



The Worshipful Company of Arbitrators

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Speech by the Master – Hew R Dundas
The Worshipful Company of Arbitrators’ Royal Charter Banquet
in the presence of HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO
Plasterers’ Hall
Monday 14th May 2012

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Wardens, My Lord Mayor, Your Royal Highness, My Lord, Aldermen, Sheriff, Chief Commoner, Ladies and Gentlemen

Welcome to these very splendid surroundings here at Plaisterers’ Hall and we gratefully thank the Master Plaisterer for allowing us the use of his Hall.

It is a great honour for me, as Master of this Company, to propose the Toast to the Guests but, before I do so, permit me to say a few words.

Your Royal Highness, we are most grateful to you for your gracious attendance this evening on behalf of Her Majesty The Queen, in her Diamond Jubilee Year, to present our Company with its Royal Charter.

This grant of a Royal Charter is the most momentous occasion in the 31-year life of the Company, bringing with it (as it does) not only a combination of recognition of the reputation this Company has achieved but also a significantly enhanced set of responsibilities and obligations.

The Company has not arrived at this **Great Moment** unaided and we had sterling, indeed wonderful, support from many along the way to whom our warmest thanks are due; some (but, regrettably, not all) are here tonight as our guests. Limitations on time do not permit me to say what each did and I invite those I will shortly name to accept the Company’s profoundest gratitude for such wonderful support

In approximately chronological order, we thank Adrian Waddingham, David Johnson, Keith Lawrey JP, Ceri King, Christopher Berry, Karen Johnstone, the Rt Hon Sir Anthony Evans, Alderman Sir David Howard Bt, Murray Craig and Sir Henry Paston-Bedingfeld Bt. In addition, I must also thank my Junior Warden, Dr Derek Ross, for his splendid contribution.

To all these, present or absent, we say – **THANK YOU.**

I must also thank those institutions who supported the Company’s Charter application and who are, consequently, named in the Charter: the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Institution of Civil Engineers, the London Court of International Arbitration, the London Maritime Arbitrators’ Association, the Grain and Feed Trade Association and the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution.

We were also supported from within the Livery by the Solicitors’ Architects’ and Engineers’ Companies.

To all these institutions and Livery Companies, we say – **THANK YOU.**

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The Company, the 93<sup>rd</sup> Livery Company, was founded on 17<sup>th</sup> March 1981 by Grant of Letters Patent by the Court of Mayor and Aldermen, greatly encouraged and supported Dame Mary Donaldson, Lord Mayor in 1983, the first and (so far) only lady Lord Mayor but we hope that we might see another soon. In passing, I should note that this Company has had three lady Masters, all of whom are present this evening.

The Company's Senior Past Master is Bill Armstrong OBE TD DL and we are very pleased that he has made the great effort to be with us this evening.

The world of Private Dispute Resolution (which I will call "PDR") has changed massively since 1981 and the Charter reflects that, not only in diversifying the membership into many different forms of PDR but also in expressly naming and welcoming ten sibling institutions. It is a source of great pride to this Company that we are so widely inclusive and this is unquestionably one of our great strengths.

The Company's principal aspirations are central to the Charter and are encapsulated by its Objects which are twofold, overlapping and complementary, one broadly covering the Company's role of fostering any and all forms of PDR, the second its role as a Livery Company of the City of London, in particular in supporting the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs and the Aldermen.

In the gracious presence of the Rt Hon the Lord Mayor, Alderman David Wootton, I will address the latter first

This Company has played and will continue to play its part in supporting successive Lord Mayors whose tireless work in promoting UK plc abroad mirrors their no less dedicated promotion of charitable endeavour in and around the City.

The Company makes an important contribution to the first category of mayoral activity, particularly through the Financial Services Group of Livery Companies (many of whose Masters are here this evening) and CityUK. We are very fortunate in that the Lord Mayor is a strong supporter and promoter of arbitration and other PDR and, in fact, I first met him when we both served on a City UK Committee whose remit is to promote English and Scottish legal and PDR services abroad.

Philanthropy and Corporate Social Responsibility lies at the heart of the Lord Mayor's and the City of London Corporation's vision for the City; reflecting that, the Lord Mayor's appeal theme is 'Fit for the Future' which aims to promote better health opportunities for all, including those from some of the UK's most deprived areas: we are proud to align ourselves with that mayoral and City vision via our support of City charities and institutions and other appropriate causes through the Company's own Charitable Trust.

I am also very proud that the Charter provides for the Company to have a strong focus on education and, in that regard, recent initiatives concerning financial literacy projects in London schools and the outstandingly successful Mediation Skills Competition for UK university students will be developed and enhanced in the years to come.

City tradition also involves supporting the Armed Services and the Company greatly honoured to be affiliated to HMS Mersey, a Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Vessel, and we welcome her Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Mark Anderson RN, here this evening.

In addition, the Company has recently become affiliated to 13 Company, Greater London Army Cadet Force, South West Sector. The Army Cadet Force is one of the country's largest voluntary youth organisations, whose officers and adult instructors give so generously of their time. We welcome Major Paul Harrison of 13 Company here this evening.

We are very grateful to the personnel from HMS Mersey and 13 Company for their valuable contributions earlier this evening.

It is my great pleasure to thank all those who have worked so hard to make this evening such a wonderful success including the staff here at Plaisterers' Hall, Norroy & Ulster King of Arms, the Chaplain, the Beadle, the Toastmaster, the Assistant to the Clerk and the orchestra and buglers. The extraordinary contributions of my Senior Warden, Karl Davies, and my Clerk, Gaye Duffy, have taken the word "exceptional" to unprecedented new heights.

To all - **THANK YOU.**

Livery convention is to introduce the guests individually but, were I to recite the many achievements of the immensely-distinguished guests here this evening, I would not finish until after midnight so I will merely say to you all that we are very grateful for the splendid support shown to us by your attendance on this Great Occasion. To all - **THANK YOU.**

Let me conclude by returning to this Company fundamental raisons d'être: encouraged, motivated and greatly inspired by this grant of a Royal Charter we will redouble our efforts both to foster the profession of arbitration and to fulfil the obligations and responsibilities of a Livery Company of the City of London, in particular to support the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs and the Aldermen.

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It is my very great honour to propose the Toast to the Guests; may I ask all members of the Company to be upstanding.

The Guests