of art takes the magical skills of a wizard. Two of the most adept 'Wizards in Wood', Stuart Mortimer and Joey Richardson, will display a selection of their most beautiful works at LINLEY Mayfair, 46 Albemarle Street, London W1, from Tuesday 29th January to Saturday 16th February.

The exhibition is part of the Crafts Council's *Collection*, the programme of special lectures, events and activities in London and Edinburgh to coincide with *Collect*, the international art fair for contemporary objects presented by the Crafts Council at the V&A, London, from 25th to 29th January 2008.

The carefully selected pieces made by Joey and Stuart will be displayed within the overall layout of the LINLEY shop, which also sells furniture, upholstery, gifts and accessories of superb quality.

David Linley, who founded the bespoke design company in 1985, has long upheld the importance of encouraging and preserving the traditional skills of craftsmanship, having himself trained as a cabinetmaker. He was thrilled to be approached by the Company to see whether he could provide an appropriate environment within which to showcase pieces by Stuart and Joey.

'We are delighted to have the opportunity to showcase a selection of works by Stuart Mortimer and Joey Richardson. They really are masters within their respective fields, and epitomize fine craftsmanship at its best' said David Linley.

A lover of wood, Stuart conjures unusual and exotic woods into decorative pieces which are avidly collected. He starts a piece on his lathe, then adds burning, carving, ebonising and piercing to

achieve effects of startling imagination and beauty. Stuart will demonstrate how he makes the most distinctive feature of many of his pieces, a twisted finial, on five special days of demonstrations with Joey at LINLEY Mayfair.

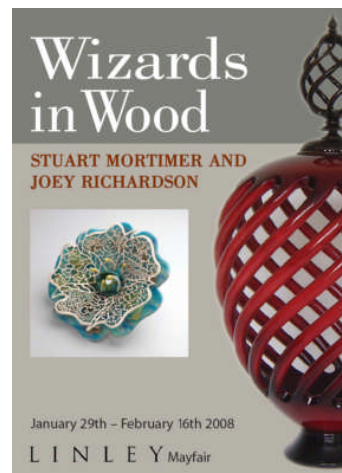
Encouraged by Stuart, Joey Richardson spent the bursary she was awarded by the Turners in 2005 on developing her huge talent for wood-turning.

She is passionate about transforming wood into art, and has created her own distinctive style, using piercing and painting, in pieces which each tell their own story.

Both she and Stuart have won many awards and have sold pieces to collectors all over the world, with a particularly strong following in the USA.

Their work is therefore worth a special visit by members of the Company to LINLEY Mayfair over the three weeks of the exhibition, particularly on the days when Stuart and Joey will be giving demonstrations of their techniques: Thursday 31st January and in February on Wednesday 6th, Thursday 7th, Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th; all between 11am and 3pm.

From the front page of the Wizardry in Wood website (see article below), jump to the dedicated 'Wizards' pages and external links to the websites of LINLEY, Stuart and Joey for more information.



Wizardry in Wood in 2008

Wizardry in Wood will be the Company's major event in 2008 and will be held at the Carpenters' Hall in the City of London. There will be over thirty different stands and exhibits with work from some 25 professional turners, presenting an enormous range of styles and types of turning. Nineteen of the turners will have individual stands and another six will have their work exhibited on the Bursary Stand.

A special Committee of the Company has been working on the preparations for the exhibition. Significant changes from the 2004 event are: firstly, the size of the venue and the opportunities this offers to exhibit a wider range of work; and secondly, greater emphasis being given to promoting the event well in advance to both members of the Company and to a much wider public audience with an interest in fine craftsmanship and works of art in wood.

Wizardry in Wood 2008 will be held from 4th-6th of June. The first publicity comes through two of our exhibitors (Stuart Mortimer and Joey Richardson) being featured in the deliberately similarly named 'Wizards in Wood' exhibition at LINLEY Mayfair.

The Company Turning Competition will also take place at the Carpenters' Hall. Entries will be judged on Tuesday 3rd June and prizes awarded. All members of the Company are invited to view the Competition entries and attend the prize giving on the Tuesday. The winning entries for each category will subsequently be transferred to Wizardry in Wood for display.

The Wizardry in Wood exhibition will be open to the public: 2-6pm Wednesday (4th June); 10am-6pm Thursday (5th) and 10am-2pm Friday (6th). Public entry to the exhibition will be by ticket only and these will be freely available through the Clerk of the Company and the dedicated website.

Members of the Company will also be invited to the Reception of the exhibition on the Wednesday evening (4th June). This will start at 6.30pm at Carpenters' Hall. The following evening a second reception will be held for City guests, including Masters and members of other Livery Companies, members of the Corporation of London and other major City institutions.

Peter Ellis, Chairman of the Committee responsible for Wizardry in Wood said, "Although the planning and preparation work is being undertaken by a small, dedicated team, we hope that the whole Company will help to make this important event a success by encouraging friends and family to attend the public exhibition days and also inviting guests to the Livery reception on the Wednesday evening".

In addition to the individual stands, works from four important collections will be on display. These are the Pinto collection from the City of Birmingham Museum, which includes many outstanding historical items and examples of treen; and the private Daniel, Smouha and St Petersburg collections.

Website: www.wizardryinwood.com

Wizardry in Wood

Art • Beauty • Skill • Mystery



Individual Exhibitors

Katie Abbot
Nick Agar
John Berkeley
Paul Coker
Stephen Cooper
Melvyn Firmager
Mark Hancock
Julie Heryet
Ray Key
Stuart King
Tim Lawson
Carlyn Lindsay
Bert Marsh
Gregory Moreton
Stuart Mortimer
Tom Pockley
Gary Rance
David Reeks
Joey Richardson

Bursary Stand

Stephen Copestake
Margaret Garrard
Sue Harker
Louise Hibbert
Les Thorne
Robin Wood

Clerk's Notes

Eight new members were appointed to the Livery at the meeting of the Court which preceded the Livery Lunch on 28th September 2007. Liverymen Jonathan Farminer, Roger Buse, Nick Fisher, William Kieffer, Roger George, Simon Noakes, Peter Godding and April Weiss (from left to right in the photograph) were introduced to the Company at the Lunch by the Master.

Neil Doling was appointed to the Livery at the Court Meeting on 27th November 2007. Sadly Neil's uncle, Liveryman David Harvey, who brought him into the Company, died shortly before the ceremony.

We are pleased to announce that Liveryman Professor Alan Gillett was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours List for his services to the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and the community in Ealing, West London.

The Mercers have recently completed a survey of Livery Companies using a questionnaire designed by our Clerk. The results showed that the 107 City Livery Companies had a total of 26,000 Liverymen and 15,650 Freemen and contributed some £41 million to charities in 2006. The results are summarised in short Livery Profile which is available on the Company's website or directly from the Clerk.



The true story of Stanley in Africa: a man of foresight and dauntless courage

Henry Morton Stanley was made an honorary Freeman and Liveryman of the Turners' Company in 1872 "for his enterprise in discovering the great traveller, Livingstone, in Central Africa." The Court's resolution ingeniously mentioned "the great probable benefit likely to accrue to the Trade over which the Company presides from fuller information and relations with that ivory-producing country."



We were probably the first public body in England to recognise the truth of Stanley's claims, and he was grateful. The City Corporation did not follow with their Freedom until fifteen years later.

Stanley (born John Rowlands, the result of a teenage pregnancy, in Denbigh in 1841) was abandoned by his mother. His father was unknown. He grew up in the workhouse. At 17 he signed on as a cabin boy on an American freighter, and jumped ship at New Orleans. Henry Stanley was a local cotton magnate, and Rowlands took his name, later claiming to be his adopted son, though they never met. Under his new name he joined the southern army in the American civil war,

fought at the battle of Shiloh, was captured, changed sides and joined the federal army, deserted, joined the federal navy, deserted from that, and became a journalist, covering fights with Indians in the wild west and a British military foray into Abyssinia. His quest to find David Livingstone was financed by his paper, the New York Herald.

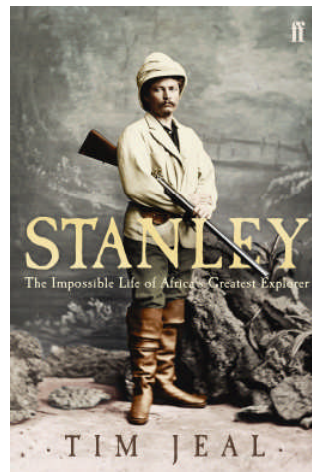
In 2003, Past Master Ian Cowper presented to the Company Stanley's honorary Freedom and Livery medal. As I had read through all the Court minutes from 1965 onwards when writing the update of the History, I was aware (though those who acknowledged his gift were apparently not aware) that the medal had come up for public auction in 1986, and that Ian Cowper had attended the auction with the Company's bid limit of £400.

He reported to the Court at its next meeting that £400 was inadequate, and that the medal had fetched £1,200. I realised that Ian had evidently bought the medal himself at the auction for £1,200, without mentioning that fact to the Court. Thanks to his generosity, the Company now owns this item of great historical interest.

"STANLEY, The Impossible Life of Africa's Greatest Explorer", a new book written by Tim Jeal, is according to its reviewer, John Carey, not just an absorbing, sometimes horrifying biography, but a feat of advocacy – an ardent, intricate defence of a man history has damned. Stanley, Victorian explorer and hero, has been indicted in

modern times as a brutal racist who connived with King Leopold II of Belgium in the vicious exploitation of the Congo.

Jeal is the first biographer to have had unrestricted access to the Stanley archive in the Museum for Central Africa in Brussels.



Comparison of his diaries with his books shows that in the latter, which enjoyed colossal sales to the Victorians, he exaggerated the harshness of his disciplinary measures and the number of Africans he shot.

Jeal thinks even his most famous utterance "Dr. Livingstone, I presume" was a fabrication. Stanley was one of the few Europeans to witness the effects of the slave trade in Africa.

He was convinced that the trade must be stopped, and the only way to do it, he believed, was to open up Africa to European influence. Stanley comes across as a man of dauntless courage, intent on reducing the sum of suffering and injustice in the world. Anyone who, after reading this book, imagines he would have behaved better than Stanley, if faced with the same dangers, must have a vivid imagination.

At her last Court meeting as Master, Penrose Halson said that she would buy the book for the Company Library, where it can now be found.

Brian Burnett

'Stanley' by Tim Jeal is published by faber & faber in hardback at £25 RRP.

Please contact the Editor of the Newsletter, Matthew Gaved, if you would like to suggest a contribution to a future issue: email: gaved@btconnect.com.

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