

MY YEAR AS MASTER 2022-23 - MATTHEW GAVED

Election Court is a poignant moment for both the new and departing Master alike. We are one of the few Livery Companies which always hold its Election Court on a religious feast day, in our case Ascension Day – and we have been doing this for over 400 years. Whilst one Master ascends to his or her new role, the other descends to become the Deputy Master.

And so it was for me on 18th May, after a ‘short year’ of fifty-one weeks, such is the Church calendar. On becoming Master in May 2022, I resolved to use every one of those weeks to do as much as I possibly could to support and promote the Turners’ Company in the City of London, amongst our fellow Livery Companies, and across the Craft.

Over the year, I represented the Company at over one hundred formal events – many with the Clerk or my wife and Consort, Christine. They ranged from a Lord Mayor’s Banquet in Mansion House to the pole lathe turners’ 2023 Bodgers Ball in a muddy field near Cambridge. It was an honour to be at both, and all the many and varied events in between. These included three visits to the headquarters of the Royal and Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME) in Lyneham and several services in St Paul’s Cathedral, the last being the Thanksgiving on the 900th anniversary of St Bartholomew’s Hospital.

Two of the REME visits were to present the Turners’ Company prize for the best REME battalion – in June 2022 to 2nd Battalion and in May 2023 to 4th Battalion. The third occasion was the REME Regimental Dinner in November 2022. At each of these events, foremost was the professionalism and commitment of REME to its mission, not least the critical role it is playing in our country’s support of Ukraine.

Back in the City of London, our Company took part in two ‘medieval’ Livery Fairs at which we displayed the ‘art and mystérie’ of woodturning. This was done primarily through pole lathe demonstrations and turned items sold to raise funds for our charity, generously made and donated by members of the Company and professional and amateur turners. There was always variety. At the two-day festival in June in Guildhall Yard celebrating the life of ‘London’s Turbulent Son’ Thomas Becket, Amy Leake gamely demonstrated in costume throughout typical summer weather – boiling hot one day and pouring with rain the next. We also showcased the Turners’ Consort of medieval style recorders, played by students from the Guildhall School of Music.

In September, many Turners, members of other Livery Companies and the public had a memorable day at the annual Sheep Drive across London Bridge and at the Livery Fair around the Monument. The demonstration by John Burbage attracted much attention and our stall was next to the Bakers’ Company. This led to the Master Turner and Master Baker hatching a cunning plan to jointly sell breadboards and bread at future charity events. And this is indeed what happened – at the Lord Mayor’s Big Curry Lunch on 30th March. Our breadboards were made by Katie Armstrong and Dan Smith; one was presented, with a loaf, by the two Masters to the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester.

We also contributed to the record amount raised for the Red Cross at the 2022 'Jailed & Bailed' event. Through the generosity of members of the Company and friends who have enjoyed Turners' Company events, I was one of the highest fund-raisers. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Red Cross through my Jailed & Bailed.

In my Master's Year we launched the Yeoman Programme for current and past winners of our three craft awards: our biennial Bursaries and annual Cockpit and QEST awards. We now have some forty Yeoman, who we will continue to support and to maintain a closer relationship. This year we are also launching a Professional Development Programme for Yeomen, which will be delivered by Cockpit over 13 weeks each Autumn. Our relationship with Cockpit Deptford continues to develop, and this year we supported the equipping of the new woodturning workshop.

The Turners' Company has also helped to upgrade the woodturning lathes at the Blackhorse Workshop in Walthamstow, and Blackhorse is now set to deliver the Company's Certificate in Turning course. I was very pleased to be able to take the course at the Max Carey Woodturning Trust in Portishead and to be the first member of the Company to be awarded the certificate.

My Master's Year was very busy at times, particularly in the lead-up to our Spring Dinner in April, for which I made the 40 or so guests individual cheese platters of walnut, each with cast pewter discs representing the location of three City churches. My wife Christine played a key role in the production line, particularly in the final days, when she was also organising for 2023 Consorts a very successful turning demonstration (by Liveryman Les Thorne) alongside afternoon tea at the Dutch Church in support of the Turners' Charity. That is just one of the many reasons why I would like to thank her for her enormous support throughout my time as Master. My enjoyment of the year also much depended on the support and kindness of our Beadle, Terry Brazier, Assistant Clerk Becca Baker; and, above all, our Clerk Niall Macnaughton. To all I say *thank you*.

Matthew Gaved

Master 2022-23

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CAPTIONS:

- 1) Amy Leake demonstrating polelathe turning at the Becket Pageant Livery Fair in Guildhall Yard, May 2022.
- 2) Past Master Baker and Master Turner Matthew Gaved showing their bread board gift to the Duke of Gloucester.
- 3) Matthew Gaved receiving his Certificate in Turning from the then Renter Warden, Christopher Scott.

