

Michaelmas Court Lunch 2014

The Company held its Michaelmas Court Lunch on 24 September 2014 at the Armourers Hall on a site occupied by the Armourers and Brasiers' Company since 1346.

Court Assistant Sue Paterson welcomed visiting Masters: Master Plumber, Nick Gale; Master Scientific Instrument Maker, David Kent; Master Launderer, John Shonfield; Master Constructor, Alan Longhurst, and the guest speaker, Alderman Alison Gowman, the Master Glover, concluding with a traditional toast to '*the guests*' – in water.



Right to left: Fleet Warden, Keith Tozzi; Alderman Alison Gowman; Master Water Conservator, Roger North, and Master Plumber, Nick Gale

Alderman Gowman explained the many facets of her connection with water. As Alderman of the Ward of Dowgate (from the Anglo-Saxon *Duue Gate* meaning Watergate) where, in mediaeval times, the River Walbrook was used as a rubbish dump, and often caused offence leading to Ordinances preventing the good people of Dowgate from *abusing the river and causing noxious and unhealthy odours and stench*es.

Six hundred years later, her role still encompassed a concern for water, waste and City infrastructure. The *City Vision 2050* was almost complete and early indications showed a concern for water stress: the high density of development coupled with an ageing infrastructure, meant that the City was vulnerable to low mains pressure and difficulties in connecting new infrastructure.

The City was also vulnerable to surface water and sewer flooding. This, when combined with wider environmental issues – droughts, floods - had the potential to constrain the City's growth. The full report would be issued in November 2014 and would include ways of building flood resilience into business and local authority planning and constructions, and practical ways to improve their operations.

The *Drain London Project* aimed to ensure each London borough had a Surface Water Management Plan which includes flood risk management plans. The City of London was working towards a more resilient and prepared City, but it was not complacent. The Water Conservators Company and its members had an important role to play, with lectures and academic engagement and, perhaps, could do more.

In the welcome Alderman Gowman had been introduced as the Master Glover. This was an important task and reminded her of the importance of gloves – from protecting the wearer from the environment to protecting patients from contamination. And then there is the important element of fashion! Concluding, Alderman Gowman proposed the toast to The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators.

Master Water Conservator Roger North thanked Alderman Gowman for her speech and encouragement to do more. The planned Thames Tunnel was designed to further protect the River Thames from pollution and facilitate better waste management. The Company recognised the need to do more, on its own and with others, such as the WET 10 group of Livery Companies. Future proofing for cities was high on the list of concerns.



That morning the Company had admitted three new Freeman: Christine Duthie, Christine Jarvis and Robert Epsom and two Liverymen: Simon Hall and Dominic Nash. They were welcomed to the Company and encouraged to play a full part in Company life.

The Company and its charity, The Water Conservation Trust, were also active in promoting environmental education, in schools and at 12 universities where the Company had ongoing relationships. Recently, two awards have been made for best Masters degree dissertations to two students at Brunel University, who were presented with Certificates and engraved water jugs.



**Dissertation Prize-winners
Girish Rambaran and Ali Mohammed**



The Lunch concluded with a collection for The Water Conservation Trust.