

Michaelmas Lunch

11 September 2018



Our Michaelmas Lunch this year was held at the Armourers' Hall and was attended by many distinguished guests as well as members of the Company.

The Hall is truly magnificent with swords, spears and armour of every size and description adorning the walls. Hopefully they are well screwed on.

The lunch was preceded by a drinks Reception at which the Master, Simon Catford and the Wardens welcomed all those who attended. It was a busy and noisy time but lovely to see so many friends and guests enjoying each other's company.

The Beadle then invited us into lunch and the usual procession of Master and guests took place. Grace was said by the Deputy Master and we then enjoyed a delicious meal expertly served by the catering staff.

After the loyal toast a welcome was made to all the guests who included the Master Launderer, the Master Master Mariner and his Clerk and the Master Watermen & Lightermen and his Clerk. The guest speaker Mrs Mary Prior CVO MBE then rose to give her speech.

Mrs Prior was until recently Lord Lieutenant of Bristol where she lives. She gave us an interesting account of her duties and some of the funny moments that took place over the years but as many of these involved the Royal Family she had to be very discreet! She also described the similarities between the Livery in London and the Merchant Venturers' in Bristol of which she is a member. A charming lady and well supported by her husband John – it was lovely to see them again.

Mrs Prior finished by proposing a toast to the Company and the Master duly responded.

In his speech the Master introduced our two new Court Assistants, four new Freemen of the Company and one new Liveryman. He also welcomed two new younger members who had been made Associate Freemen. It was good to see these new faces.



The Master then commented on the current concerns about plastic waste and river and sea pollution. He urged us to consider the use of disposable coffee cups and plastic bottles of water, both of which we use too many of. But there was a lighter side as well as he set out some of the activities for Company members in the near future.

After the speeches it was time to move next door and say goodbye to everyone over a cup of coffee. With so many good friends there it took a while for us to disperse and the Beadle almost had to throw us out as the Hall was to be used by other people; a good sign!

The retiring collection raised £840 for the Water Conservation Trust – thank you for the generous support. It was a very enjoyable day and our thanks must go to all who organised it and to the Worshipful Company of Armourers and Brasiers for the use of their Hall.

Wendy Catford, Mistress