

Masters' Annual Reports



Bob Mark 2009 to 2010

It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to serve the Livery as your Master in this our 10th anniversary year, which we celebrated so splendidly in the presence of the Lord Mayor at Trinity House in January. Our Company has come a long way since 25 January 2000 when the Company was admitted to Livery. We have established our presence through a mature network of relationships with fellow Liveries and established a rhythm of events which chart the course of a Master through his or her year.

The theme of Water is of course ever-present. My duties have ranged from presenting the incoming Lord Mayor with a jug of water through to escorting, in our beautiful cutter, a piece of Tudor Water Pipe: the Tudor "Stella", which was carried in the Queen's barge from Hampton Court to the Tower of London. This is an annual event in which we Water Conservators play a significant part to mark the undiminished importance the River Thames still has in the Life of the City.

Another highlight associated with the River has been to present the annual Bio- Diversity Prize in the Thames Fisheries Experiment on a rather cold, damp morning near Gravesend, but one warmed by the cheerful enthusiasm of the hundred or so fishermen taking part.

I have also represented our Livery in upwards of a dozen or so Livery functions graciously hosted by Actuaries, Launderers, Plumbers, Master Mariners and Watermen amongst so many others.

A very great privilege has been to introduce our speakers this year. I decided to give prominence to our university affiliations and we were greatly honoured to welcome Sir Neil Chalmers, Warden of Wad ham College Oxford and Professor Chris Jenks, Vice-Chancellor of Brunel together with some of their MSc students, whom our bursaries support. Admiral Sir Ian Forbes gave a very lively and thought provoking discourse on the UK's place in the World which I know was much enjoyed.

We have contributed in our own field through sponsorship of the "Wet - 10" dinner-debate, where 50 participants listened to the lively discourse of Jonathan Porritt CBE, formerly a Director of Friends of the Earth, and Ken Harvey the Chairman of Pennon Group.

I was delighted that 200 industry professionals attended this year's annual Water Conservators Lecture given by the Chair of the DEFRA Independent Review on Competition and Innovation in Water Markets, Professor Martin Cave. The lecture was generously sponsored by Costain and supported by Brunel University and such was the enthusiasm, three of our audience that evening submitted membership applications.

On a personal note, my wife Wendy and I were delighted that so many of our chose to join us during the Portsmouth Livery weekend, the Trafalgar Night dinner in HMS Warrior was delightful but confirmed my wife's belief that I should not take up singing sea chanties professionally. Throughout the year we have both been warmed by your kindnesses and friendship. I end as I began with my thanks for your support and confidence in electing me as your Master last year.

For those of you contemplating service on the Court and possible future election, may I commend both to you.

Bob Mark
Deputy Master