

## **Masters' Annual Reports**



### **Kevin Bond 2003 to 2004**

Writing this report at the end of my term of office as Master of the Company I am amazed at the speed with which the year has passed. I do not think that this is simply a matter of age !, but rather a function of how many different things happen whilst one is Master.

I said, at the beginning of my term, that I would want to focus on the internal processes of The Company and try to ensure that they were better when I left office than when I arrived. Only time will tell if this has happened. What we have done though is to put into place a new audit arrangement and, as a result, a set of procedures to control the financial processes. This is not, I hasten to add, because of 'problems' with our finances but because I believe that we must be seen to embrace the best practices which we see business adopting. Corporate governance has a role for us too!!

None of what I have done during this past year would have been possible without the help and involvement of others. First, there is the clerk Ralph Riley. Ralph is always either present or at the end of a phone to answer questions and explain the precedents. The City is not without its challenges and the newest company is assessed alongside the Great Twelve. The Wardens are of enormous support and will always lend a hand even though they are swimming hard to stay afloat in their own busy schedules. In particular I have to thank this year's Thames Warden Marion Carter for both her support and friendship. Sue Owen has been a Tower of Strength as chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It is through this committee that all business is transacted at some stage in its progress; thank you Sue. Have you ever stopped to think of all the many members of our company who are actively involved in making it work. I have mentioned our Clerk and the Wardens and Sue. There is also the Court, the Past Masters and the committee members; not only the F & G.P., but also the Charities and Grants, a new Audit Committee and the Strategy Working Group. This year has also seen the completion of the restructuring of our charities.

We are all aware of the central role charity plays in the life of the livery. Our Hon Solicitor and Fleet Warden, David Jones has steered us through the merging of our two old charities into one Water Conservation Trust charity. Many thanks to the trustees of both of the old charities for all they have done to facilitate this and to the trustees of the new charity, and in particular Jeff Rasbash for taking the chair of this new committee of trustees. We all must get behind this charity and make our support tangible through charitable giving.

During the year it has also been a pleasure to help greet the City's newest Livery Company; The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers as Number 104. Yes, since we took livery, there are now two behind us number 103 being The Firefighters and there are others preparing to take livery such as the Management Consultants and the Security Professionals. Livery remains a vital and relevant movement and very much at the heart of how the City of London functions. I have also reported in this edition of the newsletter on the functions I have attended this year on behalf of the company, what I

cannot give a sense of is how vibrant and current the livery is in the City. This is one of the reasons why the City is such a power house, not just in the UK, but also internationally.

I must take this opportunity to thank the speakers at our dinners and lunches during this past year; Bob Mark, John Harmon, Hugh Berridge and Robert Finch the Lord Mayor.

I reserve my final comments to pay tribute to the Past Masters of this Company. They, in the collective but, particularly in the individual, have been a huge source of strength and advice to me. It was our Past Master and Clerk Emeritus, Hugh Berridge who brought me into the company and has continued to be an enormous support to me. It is the Past Masters who have always been there to proffer advice and support during my year. Gentlemen, a very big thank you. To all my fellow freemen and liverymen of The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators, a humble thank you for the honour you have given me to serve as your Master for the year.

### **Report on Activities**

The year just finishing this July has been hugely interesting to me as your Master. I have expressed my appreciation to the many who have helped and supported me in the company. There have been countless others in the wider livery movement and the City with whom I have had contact during the year. The Master of the Company of course is invited to a range of functions, ranging from dinner and lunch to the City formalities.

During the past year I have been privileged to attend the installation of the new master of the Scientific Instrument Makers and to have lunched or dined with the Weavers, Master Mariners, Launderers, Information Technologists, Butchers and Farmers to name a few. I thoughterly enjoyed attending the annual dinner of CIWEM and meeting many old friends and work colleagues at a time of such change for those of us involved in the water and environmental movement.

The joint lecture we held with the Insurers on the flood risk to the City presented by the River Thames which was given by the chairman of the Environment Agency; Sir John Harmon was very well received. We were very fortunate to have the Masters of a number of other Livery Companies present for the lecture as well as Liverymen from the Insurers and our own Company.

Our 'In House Party', the Annual Banquet was huge fun and Sue and I enjoyed this event probably above all others as it is a sharing of fellowship within the family. For pomp and a sense of having made it!, the Myddelton Lunch, held at Mansion House in the presence of, and with the support of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, cannot be beaten. The United Guild Service, one of the services in St Paul's held during the year, was preceded the night before by dinner for the Masters of all Livery Companies in the Mansion House hosted by the Lord Mayor. For all the splendour of Mansion House, there is, I think, a very special sense of occasion to be in St Pauls when it is full with Liverymen and women and the beautiful sound of choral music.

Our joint Carol Service with the Fuellers was a wonderful lead-in to the celebration of Christmas and just one example of the way in which companies are sharing the whole livery experience in an increasing way. Our barge, The Water Forget Me Not, participated in the Port of London Challenge, The Admirals Cup and the great progression of our 'Stella' from Hampton Court to the Tower of London with me somewhat precariously seated in the rear trying to give encouragement to the oarsmen pulling my dead weight along the Thames. Despite the obvious handicap of an overweight Master, our crew completed the year once again with a clean sweep of victories.

Finally, there were, of course, our other company functions; the Installation Lunch and the Michaelmas Lunch. These wonderful occasions of the company coming together to share friendship and food. My report on activities for the year must conclude by thanking all who either offered hospitality or took a share in our hospitality every thanks for their friendship.

**Kevin Bond**  
**Deputy Master**