

WARDENS, LIVERYMEN AND FREEMEN, DISTINGUISHED AND HONOURED GUESTS

WELCOME EVERYONE!

Welcome to our Installation Dinner: it's wonderful to see you all here, and it's a very great pleasure to welcome you on this splendid occasion to Fishmongers' Hall. The Hall is looking wonderful this evening, but in the end a Hall is as good as the people in it, and that means all of you who have filled it. It's great to have you with us.

This speech will contain a number of thank-yous, and as the first of them I shall begin with a thank you to those here at Fishmongers who have done so well in giving us such brilliant hospitality and producing such an excellent dinner.

How did I get here? Let me count the ways ... Well, let's not, actually. The finer points of my career are a distinctly niche interest with which I needn't trouble you. But I think it's useful for me to note that my progress towards and within the Worshipful Company has been what I would think is a very normal progression.

Suffice to say that, having started out as many barristers have done as a general common law practitioner, and having specialized as we all began to do, by the time I came to take silk I realised not only, to state the obvious, that I was engaged in dispute resolution in various courts and tribunals; but that sometimes dispute resolution could be better assisted than by slugging cases out in court, or right up to the doors of the court. And I saw that ADR (and in particular, in my areas of practice, mediation) was something I should be concerned about as an advocate. And so I trained and became an accredited mediator, and I became a Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, and in due course Chair of its London Branch.

My predecessor at London Branch (to whom I owe a very great deal for his help with CI Arb and this Company) was Past Master Hew Dundas. He pointed me in the direction of the Company, and here I am. I'm delighted that he is here with Van this evening, and I want to thank him now for all his help.

I'd also like to recognize the good work he does for the Company as Almoner, together with our new Court Assistant Emeritus, Barry Rose, also here, in keeping up with the wider membership and in particular past members of the Court.

So far as CI Arb is concerned, I look forward to strengthening our ties with it in the coming year, particularly as so many of us are members.

So I'm particularly pleased that Jonathan Wood, the Chair of CI Arb's Board of Trustees, is able to be here with us as one of the Company's guests.

There are so very many of you here tonight who I've known so well and to whom I owe so very much – at work or in the Company or personally, or all three – that I hope you'll understand why I can't publicly thank everyone. But you know who you are.

One person who indeed knows who he is, and is very much his own person, is my husband Stephen. I do thank him very much for all his help, & his cheerful & reassuring presence, so much appreciated by me.

Indeed it's much appreciated already by many of you. Because as a Liveryman member of our Membership Committee he has done many of the interviews of aspiring Freemen, and therefore before I and he even start our year he's well-known to you.

Thank you Stephen. And also my son James, and our family here tonight.

But you'll all rightly be expecting me at once now to thank, on behalf of the whole Company, my predecessor, our Immediate Past Master, Gary.

I pass by in silence – well almost – his phenomenal act in combining full-time membership of the Court of Appeal with the Mastership of the Company. He shouldn't be remembered for that. His real gift to us has been his masterly oversight of the Company's affairs, from which we have all benefited. Throughout the last year it's been my good fortune to observe this with rising admiration – tinged ever so slightly with alarm at what the job means, as my own year has advanced and his year has progressed to its conclusion.

And I want especially also to thank Caroline, his Consort. Last year Gary described her as his Secret Weapon. Well, she's no secret now. She too has combined a heavy day job with supporting Gary and assisting all of us. She has throughout lent the business of acting as Consort the warmth, humour and charm which are all her own.

Thank you so much, Caroline and Gary.

It's been a wonderful year for us all. We've seen great activity on the social side, with heavily booked social events including a very successful Charter Banquet, and a great Masters' Weekend in Cardiff (albeit some of us were still drying our clothes out as we returned home).

With our affiliated services there's been a very special visit to Brize Norton in August with RAF 622 Squadron where some of us – who won't forget it, I'm looking at Stephen here! – had a go on a flight simulator. I'm pleased to report that this is, all being well, now to be an annual event. Many thanks to you and all, Roisin!

We had a memorable visit to Portsmouth where in the best traditions of the navy when *Mersey* was out on duties *HMS Tyne* took a party of us out in the Solent, and we returned to an unforgettable reception on *HMS Victory*. Many thanks to your colleagues, Will, and also to our own Assistant Clive Thorne on the organisation side.

Our Army Cadets have been doing well, were seen at Army Camp by the Master, and are scheduled to parade with us at the Lord Mayor's Show.

And finally, our membership has grown and is still growing, as Gary and all of us hoped. 28 new members this last year including today, I make it. And the terrific thing is the way our new members are active and interested. So many of you and your guests are here this evening, and a good number have taken the livery.

Our new Liverymen admitted this evening are Ben Giaretta, Spenser Hilliard, Dr Mary Malecka, Derek Nelson, Reverend Roger ter Haar QC, Andrew Parsons, Caroline Sheppard, Victoria Tyson, and Dr Nigel Young. I ask you all according to our usual tradition to stand and be recognised. Thank you.

And our new Freeman are Dr James Bickford-Smith (in whose membership of the Company evidently I and Stephen as fond parents take special pleasure), Michael Cover (welcome back to the company, Michael!), Alderman Alastair King, John King, Captain Peter McArthur, Dr Emilia Onyema, Robert Price, and James Taylor. Would you too all please stand. Again thank you.

From which you will see that as a Company, we're in good heart.

Our Education Committee is powering on, with our Annual alternating Mediation/ Arbitration Competitions, our Keating Symposium, our pupillages, and our school support across the City and in particular our developing relationship with Saracens' High School. Many thanks are due to you Chris McArdle as you move on from your 2-year term chairing Education to being Junior Warden. And we look forward to a seamless transition with Nicola Cohen at the helm.

Our Charitable giving in conjunction with our separate Charitable Trust has seen a determined year under the new chairmanship of Eamonn Malone – thank you very much Eamonn, as you move on from this.

And our finances have been under the prudent professional care of the now Senior warden Martyn Bradish: the engine room, as it were, has been in excellent hands. Thank you Martyn.

And as a Company, we've begun to look out towards the City more. We are delighted to have admitted as a new Freeman Alderman Alastair King. It has been my great privilege to serve since 2016 as your Company's representative on the Financial Services Group of the Modern Livery Companies. That Group has been, if I may say so, transformed under the Chairmanship of Andrew Marsden, Past Master Marketor, who is here tonight as my own guest.

This summer a group of us went to China on a City to City Tour taking in Beijing and Shanghai but concentrating on the great regional cities of Xi'an, Chengdu and Nanjing, where I may tell you there was much interest in arbitration and the running of arbitration centres. A number of the Group are also here tonight as my guests: Immediate Past Master Insurer Terry Masters, Past Master Chartered Secretary Patricia Day, Founder Master Mark Henderson of the Guild of Investment Managers, World Trader Richard Burge and Information Technologist Gus Machado. It's good to welcome you, and thank you for coming.

No thank-yous would be complete without us giving our due to our Clerk Biagio Fraulo, the administrative presence – dare I say hub? – behind the scenes. Only as you get to my stage do you see the extent of what he does. It's a lot. Thank you so much, Biagio.

Next, our Clerk's Assistant John White. What can I say? You new members all know him, our Committees are all summoned and (if I may say so) kept in order by him; and he does a terrific job. Many thanks also to Jimmy James the beadle, who I find admirably but gently scary; and to Reverend George Bush, our Chaplain, whose facility with words is so well known that I want also to mark his kindness in his Parish duties for us.

With your menus you have a Mini-brochure with our Calendar for the Year: do take it away! You'll see there our major events listed¹.

¹ For a corrected and updated copy of the Calendar of events please now refer to the Website at <https://www.arbitratorscompany.org/events-activities/calendar-of-events/>

As academic events, we have in particular the Keating Symposium on November 14th, and the Master's Lecture on 17th March 2020. Lord Justice Flaux our speaker spent a practice lifetime in arbitration and commercial work, especially international trade, insurance and reinsurance, and shipping, before becoming a Judge first of the High Court and then of the Court of Appeal. We are eagerly looking forward to hearing him.

As to social events, please come to the Charter Banquet on 20th May next year, and fill the room as you did in May this year and – look at us here tonight, the Egyptian Room at the Mansion House should be perfect for us! – as you have today.

And do please come to Cardiff on 15th February 2020. To those of you who have the misfortune not yet to know this, Welsh National Opera is on a high. We're going to be seeing Verdi's *Sicilian Vespers*, which will be a new and we expect splendid production from Sir David Pountney, recently honoured. The opera is incredibly reasonable, and it's fun in Cardiff as some of us, and also our friends in the Livery Company of Wales some of whom are here tonight, know. Watch out next week for the flyer.

It's common for a Master at this point to have a theme. I'm not particularly impressed with one for this year. I tend to think that we should keep on as we're doing. If it ain't broke, don't fix it, I would say. But I am hoping to do a few new things. Just a couple to note here.

I would like to institute a few informal lunches. Not everyone will be able to come to formal events, or will want to. I think it would be good for us to gather on less formal occasions. Let's see how it goes.

And I would like to concentrate on what is I believe called in some quarters "*The Journey*" for our members. I'd like them to feel that they are going somewhere, and participating, and that they like it as they travel on. We already have a Befriending project, and I'd like to encourage new members, as they move on to take the Livery, and generally take greater part in the affairs of our Company.

I now move on to welcoming our principal guests.

We are delighted to have with us this evening Peter Coulson – the Right Honourable Sir Peter Coulson, Deputy Head of Civil Justice. Peter is remarkable as we know, but not least because, as well as rising effortlessly to his current position, I've never met anyone with a bad word to say against him.

There is another thing about him that is worth mentioning. He went to Keele University. Founded in 1949, it's unique. Although it used to be referred to by snobbish types initially in tones reminiscent of Lady Bracknell enquiring about a Handbag on the Brighton line, it is no longer. One has only to mention among many notable alumni our very own Liveryman Dame Fiona Woolf who also went there. I say this with feeling, and echoes of an old resentment, because for the first 12 years of my life I was brought up not 5 miles away in Newcastle under Lyme where my father was Headmaster.

Sadly Rachael is not able to be with us tonight, but we hope to make up for that, and welcome her amongst us sometime soon.

It is very good to have with us the Master Bowyer, Ian Spring, the Master of my husband's Livery Company. The Bowyers are a unique Company in that their Master serves a two-year term; but I have to tell you as the 4th Lady Master of this Company that I'm afraid they have no women members. Ian is very welcome, and we're delighted that he could be with us.

Also we have with us the Master of the Livery Company of Wales, Peter Coleman and his wife Jen. Time doesn't permit me to say much at this point, but we are delighted at the growing association between our Companies, and we look forward to it continuing. We also have with us the Immediate Past Master Geoff Hughes and his wife Sue, who are here as Gary's personal guests.

And so what about my theme? This speech is a bit of a mixture of School Report and Mission Statement. I've mentioned our forthcoming events. But as I look ahead and see things looking a bit grey and grimish, with our politicians all at sea, I think that we as a Company have a positive duty to perform.

As a Potteries girl, I go to the novels of Arnold Bennett. In *The Card* some people at the end of the book are talking about our not-quite-hero, a man of less than stellar accomplishments, and one of them asks how to account for his success.

"What has he done?" he asks. *"Has he ever done a day's work in his life? What great cause is he identified with?"*

"He's identified", comes the reply, *"with the great cause of cheering us all up".*

And that's what in my year as Master I aim to do.

Would all members of the Company present please rise with me and join me in welcoming our guests.

The toast is

"Our Guests"