



THE TURNER



NEWSLETTER OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF TURNERS OF LONDON April 2010

The 2010 Richard Gardner Williams Commemoration Dinner was held on 23rd February, when two excellent and informative speeches were made. Part of the Master's speech is on this page and extracts from Past Master Andrew Hamilton's Sentiment are on page 3.

"At our other Company functions during the year we are busy entertaining guests, or engaged with the craft, and rightly so.

But it's also right that we should have one evening a year just for the Livery and the Freedom to meet, talk together and to reflect on what we've been doing and where we're going. The following lines come from T S Eliot's poem *Burnt Norton*:

*At the still point of the turning world
at the still point
where past and future are gathered*

Although the poet was talking about a garden in Gloucestershire, the lines relate rather well to our Company. This is the link between, on the one hand, the glory days of turning in London in the 15th and 16th centuries, before pewter, stoneware and then pottery became cheaper and more widely available, and, on the other, our plans for supporting the future growth of the craft and promoting interest in it, in London and beyond.

As to the past, the Court has recently put in hand three initiatives to preserve our inheritance. First, several members of the Company, including Nic Somers, Peter Gibson, Ray Key, Stuart King and others, are drawing up to professional standards a catalogue of the Company's treasures; mainly the treen but also the silver and other objects of value.

The aim is that we should know exactly what we own, what state it is in, and as far as practicable what it is worth. The work should be complete by the early summer, and I am most grateful to our in-house experts for giving their time to it.

Second, we are arranging through the Guildhall Library for the proper preservation of our most valuable archival documents. The original 1604 Charter was given this treatment some time back, and the work will now cover the 1608 ordinances – the detailed rules which govern our affairs – the 1634 Grant of Arms and the supplementary Charter of 1685.

The Livery Committee is planning an early Company visit to our archives. We will also make copies of these key documents, which Members of the Company and outsiders will be able to consult.

Third, as far as the surviving records allow, the Clerk is putting together an accessible list of members of the Livery and apprentices from 1604 – the date of our basic Charter – to the present day, which will make it easier to respond to the regular enquiries which come his way.

As to the future, the Howe Committee report to Common Hall referred to the turning competitions we will be running later this year, and initial plans for the next Wizardry in Wood exhibition in 2012.

Apart from the bodies representing practising turners, the Company is the only organisation in the UK which – with a little bit of money and a lot of knowledge and enthusiasm – concentrates on supporting this particular craft.

Let me offer you another poem, not quite in the T S Eliot class, but one of Hilaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales*. It is about Lord Finchley, a rich man but technologically challenged:

*Lord Finchley tried to mend the electric light.
Himself. It struck him dead. And serve him right.
It is the business of the wealthy man
To give employment to the artisan.*

I do not suggest that all present tonight are rich. We are after all enjoying a free dinner. But against the background of Richard Gardner Williams' generosity, let me leave you with two messages.

First, echoing Andrew Mayer and our Almoner Peter Venn, to continue supporting the Charity with donations and legacies – you can't take it with you. Second, if you don't already do so, think about collecting turned pieces yourself, and encourage others to take an interest.

This Christmas all the presents I gave to adults were products of our time-honoured craft. The enthusiastic responses were a good deal more than normal politeness. If you do the same, your friends and relations will be grateful."

The Master

Issue 34

Remembering Richard Gardner Williams, Brian Burnett and Oliver Stonehouse; the Master visits HMS Sultan and Harrogate; the Livery Companies Skills Council; golf; London Bridge; Edward III; whisky winner; scouts and other teenagers; a week at the Moulin; oranges & lemons; what we did last Summer; our charity.

Brian Burnett MC 1920 – 2009

Brian Walter Burnett MC died on 8 March 2009, in his 89th year. He was born on 17 July 1920 in Wimbledon, and went up to Cambridge from Tonbridge School with a scholarship in 1939.

After a year reading classics, during which he was awarded a blue for the quarter mile, he joined the army. He served with the 90th (City of London) Field Regiment R.A. in Iraq, Egypt and during the invasion of Sicily. On D-day he landed on Gold Beach in Normandy with the first guns ashore, and was in action until the end of the campaign.

His classical education proved its worth during Operation Market Garden. Seeking information about the German army's position he drove off the dyke road into the neighbouring village and met a Dutch clergyman. As he later recounted

"I asked him 'where are the Germans?' He didn't understand my English, I didn't understand his Dutch, he didn't understand my French, and it seemed unwise to try German. I was getting nowhere fast. Then I had a brainwave – we were in the south of Holland, so he must be a Catholic priest. 'Ubi sunt Germani?' I asked. 'Germani egressi sunt' ('the Germans have gone away') came the immediate reply and we continued discussing the military situation in Latin."

Awarded the Military Cross for his bravery, he spoke of his wartime experiences many years later in 2000 for the Second World War Experience Centre in Leeds, during which he acknowledged the support he had received from the other men in his unit and the commitment and sacrifice of soldiers fighting on both sides.

After the war Brian returned to King's for a year, reading economics, and was awarded his BA in 1946 and his MA in 1948. After going down he was called to the bar by the Inner Temple and began a career with AEI (Associated Electrical Industries) in London.

He married Eve McHaffie in 1953 and had three children: Moira, who was also a Turner until her untimely death in 2006, Paul and Angela.

During a posting to Zurich in Switzerland he and Eve were the prime movers in establishing the first English-speaking school in Switzerland, the Inter-Community School which, now enrolling 700 pupils annually, will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2010.

On returning to the UK his next appointment was as Group Secretary of Price Forbes insurance brokers. He successfully steered the company through several mergers over the ensuing years, and ultimately was Company Secretary for the Sedgwick Group, international insurance brokers (now part of the Marsh McLennan group). After retirement he moved to Wittersham in Kent, where Eve established a successful business breeding Shetland ponies.



Blessed with a rich bass voice and gift for harmonies he sang with the St Paul's Knightsbridge Festival Choir and later with the Madrigal Society, becoming President of the latter for several years.

Brian followed his grandfather JE Kingsbury in joining the Turners' Company, and became Master in 1981- 82. His thorough and persistent attention to detail was used to the fore in updating Roland Champness' original history of the Company. His involvement in this stemmed from his question at a Court meeting in 1984 concerning the whereabouts of a library of over 60 volumes referred to by Champness in his history.

No-one had the least idea and he was invited to answer his own question by finding them. Having located them in the care of the Clerk of the Spectacle Makers in his office at Apothecaries' Hall, he then located further books on turning, including vols. I–V of Holtzapffel's Turning and Mechanical Manipulation, all of which are now housed on shelves in the Apothecaries' Library Room. By then he had taken on the mantle of Company detective and historian and when in 1987 two wooden chests containing thousands of Turners' documents were discovered in the crypt of St Botolph's Bishopsgate, he was invited to examine and report on the material.

In updating the history of the Turners' Company he was able to skilfully steer a course through the minefields of new

technology and strong opinions and is remembered as always generous and gentlemanly with his contributors. This fine book was presented to the Livery in time for the Company's fourth centenary in 2004. His article for the Turner's magazine, in which he recounted the long gestation of the updated history finished with the warning "Please take care – if you ask a question you may find yourself answering it and lots of others too!"

His linguistic talents also shone again many years later at his daughter Angela's wedding to her Ethiopian husband Wondwossen, where Brian delighted guests by welcoming Wondwossen into the family in Amharic.

Throughout his life Brian was a meticulous genealogist, actively researching his family's history. His interest in genealogy had been sparked at the age of 16 by his aunt Muriel, who gave him a sampler made by his nine-year-old great-grandmother in 1841. Only six months before he died he travelled to Ireland with Eve, his daughter Angela, son-in-law Wondwossen and four-year-old granddaughter Lili, establishing yet more details of his father's early life there.

A gentle and dignified man, he was courteous and warm-hearted with a thoughtful reflectiveness and a great sense of commitment. He was delightful company, being both a good listener and, true to his Irish heritage, an entertaining story-teller, with a lovely sense of humour. He will be remembered as a "gracious senior figure", for his helpful and stimulating comments at Court Meetings, described as "always to the point" and for his generous support for subsequent Masters and those new to the Company.

Much loved and admired, he is greatly missed by all those who knew him – a life well lived – and the best and kindest of men.

This is the quick, the nerve, also the grace of death. It brings our life into the sun and we are grateful. Grief is gracious when it takes the character of this kind one,

this gentle person. We re-live his life and marvel at the quiet good he has done.

(Elizabeth Jennings)

Angela, Brian's daughter, would like to thank all the Turners who generously supported her running the London Marathon in 2009. She raised a total of just over £3,000 for the Samaritans.

Remembering RICHARD GARDNER WILLIAMS

In thinking of Richard Gardner Williams we ought to ponder why he came to play such a major part in the recent history of the Turners. What brought Richard Gardner Williams, who was born in Chester, educated there, started work at Crewe and worked initially in the North West, to the livery of the Turners' Company? There is one name and two words that offer an answer, Charles Cheers Wakefield, railways and oil.

Charles Wakefield presumably first met Gardner Williams when the latter joined the Vacuum Oil Company. Richard's job was selling lubricating oils to the railways of Cheshire and Staffordshire. In two sentences we have the name and the two words. Gardner Williams continued to sell oil to railways, subsequently being appointed special railway representative for South America, including Argentina.

At least twelve members of the Company then had connections with the railways of South America. Do you think there was any connection with many parts of a steam engine being turned, including their wheels and pistons? These twelve included Wakefield, who was to become Lord Mayor in 1915 having been Sheriff in 1908. At various times he was Master of the Haberdashers, Cordwainers, Gardeners and Spectacle Makers but, sadly, not the Turners. I wonder why not? Perhaps dinners then were not as good as the one we are enjoying tonight?



So who was Charles Cheers Wakefield? Born in Liverpool in 1859, he patented the Wakefield lubricator for axles of steam engines in 1890 and founded CC Wakefield & Co in 1899. The name was subsequently changed to the

Castrol Oil Company to reflect the use of castor oil in the lubricating oils. Subsequently many world famous motor driven events have been lubricated with Castrol oils, including Alcock and Brown's first crossing of the Atlantic by air, Malcolm Campbell's world land speed record and Le Mans wins by Bentley and Jaguar.

Having made a fortune in oil he became a generous philanthropist with an endowment of £50,000 to the British Museum. He also presented the Thomas à Becket Cup and Lord Nelson's Logbook to the Nation.

Perhaps his most lasting memorial was his establishment of the Wakefield Trust in 1937 together with the Reverend Tubby Clayton, the founder of TocH. This Trust exists to this day, now merged with the Tetley Trust.

Originally helping those within one mile of Trinity Square in the City, the terms of the trust has now been widened "to relieve the inhabitants of the Boroughs of the City, Tower Hamlets and Southwark who are in need by virtue of their age, financial hardship or sickness, by the provision or support of appropriate facilities, programmes or other initiatives. Any other charitable purpose in connection with the Parish of All Hallows by the Tower or Toc H". Certainly a look at the organisations supported by the Trust appear fully within these parameters.

Wakefield was also a considerable benefactor to the Borough of Hythe in Kent and it is this name he took when made a Baron in 1930 and a Viscount in 1934. He died in January 1941.

As you might recall, there were twelve members of the Company who were connected with South American Railways when Gardner Williams joined the Company. How come? During the second half of the nineteenth century, the time when Great Britain ruled the waves and half the land mass was painted red, Argentina was seen as a great economic future for British investment. Most of the railways there were owned by British Companies and run from the City of London, with imposing names such as

The Buenos Aires Great Southern Railway Company. These railways radiated from Buenos Aires, their basic purpose being to transport meat and grain to the ports for transmission to North America and Europe.

In the 1930s Argentina was in the top ten of world economic nations. Not only were most of the lines British owned (the others were French), but most of the locomotives and other rolling stock were made in Britain.

Even bricks were exported from here to build rows of suburban-type houses for British expatriates. During the Second World War things became difficult for British companies owning and managing overseas assets and, with the rise of nationalism, the Argentinian Railways were nationalised by President Peron in 1948. With years of despotic rule alternating with socialist policies, Argentina has been going down hill along with the railways ever since.

There has been speculation on how Gardner Williams amassed what was then a considerable fortune. He did not have children. Could he have made this from commission selling lubricating oil to South American Railways or did he make it by selling shares in a takeover?

We will probably never know. Suffice to say he was able to leave over £40,000 to the Turners in his will. In our history it is suggested that doing this and making this dinner on his birthday a first charge, was akin to the medieval practice of leaving funds so that masses could be said for the departed soul. I think I prefer the dinner. In remembering the generosity of Richard Gardner Williams, we should also remember our leaders at the time of the bequest. Firstly their appreciation and confidence in holding the first Gardner Williams dinner in 1948 (before the cash was in the bank) and secondly the decision, very brave at the time, to invest in equities rather than Government bonds and even Railway stocks.

This article is based on the Sentiment delivered at the 2010 Gardner Williams Dinner by Past Master Andrew Hamilton.

Great Barrow revisited

I took advantage of a family wedding in Cheshire between Christmas and New Year to visit Great Barrow. This is where the Company's benefactor Richard Gardner Williams is buried, and where his forebears farmed over many generations. I had a second reason for going to Great Barrow, in that, as the 1911 Census records, my father (Master of the Company 1973-4) lived there with his parents and two brothers in the early years of the 20th century.

Great Barrow is just a few miles east of Chester, in a fine position overlooking the Cheshire plain.



The village church, St Bartholemew's, is an elegant, largely 18th century building, whose origins go back at least to the 13th century. Several members of the Williams family served as Churchwardens. While Richard Gardner Williams left nine-tenths of his estate to the Turners' Company, the remaining tenth - over £4,000 in 1948 money, so a sizeable sum - went to the Churchwardens of Great Barrow, for the upkeep of the family memorials "in and about" St Bartholemew's

church. This money apparently still exists in a separate fund used for the maintenance of the church and churchyard.

Shortly before his death in 1931, Richard Gardner Williams paid for a stained glass window at the west end of the church in memory of his parents, Thomas and Martha Williams, and of his elder brother

(another Thomas) and his wife. This, and the other family memorials beneath the tower of the church, are in good condition. When the old churchyard was full, Great Barrow acquired a new churchyard in 1925, across the lane from the old one.

Richard Gardner Williams is buried in the first row of the new churchyard, in the same grave as his wife and sister. The inscription on the stone is somewhat faded, but readable.

Other members of his family are in the old churchyard. I conclude that our benefactor's intention, in allocating part of his estate for the maintenance of the family memorials, continues to be met satisfactorily.

The Master



Oliver Stonehouse

Oliver Stonehouse, who died last year aged 84, joined the Company in 1951 and was a Court Assistant from 1971 to 1975.

Throughout his career he was closely involved in his family's worsted spinning business, MP Stonehouse.

This had been founded by his great-grandfather Matthew Porritt Stonehouse, formerly a sea captain, who built the company's first factory in Wakefield in 1854.

His family was closely associated with Wakefield over several generations. His grandfather was Sir Edmund Stonehouse, who was four times the Mayor of Wakefield in the years 1888 to 1917.

Oliver was educated at Uppingham School and during the war completed a degree in natural sciences in just two years (1942-44).

On graduating, he joined the Admiralty's Royal Corps of Naval Constructors where he stayed until 1948. He then joined the family business in which he rose to become the Managing Director and subsequently Chairman, until 1988, following the sale of the business in 1987.

Oliver continued the family tradition of civic involvement in Wakefield, and in the 1980s funded the refurbishment of the organ in Wakefield Cathedral.

The organ had previously been donated to the Cathedral by his father. He was also the Chairman of the Friends of Wakefield Art Gallery for 27 years until 1979.

After leaving the Admiralty, he maintained his military connections, through serving in the Territorial Army until 1954.

But one of his biggest enthusiasms was the sea, something he shared with his great grandfather. In 1978 this led him to fulfil a long-held ambition, when he sailed the Atlantic in the 31-foot *Miranda*.

The journey from Falmouth to the British Virgin Islands covered over 4,500 miles and took 44 days, Captain and crew arriving in the BVI in time for Christmas.

Following his retirement he continued to sail in both England and the BVI and also travelled extensively by road in his camper van 'Bambi' with his wife, covering over 100,000 miles in Europe.

Oliver and his wife regularly attended the Company's annual Patronal Service, through which he remained in touch with the Company and old friends.

The Master, accompanied by the Upper Warden and Mrs Ellis, the Deputy Master, the Master's Steward, Past Master Andrew Mayer, Assistant Nick Edwards and Liveryman Brian Lewis visited HMS Sultan at Gosport on 17th and 18th September.

HMS Sultan is the Royal Navy's (land-based) engineering training establishment, with which the Company has had good connections for some years, and supports by financing prizes.

The visiting Turners, together with visitors from five other Companies with links to HMS Sultan, spent a morning and afternoon touring the workshops and meeting staff and trainees: those Turners with an engineering background were able to ask well-informed questions about the training provided.

A tolerant view was taken of the fact that our group included three former REME officers, but nobody with a naval background.



That evening the Master, with several other Masters, dined in the Wardroom; and the following morning attended a parade (known at HMS Sultan as "ceremonial Divisions") of the full complement of the ship, when Air Marshal Simon Bryant was the Inspecting Officer.

The Master then attended a smaller ceremony to mark the passing-out of a group of Leading Engineering Technicians, and spoke to them and their supervising officers about the role of the Company and our links with the armed services.

The picture shows the Master presenting the Turners' Prize to Leading Engineering Technician Hawkings for the highest achievement in the

craft elements of his qualifying course.

This was the first time for a few years that a group of Turners had visited HMS Sultan. It is a contact which we are keen to maintain and foster.

The Master

The Turners' Golf Society has had an active and enjoyable year after a faltering start. Yet again we were unable to produce a team of 4 for the prestigious Prince Arthur Cup at Walton Heath Golf Club in May. However, I have high hopes for 2010. Please note that the date is **20th May**.

On 16th July, our team of four, comprising Peter Ellis (Capt.), Bill O'Leary, Fred Bain and Brian Cooke, took part in the Newson-Smith Cup at East Berkshire GC. We came a creditable 4th and much enjoyed the day and a good supper afterwards.

On Thursday 30th July we entered two teams for the Ray Jeffs Cup at Hartley Wintney Golf Club. This is a charity golf day organised through the Livery/Schools link and the money raised goes towards funding Duke of Edinburgh's Award schemes for Schools in the London Area.

The following Liverymen took part, Rob Lucas, Peter Ellis, Andrew Mayer and Roger George (the A Team) and Peter Mitchell, Lionel Anderson, Brian Cooke and guest John Argent (a Painter Stainer standing in at the last minute), our B Team.

Again, it was an excellent day. Twenty five Livery Companies took part and although we did not win the team prize, Andrew Mayer was nearest the pin at a short hole and won a bottle of champagne.

Our Livery Golf Day took place on Tuesday 25th August at Knole Park Golf Club courtesy of Andrew Mayer. Twelve Liverymen and eight guests played at a most attractive

course with a herd of fallow deer wandering around trying their best to distract us.

The Master joined us for lunch and presented the prizes. Peter Mitchell won the Livery Prize with Bill O'Leary winning the Longest Drive and Neil Doling Nearest the Pin. Guest prizes were won by Peter Fenton and Jon Roper and a special mention must be made of Sue Slater for her quite outstanding round of 43 points to win the Ladies Prize.



Again an excellent day and by universal acclaim we will return in 2010 on **Tuesday 24th August** – please note the date.

Finally, I initiated a new golf match between the Livery and St Catherine's Lodge. This was a 5-a-side competition played at Beaconsfield Golf Club on Wednesday 21st October.

We played for the St Catherine's Lodge Trophy. This had been presented to the Livery by the Lodge in 1934 and had been used as a trophy for Technical Colleges when we used to hold the Design Awards Competition.

The latter finished in 2000 and so the trophy has been given a new lease of life. I am pleased to report that the Livery team was victorious.

The Worshipful Master of St Catherine's Lodge, our learned Clerk, Edward Windsor Clive, attended lunch and hoped that his team would enjoy better success next year.

Rob Lucas

London Bridge Fayre

London Bridge was closed to traffic on 11th July last year to hold a 'fayre' to celebrate the 800 years since it was first opened by King John in 1209.



Many livery companies manned stalls along the length of the bridge including our own.

We decided it would add a touch of medieval realism to install a traditional pole lathe turner; so 'bodger' Matt Jarvis was invited to entertain the thousands of visitors who attended the event. The Turners' stall maintained an attentive crowd throughout the day; even the Lord Mayor of London, Alderman Ian Luder, showed his enthusiasm by 'having a go' on Matt's lathe.

This was a great way to support the Lord Mayor's Appeal, the Craft and the Turners' Company. *Stuart King*

Supporting the Livery Companies Skills Council

The Livery Companies Skills Council was set up about six years ago by the Livery Companies in the City of London to promote skills training in their respective crafts. About a year after the founding of the Council, the Howe Committee responded to the Council's questionnaire on training in the craft of turning. The Worshipful Company joined the Council at that time. The Council now has 34 Worshipful Companies in membership which includes the Construction Liveries Group.

The Council collected information from each Livery Company, requesting data on their training actions, financial commitment and the number of persons in training in their craft. Using this information, the Council identified best practice of the active Companies in training. The analysis identified two groups with different requirements in addition to those Companies which provide legislative requirements to practise their trade (e.g. Watermen and Lightermen).

The two groups were, firstly those crafts that major UK businesses rely on as the basis of their training in their industry,

often involving many thousands of potential craftsmen, which have well-established training and retraining standards (e.g. Plumbers and Electricians supported by City and Guilds standards); and secondly, crafts undertaken by small and single trader businesses who have very limited financial resource to provide long-term dedicated training (e.g. Turners).

Whilst the major focus of the Council's work supports the larger crafts through exchange of training standard processes and compliance measurement (for instance the Plumbers and their Master's Certificate scheme), the Council has lobbied Government, in particular for protection of the title 'apprentice' with a well-defined meaning.

The Council provides a valuable lobby route to Government Departments and Quangos. Meetings of the Council give feedback from these Government officials and policy makers which are reported to the Company's Howe Committee. The Council produced a well-received report to Lord Leitch in 2006 on 'The Future of Training Requirements in the UK'. The Council's report took the opportunity to remind Government and policy-makers

that money and training schemes must be made available to the small and single trader businesses as well as to large companies. The Council is currently producing a brochure to promote all types of craft training for distribution to Livery Companies and the general public. It points out the contribution the City Livery Companies make to training in the UK.

Company craft events and their dates are coordinated through Council meetings. Recently the World Skills 2011 competition in Docklands (UK - sponsored) and a City Livery Treasures Exhibition at the Guildhall to coincide with the Olympics, were reported. It was gratifying to hear at a recent meeting other Companies comment that the Turners' competition and exhibition were a best practice example for other Companies to copy.

The Livery Companies Skills Council reports through the Howe Committee and ensures a route for craft-related information from official bodies and other Companies to be disseminated to the craft through its newsletter and to the craft press.

Brian Lewis

The History & Turnours

Enactment as to marking liquid measures made by the Turners. Edward III. A.D. 1347. Letter-Book F. fol. cxxxiv.

By reason of the manifold falsities and deceits which Geoffrey de Wychingham, the Mayor, found in his time in the wooden measures, as well for wine as for ale, orders were given to the serjeant of the Chamber, on the Wednesday next before the Feast of St. Peter's Chair (22 February), in the 21st year of King Edward III, that he should summon before the said Mayor and Aldermen, on the Friday following that Feast, all the makers of such measures, called "turnours", to hear and do what for the common advantage of the people should be enjoined.

Upon which Friday came the makers of the said measures; namely, Robert le Disshere of Wodestrete, John le Turnour upon Lothebury, William Gidyheued of Estchepe, William de Aylesbery of Estchepe, Thomas le Turnour upon Cornhulle, Thomas le Turnour of Sholane, and John de Selham, servant of Ralph le Disshere, of Wodestrete.

And injunctions were given to them by the said Mayor and Aldermen, in future not to make any such kind of measures of any other wood than dried; and that the measure, when so made by them, must agree with the standard of the Alderman in whose Ward such measures shall be used, and by the same standard be examined.



And that each of these makers should have a mark of his own, and should place such mark upon his measures, on the bottom thereof without, when by the standard they should have been examined; that so, when any measure made by one of the makers aforesaid shall in any tavern or brewhouse be found to be false or defective, then as well the person by whom such measure, shall have been made, as he who shall have sold by such measure, shall incur the punishment, at the discretion of the Mayor and Aldermen, to be ordained for the same.

And that no such maker, dwelling without the liberty of the City, should sell any measures to any one dwelling within the liberties of the City, save only to the makers of such measures within the same city dwelling; on pain of forfeiting the same.

And the said makers of the city aforesaid were ordered to bring here samples of their marks on the Thursday next after the Feast of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas (7 March), and deliver the same to Thomas de Maryns, the Chamberlain, there in the Chamber of the Guildhall to remain. Which marks at the end of this Book are set forth.

Contributed by Peter Ellis

Artisan of the Year



Robin Wood RPT was named "Artisan of the Year", the top accolade in the 2009 awards run by Country Living Magazine and Balvenie Whisky.

The awards are for individuals that use a traditional skill to earn their living, aiming to recognise and reward those who are keeping these skills alive and to encourage new artisans to take up the mantle.

"Yesterday was quite a day. I went to Cliveden House for the Country Living Magazine and Balvenie whisky "Artisan of the Year" awards and was very pleased and more than a little surprised to be named their 'Artisan of the Year'. And afterwards there was lots of very special whisky to try but all I could do was sniff and sip as I had to drive home."

The judges were impressed not only by Robin's traditional woodworking skills, but also by the way he has used modern media to spread the word about what he does and help others develop their own skills.

"By harnessing the power of the internet through this site, his blog, the online forums he contributes to and his YouTube videos, he has been able to reach out to many more people than by taking on traditional apprentices," they said.

In 2005 the Turners' Company supported Robin in his authorship of 'The Wooden Bowl'. www.robin-wood.co.uk

The Craft of Turning

“Completely brilliant”

Scouts from the 8th Hampstead Hall School Troop had their first experience of woodturning at their 2009 Summer Camp, thanks to a team led by professional turner Les Thorne RPT and supported by sponsors WL West, Hamlet Tools, Chestnut Products, Axminster Tools, the Turners' Company and a generous donation from an anonymous Liveryman.

Some 35 Scouts aged 10-13 years had individual tuition and all produced a sycamore bowl for use on the scout camp and to take home as proof of their new skills. Marcus, 11 years, said “it was completely brilliant” and that he had no idea that it would be such fun.

He and many other Scouts said that they would like to learn more about woodturning. One opportunity would be through the Teenage Turning courses organised by the AWGB and also supported by the Company.



The Scouts were camping in South West France and took part in many other activities. These included rafting and walking in the Pyrenees, canoeing, swimming in the Atlantic, food shopping in local markets and pioneering projects, in addition to their regular scout training.

The Scouts who took part in the woodturning will be able to count it towards their Creative Challenge, one of nine Challenge Awards that Scouts strive



to achieve. Ian Fraiss, the Troop leader said that “thanks to Les and everyone who helped with the woodturning, the boys have been able to do something very special and which would normally not be available to them”.

Les Thorne was assisted by Don Donaldson and Richard Levy, a Past Master of the Turners' Company.

Four Scouts were awarded prizes for having a particularly high level of interest, focus and development of their woodturning skills: Albie Mills (11 years) and Toby Cooper, Matthew Budd and Alex Sajjadi (each 12 years).

At the presentation of sets of Boules (donated by Edward Sawney, also a Past Master of the Turners' Company) Les



praised the Scouts for the quality and originality of their bowls.

Richard Levy said that “key to the organisation and success of the



woodturning training was the work put in by Matthew Gaved, a Liveryman of the Turners' Company, and the donations of equipment and supplies by the commercial sponsors”.

After they had completed their bowls, the Scouts treated them with a food-safe oil and the next day were able to use them for their camp meals. Rufus (left) being one of the early adopters of ‘Scout treen’.

A week at the Moulin

Teenage Turning

The Turners' Company is in the forefront of encouraging young people to experience the craft of turning and to this end we have contributed sponsorship to several training events. The latest Young Turners Weekend was held at Stuart Mortimer's Hampshire workshop last August, where ten aspiring youngsters spent two and a half days being tutored by five professional turners. The weekend was a great success for both students and tutors. *Stuart King*



"At the end of a long and hot journey we turned down an unlikely-looking steep, rough drive and at the bottom were lots of familiar friendly faces and a glass of kir."



Last September members of the Company enjoyed a week of turning and photography courses at Le Moulin de la Materette, a stunning old mill restored by Nick and Fran Davidson and set in the foothills of the Pyrenees near the French town of Foix..

We were blessed with glorious autumn weather and a week of learning, conviviality and excellent food in a beautiful setting. Organised by Past Master Rob Lucas, the week was an outstanding success and ended with an exhibition of turning and photographs (below).



"Hospitality at the Moulin was excellent, with the daily highlight being dinner round a huge table with good food, plenty of wine and stimulating and lively conversation. A thoroughly enjoyable week, with a chance informally to get to know better other colleagues in the Livery."

The Master as Apprentice

The Register of Professional Turners had a stand at the North of England Woodworking Show held in Harrogate on 20th-22nd November. This show has gained a reputation as being the busiest and buzziest in the UK and 2009 was no exception despite the atrocious weather.

The Master was intrigued by the reports from previous years and attended to judge for himself the enthusiasm for the Craft.

The activity was also supported by visits from the Clerk, the Master's Steward and the Chairman of the Howe Committee.

The stand itself attracted a good deal of interest particularly to see the demonstrations of RPT member Guy Ravine – assisted by his newly-seconded apprentice.



Nick Edwards

Goat's Hair & Harmonics: Whitechapel Bell Foundry

Bells are some of the oldest and loudest musical instruments in the world. They date back to Egypt in 3500 BC. Bells are certainly one of our loudest musical instruments too and as well as being heard in a concert hall can be heard from many miles away over land or sea on a still night.

The bell can be the largest or smallest of musical instruments and to many the sound of ringing church bells is quintessentially English. We also have the hand bell of the town crier, wedding bells, Big Ben, parish church bells calling to a service, school bells, ship's bells and the mournful funeral bell.

We have bells in our nursery rhymes – “Oranges and Lemons say the bells of St Clements” and “Ding Dong Bell”; we have bells in our idioms: “go like the clappers”, “ring the changes” and “give him five bells” as well as having “peals of laughter”; and we have bells in English history - from the Anglo-Saxon curfew bell introduced by Alfred the Great, through “nine tailors” announcing a man's funeral, to the second world war edict that all church bells should be silenced so that their ringing could be reserved to warn of enemy invasion. Bells don't just ring – they communicate.

Bells have been turned since the middle of the 18th century and all bells are now tuned by turning. On February 11th members of the Livery and some of their wives were guests of the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in Whitechapel Road, London, where they were given a spell-binding works tour by owner Alan Hughes and afterwards a mouth-watering buffet supper by his wife Kathryn and daughter Elizabeth.

The Whitechapel Foundry has a legendary reputation and has cast many famous bells as well as the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia USA (1752) and Big Ben in the Palace of Westminster (1858).

It is one of only six companies in the world able to cast and harmonically tune sets of bells and is listed as Britain's oldest manufacturing company having been established in 1570. We also learned of the remarkable properties of bell alloy,



tuning cast bells today. If you want to try to ring hand bells some of the best sets come from the Whitechapel Foundry – and if you break one an emergency replacement can be despatched in five days.

We left with memories of good food, good wine, good company and the sounds of bells ringing in our ears.

The next time you hear a big bell chime, listen for the upper octave and the residual low frequency hum which lasts for well over a minute – they are both tuned in to the bell when it is made.

We're hoping to visit again next year: the Whitechapel Bell Foundry is a proverbial treasure trove of the mystery and art of bell making.

John Bridgeman,

Chairman of Livery Committee



80% tin and 20% copper, as well as of bell moulds made from a mixture of sand, goat's hair and horse manure.

We saw a 1740's horizontal lathe used for turning hand bells and a 20th century vertical lathe and frequency analyzer for

What we did last summer

On July 22nd the sun-filled courtyard of Apothecaries' Hall was alive with people: members of the Court, socializing after a Court meeting with Liverymen, Freemen and guests.

We all went upstairs to the Great Hall and became immediately engrossed when Freeman Stuart King started to use it to turn a chess piece from a piece of firewood. Before our eyes, Stuart adeptly shaped it with a very sharp cutting tool.

Shavings flew in all directions as the ordinary-looking rough lump of wood took shape. From time to time Stuart stopped the lathe to examine his work, and we could see – very clearly on the screen – the transformation that was taking place.

In only half an hour Stuart had made not only a chess piece but also a beautiful miniature wassail bowl from a small piece of maple wood. He passed them round so that



we could admire the shapes and feel their smoothness. Entertaining us with talk about what he was doing as he worked, Stuart then turned some charming flowers; and showed a film he had made of turners using very primitive foot-operated lathes in Marrakesh.

The evening ended in the courtyard, with wine and canapés and a new knowledge of our ancient and fascinating Craft.

Penrose Halson

Turning in the time of Beowulf

Channel 4's Time Team were given the chance to excavate one of the biggest Anglo Saxon halls in Britain, discovered in the first half of the 20th century near Sutton Courtenay, just south of



Abingdon in Oxfordshire. This royal site would have housed the king and his retinue as they processed through the kingdom. The halls would have echoed to the sound of feasting, drinking, riddles and epic stories.

The site dates from a period of kingdom building and warfare, when the average Anglo-

Saxon would have known how to handle a spear and shield, not a quill and ink; the time of Beowulf and a culture where heroism, story telling and drinking went hand in hand.

The Time Team programme on Sutton Courtney will be broadcast on Channel 4 in the next couple of months and also features our own Stuart King, pictured here with archeologist Phil Harding. Stuart was engaged to demonstrate how an Anglo-Saxon Goblet would have been turned on a pole lathe – which he clearly did with great skill and fun.

LEGACIES

Peter Venn, Company Almoner, writes:

“Richard Gardner Williams’ bequest did so much more than entitle us to an annual banquet. It has become the foundation of our charitable giving as a Company.

The Charity Committee believes, however, not that we should stand still but, rather, build on that foundation.

A natural way for us to do that, if we are able, would be to follow the example of our greatest benefactor and leave a bequest – though not necessarily, perhaps, to quite the same extent!

May I urge you, please, to consider leaving a legacy to the Turners Charity in your will.

A legacy will be an investment in the Company’s future charitable activity, which is such an essential part of our Livery life.”

Clerk's Notes



The Court has been enhanced by a new assistant, Nic Somers, who was sworn in at the September Court.

Also we have had the pleasure of raising James Young, Nic Gibson, Richard Lucas and Gerry Thwaites (L to R in the photo) and also Bill Morris to the Livery.

James Young was introduced to the Company by Past Master Andrew Mayer and works with him at the international real estate consultancy Cushman & Wakefield as a partner in the City office. He is married to Elspeth and has two sons.

Nic Gibson is the son of the Master’s Steward Peter Gibson. Nic is married to Emily and has one son. He has his own Company as an IT Systems Architect.

Richard Lucas is the son of Past Master Rob Lucas. He is married to Lindsey and has two daughters. His skills are in multimedia and he produced the excellent video used at Wizardry in Wood..

Gerry Thwaites joined the Navy in 1975, serving in Nuclear Submarines. His last posting was Commodore at HMS Sultan. He is married to Barbara and has three daughters and has recently established a consultancy business. He was introduced to the Company by Honorary Assistant and Past Master Barrie Johnson.

Bill Morris joined the Livery in November as he could not make the September Court. He was introduced by Douglas Miller, is responsible for TV outside broadcasts, particularly sport. He is married to Katie and has a son and a daughter.

We are sad to report the deaths of Thomas Fotheringham and Lucian Ercolani.

Following a meeting for new Freemen to make their declaration, we are delighted to welcome Mark Baker, Andy Slaughter and Brian Smouha to the Freedom and hope they enjoy membership of the Company.

City Briefings – Innholders’ Hall

These are excellent evening courses run to explain the City to Liverymen and Freemen. The cost is £10 and the planned dates in 2010 are: Tuesday 4th May; Wednesday 13th October;

Wednesday 10th November. Booking and payment can be done on-line at www.liverycommitteecourses.org.uk (register first, then book) or by email to the Clerk of the Wax Chandlers at clerk@waxchandlers.org.uk.

In the Company's motto, By faith I obteigne, the word "obteigne" does not have today's meaning of "get", with its faintly materialistic overtones, but means "attain", or "achieve", referring to things spiritual.

Like all early Livery Companies, the Turners had a strong religious element, in which faith was important – as also was faith's constant companion, charity.

The principal charitable concern of early Turners was the welfare of members of the Company and their families. Seventeenth-century accounts record payments such as 5s to John Frank, a poor brother of this Company living in Ludgate (prison), and in 1708, £6 to a Past Master, Mr Richard Bullock, for his better support, he being reduced to great necessity and want. Alms and grants were also given outside the Company: 30s to a schoolmaster whose house had burnt down; 50 guineas to the Lord Mayor's fund for victims of the Titanic disaster.

Such charitable gifts were funded partly from the Company's Poor Box, partly by generous individuals such as Captain Peter Cushing, who in 1680 bequeathed the Company £100 to provide three sums of 40s to be paid yearly to three named widows.

Today the Company's ability to support charitable causes depends partly on money allocated by the Company, and partly on donations from individual Freemen and Liverymen. Both these sources enabled the Company's Charity to give a computer-controlled lathe to the Valence School for severely disabled children.

The first Company visit to see the lathe in action was such a success that we arranged another earlier this year.

These visits are extremely beneficial, both for the school which welcomes our support and for our members who can see at first hand the tremendous benefit that the children derive from the money paid to our Charity Fund.

by faith I obteigne

On this last visit, not only did we have lunch with the children but also, before they gave us a demonstration on the lathe, Gambier David Reeks RPT, a professional turner whose splendid work was on show at Wizardry in Wood, brought along one of his lathes and gave a demonstration, with a video so that it could be projected onto a large screen and thus seen by the entire school. I would like these visits to take place on an annual basis, as would the school, so if you would like to join a future visit, please contact the Clerk.

Thanks to a most generous donation from an anonymous Liveryman, the Company enjoyed a wonderful Opera Evening at the Reform Club. The Charity Committee and all who attended are very grateful to the donor.

A similar event is planned for next year and, as no single member of the Company has volunteered to sponsor it, several are clubbing together to raise the necessary £8,000. We are naturally seeking more joint sponsors so, if you are interested in becoming one, please contact Assistant John Bridgeman, chairman of the Livery Committee.

The Company's Charity has also given a stair lift to our former Beadle, Douglas Baker, who is 90 and increasingly frail. Douglas worked devotedly for the Company for twenty years, in a career which – after six years in a German POW camp – included being Lord Denning's train-bearer and Beadle to the Worshipful Company of Bowyers.

He was trained as a leather-worker, and used his considerable skills to make luggage for the Duke of Windsor, as well as beautifully-finished travelling cases for

the Company's Howe Collection. He lined the cases with blue silk, which had been one of his wife's favourite dresses: "He said it was a lovely dress," says Edna, "and he took it off its hanger and cut it up!"

Many worthwhile potential recipients of our Charity funds, be they special schools, charitable organisations and even individuals, have no idea that we exist let alone that we may be interested in supporting them. Therefore very few contact us direct so it is important that we seek them out.

I therefore urge members of the Company to tell the Clerk if they know, or become aware of, any likely organisation or person who would benefit from our assistance. The benefit must, of course, be turning-related and could include say the installation of a lathe, or training in its use, or awarding of prizes.

Finally, I am sure you would think it remiss if a statement from me did not include my usual plea for you to re-visit your Standing Order to the Charity Fund. We are one of a very few Livery Companies who do not charge "Quarterage" i.e. an annual subscription, relying, as we do, on Fines from members when they become Freemen and Liverymen and, thereafter, on your discretion as to a suitable annual charitable donation.

You might be interested to know that the annual average Quarterage paid by Liverymen in other Companies would seem to be around £300 per annum. Our incoming Freemen now complete Standing Orders to the Charity Fund, the minimum suggested sum being £150. I would like to stress the word "minimum".

If members could increase their donation to, say, £300 per annum, that would have a significant impact on our charity giving. There are many more schools like Valence where, with more funds, we can make a considerable difference.

It is only with your generosity that the Company can help needy people who have faith in the charity of others.

Andrew Mayer

Chairman, Charity Committee