

Installation Court Lunch

9 July 2018

On a very warm July day the Installation Ceremony took place within the Stationers' Hall. After the Installation Ceremony itself, we were all able to enjoy the Reception Drinks in the cooler gardens and in the shadow of the very magnificent ancient Plane tree.

Returning to the Great Hall for lunch, there was relief all round when permission for removal of jackets was given. The excellent food was then enjoyed amongst much convivial chatter before the Toasts at the finish of the meal.



The Thames Warden Mark Lane spoke first to thank Master Stationer for the beautiful venue and the Team from the Cook and Butler for the splendid and most enjoyable lunch. He proceeded to welcome the 'veritable panoply' of Guests including Alderman

Dr Sir Andrew Parmley. We were also privileged to share our table with Robert Burgon Master Plumber and Clerk, Dyfrig James Master Pavior and Clerk, Julian Sayers Master Farmer and Clerk, Ron Summers Master Scientific Instrument Maker and Clerk, Maureen Marden Master Environmental Cleaner and Clerk, Tony Ward Master Constructor and Clerk, and the Principal Guest, Professor Paul Leinster CBE.

Paul is Professor of Environmental Assessment at Cranfield and previously CEO of the Environment Agency as well as holding a number of other very senior roles. Paul regaled us with some tales of water management through the years and the challenges we now face today of too much, too little or wrong sort (quality). We

started with what the Romans taught us, their knowledge of the importance of water and the early days of water management, storage and distribution. Water management by the Moghuls in 17th Century India was no less impressive and in Jaipur they built for themselves not just a storage and distribution system but also a filter treatment facility. The quality of water in our capital's river has been observed through the ages in literature (Charles Dickens in Little Dorritt) and in the news. In 1971 (in no small way owing to the 40mt of sewage being dumped in the river each year) it was pronounced dead.

Paul then focussed on the powerful partnership of regulation and legislation (including European) and their roles in revitalising the wonderful river now with 120 species of fish living in the tidal flow. Whilst at the EA he developed and introduced 'Better Regulation' which engaged more broadly across society. Brexit is seeking deregulation but it is imperative it does not lose the benefits gained. The government has outlined its 25-year plan and we will be the first generation seeking to leave the Environment in better condition than before. He added that it is imperative this must become statute. Paul is clear that Natural Capital Assets should be properly identified and embedded in planning as with any other element of infrastructure.

He knows legislation is not straightforward and highlighted the challenge of plastics. Currently a major focal point but balancing plastic use with food longevity is an example of one of many challenges to come. Paul's address was warmly received and applauded.

In response, Mr Simon Catford made his first speech since becoming the 30th Master Water Conservator, thanking Paul and also Mike Williamson for his sterling work over the past 12 months.

Simon introduced his new team and Court Assistants, acknowledged the support from the Clerk and Beadle and advised on changes to the Past Masters Committee.

Simon proceeded to talk of the challenges of his coming year as Master and of his determination to increase membership numbers, complementing the creation of the Associate Liveryman introduced last year by Mike Williamson by launching H2Outreach. This will be a recruitment drive seeking to increase membership numbers by 10% by 2020 and the mantle will be picked up in succeeding years by Mark Lane and Rob Casey. The Spring Networking event which attracted 50 potential new members to hear about the company was a good start and will be repeated, along with continuation of the mentoring programme and developing relationships with other professional institutions.



Simon also outlined his exciting social programme for the year which includes the Globe Theatre visit for Othello, a visit to the Bank of England and a City Walk.

Simon finished with thanks to everyone for their supports, reminded us of the Michaelmas lunch and Annual Banquet and reminded us that the retiring collection was for the wonderful Magical Taxi Ride to Euro Disney. Thanks to the generosity of those assembled, some £600 was raised which will be presented to the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers in due course.