

SILENT CEREMONY AND LORD MAYOR'S PARADE

Our new Mayor, [Mr Richard Lewis], officially took up his position on 9 November at Guildhall in the so called Silent Ceremony. This is the formal occasion upon which the new Lord Mayor is sworn in and the retiring Lord Mayor passes on his symbols of office to the new Lord Mayor. The key items passed on include sword, sceptre, and inventory of the Corporation's possessions (for which the new Lord mayor takes responsibility). It was a most dignified occasion full of the history of the City. Our own Installation Ceremony is in essence the same but on an altogether less grand scale. Your Master, his Lady and Liveryman Bill Halson attended on behalf of the Company. A limited number of tickets is available in advance and any Liverymen wishing to attend next year should apply via our Clerk.

The following day saw the Lord Mayor's Parade celebrating his installation. This was again a splendid occasion (but by no means silent!). There were over 150 floats representing the armed services and various institutions with links to the City. As in recent years the Company processed with the other Modern Livery Companies. The Master, his Lady and Bill Halson walked the full route from the holding area near St Pauls, past the Bank of England, Mansion House (where we saluted the new Lord Mayor), down Cheapside and up Fleet Street ending up at HQS Wellington for very welcome snack lunch and liquid refreshment. Bill is to be congratulated for his sterling efforts in carrying our banner so well in quite windswept conditions. The Thames Warden, Lorna Walker, followed on the upper deck of an open topped bus (which also contained a jazz band). After the lunch the parade made its way back to its starting point.



Numbers of spectators this year seemed well up on last year. Also there were very few crowd barriers which added to the immediacy and enjoyment of the event. It was lovely to see so many smiling faces. Among the thousands of faces I spotted Court Assistant Jeff Rasbash. From the cheering crowds I picked up a number of favourable comments about our Company's name; people particularly in the east of England are more and more aware of the need to conserve water.

It was enjoyable to process with friends from other Livery Companies. Equally there may come a time when we wish to have our own float again. I still remember our float of several years' ago when we had Liverymen dressed as medieval water carriers and ladies dressed, much more fetchingly, as teardrops. Our motto 'Every drop is precious' was well received albeit on the day in question it was pouring with rain! Perhaps we might consider a repeat on some future date, say the 10th anniversary of grant of Livery.