

## **Masters' Annual Reports**



### **Peter English 2001 to 2002**

I have been incredibly honoured to serve as Master. It has been a thoroughly enjoyable and highly memorable year with a number of experiences that I will always treasure.

It is perhaps not until you become a Master that you realise the significant role you play in the corporate life of the City of London as part of a larger group. When the members of that group are assembled and formally dressed in their beautifully colourful regalia it is a magnificent sight to behold. Only then can you appreciate what it means to be a Master - and indeed a member - of a livery company.

Among the occasions when this grand spectacle is at its finest is at the election of the Lord Mayor - an event I was delighted to attend on October 1st at the Guild Hall. Equally as impressive I am sure will be the election of the Sheriffs in June, which I look forward to attending.

During my 12 months as Master, two unforgettable experiences have been the Myddleton Lunch and a mini-voyage from Toulon to Gibraltar on board the Royal Navy survey ship, HMS Scott, thanks to the company's affiliation with the Naval vessel. Both events are detailed elsewhere in the newsletter.

On September 6th, I was also lucky enough to be invited by the RAF's number one Aeronautical Information Documents Unit (AIDU) to a Battle of Britain cocktail party at RAF Northolt. One of the highlights was the sight of a lone Spitfire soaring overhead.

My wife Angela and I were entertained again by the unit in November, thanks to Wing Commander Gary Barber. As part of the unit's hospitality, Angela was even treated to her first ever trip in a helicopter and was lucky enough to be flown over London in one of the Queen's flight.

During the year, the company has also further developed its strong affiliation with the sea cadets and on three occasions I visited the training ship (TS) Scott at Maidstone, Kent. I was present in July for the annual inspection as well as October's splendid Trafalgar Night Dinner where the 12 year old cadets made a superb effort. In January, I was there when the commanding officer, Peter Lewis, was presented with a bar to his long service medal while his number one, Deidre Lorimer, received her own long service medal.

I have also had the pleasure of accepting invitations from the Worshipful Company of Musicians to join them for two marvellous events. On October 3rd, I attended the company's beautiful choral evensong service in St Paul's Cathedral as well as the festival in Westminster Cathedral on November

21st in honour of their patron saint St Cecilia. Both were wonderfully uplifting and again the sight of the Masters in their robes of office was truly magnificent.

In November, I was privileged to attend the Remembrance Day ceremonies and plant a commemorative poppy in the field at St Paul's Cathedral. I was also proud to take part in the procession to the merchant navy war memorial along with other Masters of water-related livery companies, led by the Worshipful Company of Master Mariners.

Also in November, our own annual banquet at the Vintners Hall was a splendid evening where we were able to strengthen our ties with the sea cadet movement by welcoming their senior officer and our principal guest, rear admiral Sir Jeremy Todd.

Following Christmas Court in December, the carol service was immensely enjoyable. Held jointly with the Fuellers' company, we filled St Michael's, Cornhill with the sound of festive singing.

In January, I was proud to witness the success of our first lecture, which saw Chris Binnie speak so eloquently on the history and future of water in London. Organised jointly with the Worshipful Company of Plumbers and held at the Institute of Electrical Engineers, it was an occasion enjoyed by many of our members and is an event we hope to repeat.

On March 14th, the Lord Mayor's Livery Dinner was a glittering affair held in the grandeur of the Egyptian Hall with the Lord Mayor guarded by the company of Pikemen and Musketeers in their splendid medieval dress.

More recently, the 25th anniversary luncheon of the chartered surveyors' company at Drapers' Hall on April 15th was a tremendous occasion and attracted a phenomenal attendance, with 90 out of 103 Masters present.

Finally, as my year as Master drew to a close, I had the pleasure of the Tudor Pull in May.

Our wonderful Thames cutter has enjoyed great success in its first season crewed by the younger members of the Worshipful Company of Watermen and Lightermen and they ensured the clerk, Ralph Riley, and I arrived in fine style at the finish line.

**Peter English, MBE**

**Deputy Master**