

Masters' Annual Reports



David Jones 2005 to 2006

It was always advised by Past Masters that one's year in office goes very quickly. I use to think to myself that a year is a year and why should this be any different. It does not seem a year ago since I stood before members and guests for the first time at my Installation to announce the successful bid for the London Olympics. It was greeted with rapturous applause. One of my members turned round to me and says "enjoy it whilst it lasts".

I am pleased to say that I did enjoy the whole of my year and it was a privilege and an honour to be Master of the Water Conservators. A year ago I set out to achieve three things. First for all of us within the Company to have fun. Secondly to raise our profile within the City Livery. Thirdly to help develop our Charity. In approaching my year I was very conscious that it should be on the basis of evolution rather than revolution whilst accepting and understanding that unlike in business members give their time to the Company for free.

As to the first I am pleased to report that as a Company we seemed to have had fun. Numbers for all our lunches were up by a third. We had the highest number in attendance at our annual Banquet since we held it at the Mansion House on the year we were granted livery. At the installation of our new Master in July we had over 120 people which was double the number two years ago. In addition to our normal social events we went to see the Leicester Square Players. This is a most entertaining Victorian Music Hall extravaganza which was kindly organised by Bill Halson. I then decided on a more ambitious event namely 2 nights away to visit the Eden Project. This was our first Company trip away for over 15 years. At the Master's dinner on our first night in Cornwall I was delighted with an attendance of forty two members and partners. From all the pleasant letters I received everyone seemed to enjoy the event. I am particularly grateful to Anne Curtis of Aspen Travel for organising the accommodation etc and to Richard Cunis, our principal guest at our Banquet and a Trustee of Eden Project for arranging our introductory tour.

As to raising our profile I attended a number of events within the City. We continue to develop good relationships with a number of companies including by way of example the World Traders, the Plumbers, the Coopers, the Pavors, the Firefighters, the Fuellers, the Solicitors, the Accountants, the Butchers, the Environmental Cleaners, the Arbitrators, the Builders Merchants, the Architects, the Constructors, the Management Consultants, the Engineers, the Launderers, the Information Technologists and the Watermen and Lightermen. In addition I was very fortunate to have Richard Cunis and Adrian Watney, both former Masters of the Mercers and Francis Bergin, former Master of the Bakers, as my principal guests. I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking our other two principal guests Baroness Jo Valentine and Ian Croxford QC.

I was very pleased with the response and outcome of our first Charity event. We had over a hundred people attend our light opera evening in March at Salters Hall. We raised over £3000 half of which

went to the Lord Mayor's charity, Treloars. I am most grateful to Andrew Parmley for producing, directing and starring in the event with his three opera singers and to Gill Wilson for organising it.

Our Charity, the Water Conservation Trust also became involved with the Calvert Trust. We will be supporting as a Company event a week of "water sports/education for the disabled" over 3 years at 3 different reservoirs in Northumbria, Yorkshire and Devon. This is an extremely good cause and I hope that we can develop more worthwhile projects.

With any year there are always some good-byes to say and some thanks to give. Sadly we lost Past Master Geoff Truesdale. He will be fondly remembered by all of us who knew him in the Company. It was lovely to see his wife Beryl and the family at his memorial service in March. We are also saying good-bye to Past Master Peter English and court assistants Jim Urquhart and Ivor Richards. They step down from the Court, having all made substantial contributions over many years. We will not be losing touch as Peter remains involved with the Past Masters and Jim and Ivor remain trustees of the Water Conservation Trust.

I would like to thank my Beadle and my clerk for looking after me in my year. I very much appreciated the advice and assistance from the Past Masters. I am also very grateful to the immense contribution of the Court particularly in committee meetings discussing and finally agreeing our new Standing Orders.

I would on behalf of the Company thank Past Master Roy Harris for his gift of the delightful "miniature" water tankard and to past Masters Ted Flaxman and Ted Jackson for the magnificent silver water tankard.

A Master's year could never be successful without the support of one's wardens and my year was no exception. Sue Owen, Colin Drummond and Ian Staniforth were invaluable to me. Sue in particular was always very supportive and I wish her every success and happiness in her year as Master. I am confident that under her stewardship the Company will continue to grow and prosper.

Lastly I would like to thank my lovely wife Jean for her continuing support and interest and for attending a number of functions with me.

As I said at the beginning of my report it has been an honour and a privilege to have been your Master in 2005/06.

Financial Report

We began my year in a cautious mood having seen a decline in the capital reserves of the Company in the previous 12 months. It was therefore very important that we made certain that everything was budgeted for and so far as is possible we stayed within budget.

I am able to report that we had a small overspend of 2%. The primary reason for this is that we partially fund our lunches to keep the price at a reasonable level. This means that the more who attend the greater the risk of not hitting budget. With numbers rising this was always a problem (albeit a healthy one) particularly in regard to the Banquet. However the long term gain is that applications for membership are rising and as such over time our Capital reserves should be replenished.

David Jones
Deputy Master

