



# Worshipful Company of Constructors

## Quarterly Newsletter — January 2019

ISSUE 6

## The Newsletter

This issue of the Newsletter is the next in our quarterly series of Newsletters, and is focused on the objectives of our Membership Committee, the first few months of the new Master's year, the way we are moving forward with the initiatives that were identified in the recent "away-day" and the aims of the Company in respect of our themes of international relations and diversity. There is also an article on the cost and price of our formal events over the last ten years. Whilst inflation has taken its toll, we have managed to maintain costs, and thus prices, whilst maintaining our tradition of providing a memorable and high quality event.

## Company News

The Membership Committee has published the following:

### Membership

Our membership in September 2018 was 319, but in December 2018 that had decreased to 304. This is not unusual at the time when quarterage invoices are distributed and members decide that they no longer wish to be members. However, looking forward there are 7 potential members booked for interview and a further 7 applications being processed, which pretty much restores the numbers. History also shows that there is always a degree of churn, but that our membership numbers rarely decrease at the end of each Master's year.

### Membership Committee

The Company is always seeking to be more inclusive and open. We are also keen to attract new members who are connected with the construction industry, particularly those who are under 35. As the Master has previously said - "We pride ourselves in being totally committed to equality of opportunity for all irrespective of race, colour, gender or sexual orientation." Our Membership committee is determined to carry this commitment forward and has formed sub-committees to look at diversity and the role of young people within the Company, seeing it as a fantastic opportunity to make a difference to not only the Company, but also the industry as a whole. These sub-committees will be led by Freeman Diana Chrouch and Liveryman John Rowsell respectively. The goals of the Membership committee are that:

- 25% of the membership should be female and under the age of 45
- Younger membership (ie those under 35) should rise from 40 to 100 in two years
- BME membership should increase to 25% within two years
- On achievement of the above goals the bar should continue, at least in the short term, to be raised by 2% per annum
- The Company should partner with other organisations that have similar goals, with particular emphasis on understanding the mix between technical/professional staff and trade/labour staff.
- Work with the Livery Committee to develop a diversity policy for the livery
- Develop an outreach programme

### Considerate Constructors Scheme



The Company is proud to be a supporter of the Considerate Constructors Scheme, which is a non-profit-making, independent organisation founded in 1997 by the construction industry to improve its image. Construction sites, companies and suppliers can register with the scheme, and they agree to abide by the Code of Considerate Practice, which is designed to encourage best practice beyond statutory requirements. The scheme is concerned about any area of construction activity that may have a direct or indirect impact on the image of the industry as a whole.

When we first supported the scheme the Master said "With many of our aims and objectives so closely aligned with those of the Considerate Constructors Scheme we are extremely pleased to be a Scheme Supporter as we want the image of responsible construction to be spread widely throughout the UK. We pride ourselves in being totally committed to equality of opportunity for all irrespective of race, colour, gender or sexual orientation."

# Message from the Clerk



Our Gallant Clerk is Kim Tyrell, and it is he who manages the majority of our workings, administration of the Court, payment of our dues and all our communications with Members. Whilst this newsletter replaces the "Clerk's Notes" the Clerk will still provide information to members as needed.

The latest message from the Clerk is:

## **"LIVERY & AWARDS DINNER - 13 February 2019**

This year's Livery & Awards Dinner will be held in Haberdashers' Hall. There will be a three-course meal with musical accompaniment and the presentations to our Scholars and members of our affiliated Armed Forces Units. It is a formal occasion and the dress is black tie with orders, decorations and Livery badges and medals. The Master's receiving line opens at 1815, and dinner will be called at 1845. All members and their guests are very welcome. Tickets are £95pp, please contact the Clerk.

## **United Guilds Service - St Pauls' Cathedral - 29 March 2019**

The United Guilds Service will take place in St Paul's Cathedral on 29 March 2019. Tickets are limited, The Master, Wardens & Clerk should attend gowned the dress for other Members of the Company is business attire. Tickets should be requested from the Clerk. There will be a lunch at Painters' Hall following the election at a cost of £62pp. Places at lunch are limited, guests may be bought, Members are requested to inform the Clerk soonest if they wish to attend.

## **New Freedom & Livery Certificates**

As a number of you will be aware, the format of both the Livery & Freedom Certificates has been revised in the past year to conform to the shape and approximate dimensions of the Freedom of the City certificate. The Freedom Certificate is the same dimensions the Livery Certificate is deeper to reflect that it has more words. Both are framed. If any Freeman or Liveryman would like a new style certificate, please contact the Clerk the cost will be £35 each and delivery will need to be arranged between each Member & the Clerk.

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## The Master writes ...



Since my Installation in October 2018, it has been a busy couple of months working on company matters, representing the company across the city and further afield and dealing with an untimely illness.

I am pleased to say that health issues are under control and my grateful thanks must go to all those who sent me their well wishes and cards.

Reflecting over the past couple of months, I am also pleased to say the first stage of our review of the company and relationship with our Charitable Trust has been completed and we have highlighted 7 major areas for development, which include a firm commitment to diversity and equality, the formation of a young members committee to name but a few.

We want to be a fully inclusive and more dynamic organisation that fully represents all of its members, to increase our sphere of influence across the city and beyond and we continue to develop our scholarships and awards programmes and support those most in need.

My main theme, as outlined at the Installation dinner and contained in my Master's message, is International relations. It was therefore a great honour to host an official governmental delegation from Rugao, Jiangsu, China, here to a lunch in the superb surroundings at Inn holders Hall, served with a sumptuous lunch prepared by the Michelin star chef, Herbert Berger ( there is a short article later and there are more details on our web site).

As this year is our official fundraising year, I am looking for sponsors to support our charity gala banquet to be held on 19th September in the wonderful and iconic Long Room at Lords. The venue holds 200 and we have already received some marvellous auction lots to help entice those attending to give generously.

Any help members can give to achieve or even exceed my target to raise £50,000 would be both recognised and gratefully received. Why not encourage your company to take a corporate table for 10. For more details or if you wish to get involved or know someone who can help support us, please contact either Femi Santos, chair of the Fundraising committee or myself. We would be very pleased to hear from you.

We have a great deal planned for this year and our web site is kept fully up to date with the programme of events and functions, so please stay tuned to what's going on in to your company and come along and support as many events as you can.

I would be especially pleased to hear from members who wish to attend my Master's weekend in Cambridge between 12th-14th July, check out the web site for further details.

Coming up before then will be our Livery & Awards dinner on 13th February at Haberdashers' Hall, our principal business dinner event of the year, which provides us an opportunity to recognise all of our award winners and the gallant efforts of some of the exceptional individuals from our military affiliates. Do please come along and bring a guest with you.

The festive season is a long time coming and so quickly passes (I just wish the weight did as well!), as does the seasonal shut down of the Construction sector. Now the New Year is upon us and the hard work begins once more. May I and Mistress Jessica take this opportunity to wish you all good health, happiness and prosperity for 2019 and we really look forward to meeting as many of you as we can throughout the remainder of the year ahead.

*Mike Parrett - Master*

# City Briefings

These are aimed particularly at new Liverymen and Freemen; partners are also welcome, as are Court Assistants and Liverymen of longer standing, who have not previously been to a Briefing, who are also encouraged to attend.

They give a short introduction to the work of the Corporation, especially the relationship with the livery companies. The presentation is given by an Assistant Town Clerk and a member of the Livery Committee. There is opportunity to ask questions of the speakers and the Briefing is followed by a light finger buffet, which provides the chance to mix with other Liverymen and Freemen.

The briefings are held at the Livery Hall, 71 Basinghall Street, Guildhall, London EC2V 5DH and there is a non-refundable charge of £20 per person for the course.

There are several Briefings a year and in 2019 the Briefings will be held on Tuesday, 5 February; Wednesday, 15 May; Monday, 21 October and Tuesday, 19 November. Once you have selected and applied for one of the Briefings, you will be able to change the date and carry your payment forward, providing 10 days notice is given. To change the date of the Briefing you wish to attend you should contact the [Course Administrator](mailto:liverycourses@cityoflondon.gov.uk) at (liverycourses@cityoflondon.gov.uk) stating your and your guest's (if applicable) name, your livery company, the date of the course you were originally booked on and the new date of the course you wish to attend. Please also note that bookings can only be made up 10 days before each course and that bookings will close when the maximum number of attendees (120) has been reached.

## Programme and timings:

- 5.00pm **Registration**, tea/coffee served
- 5.30pm **Welcome:** Vicky Russell, Chairman of the Livery Committee
- 5.40pm **Livery companies, their membership, and activities:** Vicky Russell, Paul Jagger, The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists
- 6.00pm **The role of the City of London Corporation:** Lorraine Brook, Town Clerk's Department
- 6.15pm **The Freedom of the City of London:** Murray Craig, Clerk to the Chamberlain's Court
- 6.45pm **Panel discussion with Q and A**
- 7.00pm **Closing remarks:** Chairman of the Livery Committee
- 7.05pm **Drinks Reception**
- 8.00pm End

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# Formal Events

There has recently been considerable debate amongst members about the cost of our formal functions, and some of this has debate has taken place in the forum of our feedback surveys. As a result, we have looked back at the cost and price of our formal functions over the last 10 years. To maintain a sense of reality in this evaluation we have compared our costs over 10 years with the Retail Price Index (RPI).

Taking the value of RPI at October over 10 years it was 217.7 in October 2008 and 284.5 in October 2018, an increase of approximately 31%.

Over the same 10 year period the average price of our events has gone from £89 to £106.33, an increase of approximately 20%. Our costs have also increased by about 22%, so we would appear to have raised our prices less than our costs have increased, but it is important to note that some functions are more expensive than others, and this particularly applies to the Sir Christopher Wren Banquet (or its equivalent) each year. The cost of a typical formal function can be broken down into several headings: Official Guests; Venue hire (sometimes includes the cost of the meal); Catering (including the reception and stirrup cup); Music (limited to £450 - above this the Master of the day pays the balance) and Flowers (installation Dinner and SCW only, but again limited to 1 large and 2 small arrangements on the Top Table - if the Master of the day wishes more elaborate arrangements the these are at the Master's cost). If any "extras" (eg Pikemen, Carpet Guards etc) are required then these, too, are at the Master's cost.

A great deal of thought goes into the choice of halls, menus and wine so that the Company achieved a balance between a wonderful and memorable event in a great venue, but at a cost that the membership is able and willing to bear. As ever, the Company makes its best efforts to reduce cost, but never at the expense of our "accepted" standards so as to ensure that the quality members have come to expect in these events is maintained. It is perhaps important to recognise that these formal events are never seen to be money making events and are simply expected to break even when all the costs associated with Company Official Guests are discounted - ie the Company not the attending members paying for the official guests.

So, to sum up:

The Company, like all its members, is not immune to the effects of inflation - our event costs increase as time goes on because our cost base increases, but over the last 10 years we have managed to keep price increases below inflation. Indeed, for some years during the last 10 years, we artificially held fire on our cost increases and so our income from each function was probably exceeded by our costs, something that was clearly untenable in the long run.

We cannot therefore halt the inexorable, if slow, rise in the price of our formal events, but rest assured that we will always strive to maintain standards whilst getting the best value for money that we can.

# Lunch for Chinese Delegation

On 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 the Company was honoured to host a civic delegation from the Town of Rugao, Jiangsu province, China to lunch at Innholders' Hall.

The lunch was a delicious 4-course fine-dining experience created by the Innholders' Michelin starred chef Michel Berger.



Chairman Wu

Chairman Wu, the leader of the delegation said that it was a great privilege to be with the leaders and elite from all walks of life in the City of London. He also talked about the City of Ruago, describing it as an open and inclusive city that attached great importance to strengthening economic and trade co-operation with Great Britain and other European countries. He recognised that London is the major financial centre in the World and he went on to say that the purpose of the visit was to strengthen the relationship between Ruago and London and he invited everyone to visit Ruago for investigation, sightseeing, leisure and investment co-operation - he was sure that all would gain a lot.



The Master and Mistress Constructor with the Delegation from Rugao

The Master responded by thanking Chairman Wu for his introduction to Ruago and the opportunities for further co-operation between our great cities and countries. He reminded all that he, the Mistress and their family were no strangers to China, having relatives there and having visited the Country often. He also recalled that he and the Mistress had visited Rugao some three years previously, finding it to be both an enlightening and unforgettable experience.

The Master concluded his address by quoting from the writings of the ancient Chinese philosopher, Confucius, who said "A superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions" - something that was, he considered, ably demonstrated in Chairman Wu's address.



Alderman Mainelli

On behalf of the City Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli marvelled at the difference between China in 1983 and now and emphasised the importance of the "Green Revolution", something that was being worked on in both Jiangsu and the City of London and his closing message was that "London remains most open to trade on technology and finance with all".

The occasion was greatly enjoyed by all present and the surroundings of Innholders' Hall, although somewhat compact, together with the standard of catering, were considered to be exceptional, and whilst probably not suitable for one of our larger occasions would probably be very appropriate for one of our smaller luncheons.



The Rugao Delegation with PM Christine Rigden - a previous Non-Aldermanic Sheriff of the City of London

# Annual Carol Service and Reception

On 13<sup>th</sup> December the Worshipful Company of Constructors held their annual Christmas Carol Service at our Guild Church of St Lawrence Jewry. It was held in conjunction with the Worshipful Company of Architects and the Guild of Entrepreneurs, so resulted in an almost full congregation, who sang several Christmas Carols lustily and listened to some magnificent carols and other Christmas music splendidly sung and played by Catherine Ennis and the choir of St Lawrence Jewry. The address was given by Revd Cannon David Parrott, the Guild Vicar of St Lawrence Jewry.

A collection was taken during the service and, as usual, our share of the collection was donated to CRASH, the construction industry charity that supports hospices, the homeless and other disadvantaged people.

The collection raised £658.00 which, with gift aid claims increased to £797.50, and we were very pleased to receive the following email from Lucie Gillard, the CRASH Fundraising Executive:

"On behalf of CRASH, a huge thank you for supporting CRASH once again at your Carol Service. The total raised was a fantastic £797.50. We are so grateful to be the chosen charity so thank you again for your continued support of CRASH and what we do"

After the Service the Constructors and their guests retired to the Guildhall Club where they enjoyed a festive drink and a sit-down meal. It appears to have been considered a fitting start to the Festive Season by all those who attended.

# Freeman John Kennedy Melling

Past Master John Burrell writes:



“On 2<sup>nd</sup> November we learned that John Kennedy Melling (JKM) had died on 10<sup>th</sup> October. Being almost 92 he had been inactive for many years and it is doubtful many of our current membership knew him. However, we have all benefited from the time he devoted to the then Company of Builders in its early years.

JKM was a singular man, a self-described dilettante immediately recognisable by his monocle and velvet cloak which was a red-line cloak originally made for Hamilton Deane’s 1924 staging of Dracula, and which he would often wear to make grand entrances at functions. Not in any way was he one’s idea of a conventional Liveryman but John was ‘Livery’ through and through.

He was a Past Master Poulter (1980-81) and a Liveryman of the Bakers, Farriers and Constructors (admitted July 1977). He published many works on many subjects including Discovering London’s Guilds and Liveries, London and the

Guilds of Europe and The Poulterers of London. He was a past editor of The Liveryman Magazine.

Being an acknowledged authority on the Livery caused our Founders to seek John’s advice on City and Livery ways, and that freely gave. He subsequently wrote a history of our early days which members can find on the website and which emphasises

Having joined the Company of Builders in July 1977 he continued to advise and contribute organising the Masters Summer visits to Chatsworth (Master Peter Allen 1979-80) and Aberdeen (Master Ken Davis 1990-91).

I cannot overstate the importance of the contribution JKM made to our formation and first steps as a then Guild seeking Livery. Moreover I cannot forget the help he gave me personally. As Senior Warden I also sought his advice on the ways of the City and the Livery. Despite my having asked him a favour he twice invited me to the BAFTA Club (he was a long standing member) for lunch at his expense where he sought to steer me away from errors of which I avoided a few. In return I invited him to be principal guest at my Installation Dinner where he spoke on the lighter side of the City and Livery.

As I said, he was a singular person but a kind and generous man who the Builders / Constructors were lucky to have.”

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## Membership News

As an organisation for members, we value greatly our membership, and at Court on 13 December 2018 the following changes were made to our membership:

- Liveryman Rebecca Thompson and Liveryman Deborah Pullen were appointed as Court Assistants.
- Freeman Philp Hudson and Freeman Dragan Krstevski were clothed as Liverymen
- Stuart Alexander, Gavin Li-Parrett, Diana Chrouch, Tony Dowle and Martin Gettings were all admitted as Freeman and Yeoman Jonathan Li-Parrett was advanced from Yeoman to Freeman.

Two new Apprentices were also introduced to the Company – Alexander Watson, who is the son of Freeman Martin Watson, who sadly died last year following surgery and Bradley Young. Both Alexander and Bradley were bound to the Master and are subject to the somewhat antiquated, but nonetheless real, requirements of the City of London regarding apprentices.

It is also with great sadness that we record the passing of Companion Muriel Booth on 21 December 2018 at the age of 94.

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## Forthcoming Events

4 Feb 19	Ironmongers’ Hall Lunch	29 Mar 19	United Guilds Service
13 Feb 19	Livery & Awards Dinner	29 Mar 19	Lunch at Painter Stainers’ Hall
21 Feb 19	Senior Members’ Lunch (by invitation only)	12 Apr 19	Master’s Weekend in Hong Kong
27 Feb 19	Sir Ian Dixon Award presentations	8 May 19	Companions’ Lunch
5 March 19	Inter-Livery Pancake Races	15/16 May	Inter-Livery Clay Pigeon Shoot
20 Mar 19	Sustainability presentation	6 June 19	Sir Christopher Wren Banquet

Where the above details are in **BLUE** a Flyer or other notification has already been issued, and bookings should be made in accordance with the instructions contained in the Flyer.

We are also hoping to arrange several other informal events, including a celebration of the Chinese New Year in February, so please look at the website for details of these.

We are always looking for people to arrange our technical visits and informal events. If you are able to assist in this way, please contact [Iain Meek](mailto:iainsmeek@gmail.com) (iainsmeek@gmail.com) who is the Chair of the Events committee.