

## The Master's Speech at the Spring Livery Lunch, 2008

**Wardens**

**My Lord, my Lady**

**Distinguished guests**

**Liverymen**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

Don't bore them, the Clerk said, with a lot of Parish Notices.

But even on a day as informal as today should be, I have a duty to say one or two things.

First and foremost, may I on your behalf, extend the thanks of all of us here today to the staff of Watermen's Hall?

We have been nourished by an excellent meal: lubricated by delicious wines: and served with consummate professionalism. **Master Waterman**, it has all been a great credit to your Company. We look forward to returning here in the future.

The hard work has not just been confined to the kitchens and the dining hall. I want to thank very much our Clerk, **Gaye Duffy**, for the part that she has played in ensuring the success of today.

Our guests today will find a Livery Company in good heart: we continue to grow and to benefit from the membership of some of the leading names in our professional world.

We have a thriving programme of events, certain, I believe, to attract much support.

Today I would especially like to mention and ask you to recognise those present who have been clothed in the Livery this morning:

Anthony Ensom

Dr Steffi Spitznagel

Neil Stocks

And to join me in welcoming to the Freedom of the Company

Peter English – a quantity surveyor and arbitrator

Peter McNamara – a solicitor, adjudicator and mediator

Christopher Miers – a chartered architect and chartered arbitrator

Lindy Patterson – a solicitor and adjudicator

What have we to offer them?

Aside from the fellowship of our Company and our undoubted commitment to the City of London and the support of the Company's charity -

There is the recital at St Mary le Bow on the evening of 4 June – thanks to the unstinting efforts of the Junior Warden

We are going to watch the Beating of Retreat on Horseguards Parade on 5 June

We have our annual church service at St Mary le Bow on 16 July with dinner at the Wax Chandlers Hall thereafter

And then the Birmingham weekend on the 9 and 10 August with a full day of the City and its treasures, a gala dinner and then Sunday lunch at our house.

So there are great things to look forward to.

Today we are surrounded by greatness.

May I welcome our distinguished guests?

As you know, we are at the home of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen and it is a delight to welcome today **Master Waterman, Ken Dwan and his Clerk, Colin Middlemiss**

Master Waterman is a distinguished oarsman; six times amateur champion, twice an Olympian, he has set records for the single sculls event at both national and international level.

It will be no surprise to you that he is a past winner of the Doggett's Coat and Badge Wager, one of the great City of London events.

After many years working on the river (including in the construction of the Thames Barrier) he has been a commercial man in more recent times, involved in the operation of passenger boats on the river and running a boat building and repairs yard on Eel Pie Island, Twickenham.

You may not know though that he has handled the Crown Jewels, including the Crown itself.

Having served as a Queen's Waterman, he was appointed Queen's Bargemaster in 2002 and it was part of his role in that office to assist in the transportation of the Crown from Buckingham Palace to Westminster on the occasion of the State Opening of Parliament. The Comptroller of the Royal Household hands the Crown to the Bargemaster whilst he boards his carriage; the Bargemaster then hands back the Crown; all a throwback to the mediaeval times when the Crown travelled along the river from Hampton Court on the Monarch's Barge.

Master Waterman, those few details scarcely do justice to the involvement of you and your Company in the civic life. But seeing the Doggetts Men and being in this wonderful Hall makes us share in your undoubted pride in the tradition of the Livery

Companies and its support for the City of London. Thank you for allowing us to be here today.

It is always a pleasure to welcome to our table **Master Pavior, Christopher Laing**. He has spent his business life with John Laing plc, literally working his way down the country. After commencing his career in Edinburgh and being responsible for a number of substantial projects in that jurisdiction he then moved south via Rochdale and Milton Keynes, managing major projects along the way before settling in Hertfordshire and establishing a new joint venture with the Grosvenor Estate aimed at regenerating inner city sites for small business centres. His career with John Laing culminated in being made Environmental Director, a position in which he served for some years before retirement.

Master Pavior was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and was High Sheriff of Hertfordshire in 2001. In retirement he has remained as busy as ever: as a Vice-President of the National Playing Fields Association, President of the Hertfordshire Groundwork Trust and as a Trustee of the Lords' Taverners. But, I am pleased to tell you, not so busy that he cannot enjoy family and a game of golf from time to time.

Master Pavior, you and your Clerk **John White** are most welcome.

The Livery should know that I am proud not only to be Master of this Worshipful Company but also proud of the fact that I am a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers.

I am therefore very pleased to be able to entertain on this occasion **Master Fan Maker, Bill Bryen**. Like me he is a keen golfer; like me he is a member of the In and Out – but thereafter our paths diverge.

Master Fan Maker spent his early career with the Royal Air Force, flying jet fighters from bases in this country and later in Germany. On leaving the service, he turned to the business world and set up a development and construction company which specialised in commercial projects in London and the South-East. His clients came from the banking and insurance sectors of the City and his company grew such that he retired as Chairman in 2000.

Master Fan Maker enjoys freemasonry and has reached Provincial Grand Master rank. He has been a tireless fundraiser for charity through this interest. The West Kent Festival of 2003, which he led, raised over £5million for the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution. That is an extraordinary effort and we salute your leadership.

Master Fan Maker, you and your Clerk, **Keith Patterson** are very welcome today.

Our other principal guests today are distinguished by their public service in the governance of this country.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns** is the Opposition Chief Whip in the House of Lords. She came to political life after a career in teaching and voluntary service as a magistrate and with the Woking Citizens' Advice Bureau as well as being a member of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal and other related bodies. She chaired the Conservative Women's National Committee between 1993 and 1996 before accepting a life peerage.

Her responsibilities in Parliament have included acting as Shadow Minister in the Lords for Agriculture, for Culture, Media, Tourism and Sport and for Home Affairs. She has been Chief Whip since July 2007.

Baroness Anelay is another keen golfer although I am aware that her opportunities to play these days are less than they were. Nonetheless I am thrilled that she has been able to find time in her busy life to come as one of our guests today.

Baroness Anelay, you are very welcome.

**Lord Goldsmith QC** is someone whose record in public life is virtually without equal. An outstanding advocate at the Commercial Bar, he was Chairman of the Bar of England and Wales in 1995 and became a life peer in 1999. He served as Her Majesty's Attorney-General between 2001 and 2007, dealing in that time with some of the most sensitive legal questions ever to have been posed.

Having served as Attorney-General, Lord Goldsmith has become the first to hold that office to join a firm of solicitors. He now is the European Chair of Litigation at Debevoise & Plimpton here in London.

Recently he reported on citizenship

Lord and Lady Goldsmith: it is a tremendous honour to have you with us today. Thank you for agreeing to say a few words to us.

But everyone who is here today as a guest is warmly welcomed. We, your hosts, value your friendship and your company.

May I ask the Livery to rise and salute all of them with this toast:

“OUR GUESTS”