



The Conservator

A Message from the Master



Three months have already passed since I became Master and despite the current social restrictions there is much to report. You can read below about our recent successful events including the monthly webinars, the virtual wine tasting evening, the pumpkin carving competition and the virtual Carol Festival, together with the planned virtual WET 10 lecture on World Water Day. Despite these "virtual" successes, I can't wait to meet up with everyone again in 2021, hopefully at the planned Election Court Lunch on 21st May.

I also want to update you on one of my key objectives to increase to the awareness and involvement of Company Members in the work of the Water Conservation Trust. Discussions are

progressing well between the Company and Trust to restructure the Trust to meet the latest Charity Commission guidelines. As part of this we want to expand the Trust activities, and increase funding. To do this I am asking more members to support our regular charitable giving - please contact Peter Hall (peterbhall@hotmail.com) for a form. Also, I am asking company members to use their links with companies in water industry sector to encourage them to help sponsor our fantastic programmes. For example, £240 funds a day visit to the Museum of Water and Steam supporting the Trust's aim of encouraging water related science and environmental learning in schools and helps secure the future of this important water industry museum. Please help and contact me at rob.casey1@hotmail.com.

As an indication of the success of our Company, I was delighted to install a record number (13 in total) of Freeman and Liverymen (see report on page 3) at my first Court Meeting as Master.

Please remember to read my blog on our website with regular updates on everything that is happening, and the monthly updates that are e-mailed to you all.

Rob Casey
Master

Sponsored Walk

The annual sponsored walk took place on Sunday 4th October when six brave souls (in compliance with Covid-19 restrictions) walked along the banks of the River Thames between Bourne End and Cookham. Monies raised will be used to support the Water Conservation Trust's schools programme to enhance water related science and environmental learning. With gift aid and matched funding from Thames Water's Charity Committee a record £5,000 was raised.

Master Rob Casey, who organised the walk said "Firstly I would like to thank everyone who sponsored us, your giving will make a significant difference to the schools we support. Secondly a big thank you to Peter Hall, Trevor & Annette Harrington and Thames Water colleagues Terence Winfield and Thomas Earnshaw who all joined me on the walk on a damp and drizzly day."



Christmas Carol Festival



Covid-19 restrictions made it impossible for our Members to take part in a Carol Service in the City of London this year.

Discussions between our Chaplain (the Reverend Katherine Hedderly, Vicar of All Hallows-by-the-Tower, see photograph), Deputy Master Mark Lane and Past Master Simon Catford resulted in the development of our own Zoom-based Carol Festival on 15th December.

Led by our Chaplain the event was a mixture of Readings and Carols sung by Members and their families. It proved to be a popular event and was greatly enjoyed by all participants.

The Master said "Many thanks to our Chaplain for being so innovative in these difficult times and we look forward to meeting up with her at All Hallows-by-the-Tower very soon".

Neil Reynolds - Lands End to John O'Groats

On Thursday 17th September, Freeman Neil Reynolds set off from Land's End on a solo bike ride to John O'Groats in aid of the Velindre Cancer Centre (www.velindrecc.wales.nhs.uk). Given the Covid-19 restrictions and impending Storm Aiden, Neil decided use quiet routes, trails and tracks which added 200 miles to the shorter routes using A and B roads.

Although not a race, Neil set himself the target of completing his 1105 mile journey in two weeks – a target he successfully met. His full description of the journey (including the use of ibuprofen cream, anti-friction cream, Savlon and Deep Heat!) is posted on our website and is well worth a read.

Neil's description of the many acts of kindness he was shown and his determination to succeed help explain how he has so far successfully raised almost £5,000 as a result of his efforts. His Just Giving page remains open www.justgiving.com/Neil-Reynolds20.

Well done Neil!



Virtual Wine Tasting

On 15th October, the Master Rob Casey hosted his first social event – a virtual wine tasting evening. Rob said "It was great to meet up with so many members again from all corners of the country, some I had not seen for many months. I also picked up some amazing wine tips, a good red wine can be yours for just £3.99 a bottle!"

Utilising the breakout facility in Zoom participants were split into groups of 4 to enable everyone to socialise and describe their wine to others in their group. During the evening the groups were remixed to allow everyone to meet. Special thanks were given to Past Master Simon Catford who yet again managed the Zoom technology for us.

Did you know? Cutlers Hall, London

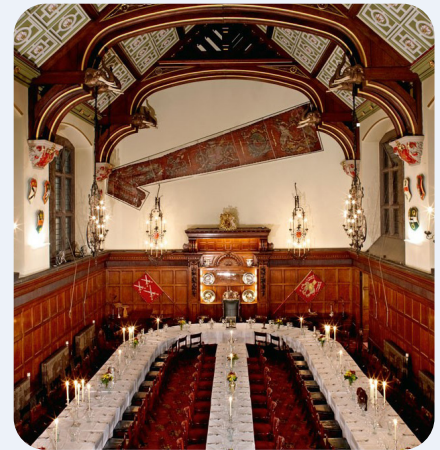
The Water Conservators regularly use the lovely Cutlers' Hall in Warwick Lane in the City of London for some of their formal lunches and dinners. With the consent of the Master Cutler, our Members have had the opportunity to view the impressive collection of the work of a cutler, but probably have little knowledge of the Hall and its history.



"A House of the Cutlers", mentioned in 1285 as being on or near the site of the present Mercers' Hall, was the earliest recorded meeting place of the Cutlers. By the early 15th century the Cutlers were settled in a building in what is now Cloak Lane (by Cannon Street Station). The Conveyance describes the property as being "next to the tenement belonging to the famous Richard Whytington, sometime Mayor". The hall was extensive with a garden, well and winery, but needed a substantial rebuild

which was completed and paid for by 1666 – sadly three months later it was destroyed in the Great Fire of London. The Company set about rebuilding the Hall and it was completed for use in 1670 – it was occupied for over 200 years until 1882 when it was compulsorily purchased by the Metropolitan and District Railway Company. The fifth and present Hall was built on land in Warwick Lane previously occupied by the Royal College of Physicians and a foundry – designed by Mr T Tayler Smith, it came into use on 7th March 1888.

During World War II the Hall survived the great fire bomb of 29th December 1940 but was seriously damaged by a high explosive bomb on 10th May 1941. Reconstruction works were completed by 1951 and the Hall has remained unaltered since that time.



The Livery Hall, where our lunches and dinners are held, has a fabulous Victorian hammer beam roof which helps "set the scene" for the splendid formal occasions many of our members have been able to enjoy.

Despite being constrained to a virtual meeting by the current pandemic, this was a thoroughly enjoyable evening.



Webinars

Deputy Master Mark Lane initiated a series of webinars during lockdown in the early summer of 2020. These comprise a 30 minute presentation from a guest speaker followed by a 30 minute Q & A session.

Subjects have ranged from the "Detection of the Covid-19 Virus in Sewage" to the "Internet of Things". Participants have not only included our own Members but also a wide range of representatives from other livery companies and the wider City of London audience. A total of 7 webinars have been held so far and Master Rob Casey intends to continue with a monthly programme of interesting subjects in 2021.

Water Conservation Trust

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our beneficiaries has been substantial. Although schools have made enormous efforts to recover, many Trust projects have necessarily been postponed to early 2021. Anticipating a full recovery, a further school educational visit to the Museum of Water and Steam for Sir John Cass's school was agreed in addition to the visits by Hugh Myddelton and Winton schools.



The Trust supports two special schools in North Wales, and our investment over several years in horticulture and bicycle maintenance had an unexpected outcome. The schools have been able to use skills and equipment provided as a basis for outdoor activities to relieve

the gloom of being locked inside. This includes cycling with conversions to allow wheelchairs to be linked with bikes. The horticulture activities have been extended over the winter assisted by a Trust grant for warm protective clothing.

The normally smooth-running of the Universities Bursary Programme continues to be severely affected. Reviewing the 12 participating universities in 2019-20, all students have had their field activities substantially reduced and, as this is often the basis for their dissertations, most have resorted to desk-based reviews. Two students have dropped out for reasons relating to the pandemic and, generally, universities have struggled successfully to complete their Masters' programmes. Recruitment for 2020-21 has been affected in most universities although ten universities have identified students for whom the Trust Bursary would make a difference.

Trustees have been pleased to support the Company's Associate Membership Scheme, whereby former grant beneficiaries have the ability to get career guidance and mentoring from experts by joining the Company. Three people have joined since the Summer

and more are expected to do so.

As far as the Trust is concerned, its financial assets, which generate income for the expenditure programme, have so far been robust and the grant-giving plans for 2021 have not been affected. Trustees look forward to 2021 including the completion of the 2020 plans alongside the new programme.

Roger North
Chairman of the Trustees

Zoom and the Water Conservators

Twelve months ago, the word 'Zoom' referred only to one of two things; the sound of a space rocket or a child's iced lolly. But now it is perhaps the word of 2020 and has become common parlance, e.g. "...I was Zooming all morning." Like it or loath it, Zoom has proved to be a vital tool in the art of communication and the Water Conservators have adopted it wholeheartedly.

From the outset of Lockdown, Past Master Simon Catford kindly made available his personal Zoom account for Company use and it has certainly been well utilised. All internal Company meetings have been conducted over Zoom including the Court, the FM&GP, Past-Master's and Master's Committees as well as our very successful monthly webinars. Zoom is user friendly and has a number of useful features such as breakout rooms, a 'chat' facility, screen-sharing and meetings can be recorded if desired. Whilst physical meetings are still by far the best, until it is safe to do so, Zoom will continue for a while yet.



The Conservator

The next edition of The Conservator will be published in early July immediately following the Installation of our Master for the year 2021/22. If readers have any news or ideas for articles, please contact our PR manager Keith Tozzi at keithtozzi@aol.com.

Christmas Court and Clothing Ceremony

The Christmas Court Meeting was successfully held by Zoom on Wednesday 9th December but sadly because of Covid -19 restrictions could not be followed by the normal convivial luncheon.

However, the meeting was followed by an Installation and Clothing Ceremony to admit a record number of 4 Freeman and 9 Liverymen. Details were:

Freemen

John DeMoraes
Jeremy Jones
Geoff Parker
Neil Reynolds

Liverymen

Allan Barton
Bill Cutting
Chris Downs
Afzal Ginwalla
Clive Kennedy
David McIlroy
Barry Millar
Steve Morris
Jim Southworth

The Master bid them all a very warm welcome and hoped that post the Covid pandemic constraints they would be able to participate in the full activities of the Company from Spring 2021.

Associate Membership

As part of our ongoing recruitment drive initiated by Past Master Simon Catford in 2018 and entitled H2Outreach, the Company created the Associate Freeman class of membership. This is open to students supported by our charity, the Water Conservation Trust, and anyone studying or working in areas of Water, Waste or Environmental Management aged between 18 and 40.

The current fee is only £50 per annum and provides Associate Freeman with access (at cost) to all Company events including those organised especially for younger Members, mentoring on a confidential basis, potential sponsorship to become a Freeman of the City of London and ultimately progression to become a full Freeman or Liveryman of the Company.

If readers know of potential Associate Freeman please ask them to make contact with our Clerk Ralph Riley (waterlco@aol.com), who will be delighted to forward further details and an Application Form.



Pumpkin Carving Competition

Walbrook Warden Christine Jarvis launched a Pumpkin Carving Competition in early October for two age groups – under 16 and over 16 years of age. Participants were invited to send a photograph of their carving to Christine with a closing date just before Halloween.

Christine said “I was delighted with the response we received with 17 entrants in the under 16 age group and 14 in the over 16 group including our learned Clerk and Sheriff Alderman Michael Mainelli. The standard of entry was extremely high which made judging the winners really difficult.”

Eventually Christine and Master Rob Casey chose the winners (who received a gift voucher from the Master) – Chloe Hayes, aged 10, in the under 16 category and Anna & Martin Baggs in the over 16 category (see photographs).

Christine added “Many thanks to everyone who took part – it was great fun and perhaps it could become an annual Company event?”



Forthcoming Events

Cocktail Evening



Following on from the successful Virtual Wine tasting evening held during the Autumn, Master Rob Casey has arranged a Cocktail Evening on 28th January where Members will be able to showcase their favourite cocktail to each other via Zoom. The Master hopes you will be able to join him for this fun event – full details are on our website.

Formal Events in 2021

With an increasing prospect of a vaccine roll-out and a further relaxation of constraints, the Clerk, Master and Thames Warden have been working with Livery Halls and caterers to identify locations for a return to London based events in Spring 2021.



Their primary concern is to ensure the well-being of our Members. Arrangements are in hand for the Election Court & Lunch on 7th May at Trinity House and the Installation Court & Lunch on 13th July at Skinners Hall.

Wet 10

Preparations for the 2021 WET 10 virtual event are well advanced. It will be held on World Water Day (22nd March) at 6.00pm with speakers from AECOM, Stantec and Energy & Utility Skills on the subject of “Which Way Water – 2050?” Full details will be on our website.

New corporate member

The Company is delighted to announce that Tetra Tech the worldwide leading provider of consulting and engineering services is our latest new Corporate Member. Welcome.



Ted Flaxman

It is with much sadness that the Company has learnt of the death of Ted Flaxman. Ted was a founding Member of the Water Conservators and was Master for the year 1996/97.

He had a distinguished Civil Engineering career working with consultants Binnie & partners where he was a Partner in their Victoria-based office in London. He was passionate about the use of technology and was the founder of ISTT (The International Society for Trenchless Technology), was its first Chairman (and subsequently Chairman Emeritus). He organised the first trenchless conference in London, “No-Dig 1985”, and was dedicated to the advance of trenchless construction for the public benefit.

Ted remained on the Court of the Company until 2001 and was responsible for the very successful Water Conservators float in the Lord Mayors Show in November 2000, which celebrated our granting of Livery. Ted generously donated the Master's Chain of Office to the Company at this time. In 2004 he published “Sweet & Wholesome Water – five centuries of water-bearers in the City of London” jointly with Past Master Ted Jackson. This paperback is still available on Amazon. He was also responsible for the development of blue plaques to record the historic importance of water conduits in the City – the first of these was erected at Aldermanbury in 2010, the second in Cheapside (to mark the “Great Conduit”) in 2014 and the third in Fleet Street (to mark the “Fleet Conduit”) in 2018. Further plaques are planned to continue this excellent work.

Ted and his wife Joan had three children Peter, Penny and John who remember his great sense of humour and his preferred epitaph “Ted Flaxman, fled taxman 2020”!

He will be much missed.

