

## The Installation Dinner

The Installation Dinner was held at Farmers' and Fletchers' Hall on Tuesday 12th June 2001 following the Midsummer Court at which Howard Worth had been installed as Master.

He was delighted to welcome the traditional guest of honour, The Chief Commoner, Mr A N Eskenzi, CC, The Master Mercer, Mr Richard C Cunis and the President of the Old Mercers' Club, Mr Robin Whiteland, the President of the Old Abingdonian Club, Mr Forbes Wastie, MBE and the Chairman of the Old Dauntseian Club, Mr Tim Church. Sadly the President of the Old Collyerian Association, Mr Rupert Parker, was prevented from attending due to ill health.

The Guild Junior Warden, Angus Macpherson, proposed the toast to our guests to which the Chief Commoner was kind enough to reply. He congratulated the Master on his installation and presented him with a delightful gift of a book about the City. He told us that the title of Chief Commoner is one of great antiquity. It dates from 1215 and the Magna Carta. Apparently when the barons went to Runnymede to meet King John they took along their banker – the Mayor of London – to represent the Commoners. He was termed the Chief Commoner and it is from this title that the Court of Common Council derives its name and why, even today the elected members are Common Councilmen, even the Ladies. Understandably, the Mayor of London and even more so when he became a Lord Mayor, was not overly keen on being called a Commoner – even a Chief Commoner! The title fell in to disuse until the latter half of the 19th century when it became the customary title given to the Chairman of the City Lands Committee, the senior committee of the Corporation and hence the title the senior Common Councilman. It was subsequently recognised by the sovereign and thus enjoys official recognition in the same way as the Lord Mayor. Incidentally, the Lord Mayor of London is the only Lord Mayor who does not hold his title by statute but by royal recognition. No one else uses the title of Chief Commoner, it is unique to the City.

The Chief Commoner reminisced over his five decades in the City and over thirty years as a Common Councilman. He concluded by telling us that he is spending some of the year promoting the idea of a 'Finer Street Scene' and making the streets of the City more interesting and safe through a City Watch Scheme.

The toast to the Guild was proposed by the Master Mercer. Mr Cunis is an old boy of St Paul's School and has spent thirty eight years in the City and been a Liveryman of the Mercers' Company for twenty eight. He was able to tell us that the Company has recently agreed to include two more schools in the 'Educational Cluster'. One of these is The Royal Ballet School which operates

in a very different educational environment. The Master has estimated that there are around 10,000 pupils and students within the trusteeship, governance or benefaction of the Mercers' Company, a matter for considerable pride. He drew the company's attention to the recently published Livery Profile pamphlet which gives details of the work of the 102 Livery Companies in the City. In 1999 they gave away just under £40 million in charitable grants, there are 41 almshouses and sheltered housing schemes and 124 educational establishments and schools with specific links to the Livery. Eighty five Livery Companies maintain active trade links. The Master Mercer continued by saying that he thought the Livery community plays a valuable part in the life and fabric of the City but has suffered over the years from a certain misconception and ignorance. He feels that the Livery has a good story to tell and that we should try a little harder to make information of Livery affairs more readily available to a wider audience. In conclusion Mr Cunis congratulated the Guild for the role it is playing in providing a worthwhile focus for those who have left Mercers' Company cluster schools and wished the Master and Wardens a successful year.

The Guild Master thanked the members of the Guild for electing him as Master for the current year and outlined his social programme before wishing all those present a safe journey home.

## Livery

One of the principal objectives of the Guild is to encourage Guildmen to become members of the 102 Livery Companies in the City. At the moment only 30 Guildmen are Liverymen out of a total adult membership of 140. This year Guildman Keith Hubbard Brown has joined the Fletchers' Company and Past Master Derek Williamson has joined the Management Consultants (a Company without Livery).

Three Past Masters of the Guild are Clerks to Livery Companies, John Owen-Ward is Clerk to the Bowyers' and Fletchers' Companies, Peter Clark is Clerk to the Masons' Company and Neville Watson is Clerk to the Scientific Instrument Makers' Company.

All Livery Companies are run differently and have different qualifications for membership but if any member of the Guild wishes to find out more about joining a Livery Company one of the above will be pleased to offer help and advice.

A copy of the Livery Profile mentioned by the Master Mercer is included with this newsletter.

## Annual Meeting

The fifty second Annual Meeting was held at Guildhall on Thursday 22nd March 2001. At the Court Meeting the following officers had been elected for the year 2001/2002:

Guild Master	H G J Worth
Renter Warden	M J Houghton
Junior Warden	A S Macpherson
Apprentice Warden	R A Lawman
Senior Court Assistants	M J Cummergen M StJ Parker

Honorary Clerk	N J Watson
Hon Asst Clerk	R J C Davey

The following Guildmen were proposed, seconded and elected to the Court by the meeting:

Court Assistants	D J Harvey A C Macmillan
Abingdon Asst	S M Hills
Collyerian Asst	R T Smith
Dauntseian Asst	R J Slade
Pauline Asst	A I F Mackenzie
Social Court Asst	D M Williamson
Honorary Auditor	K Hubbard-Brown

The meeting was attended by 37 Guildmen and Apprentices who enjoyed supper at the Baracca Restaurant afterwards.

**Guildmen and their guests generously contibuted £342.91 in the Alms Dish for Unicef, the Guild Master's chosen charity at the Installation Dinner.**

## Accounts

At the Annual Meeting the Honorary Assistant Clerk reported that the accounts were as follows:

### General Fund:

At Barclays Bank	£4013.51
On deposit with the	
Chelsea Building Society	£1450.00
Life subscriptions	£3550.00

### Benevolent Fund:

National Savings Bank	£3693.57
-----------------------	----------

## The Web Site

During the year Guildman James Hughes volunteered to become web master and has designed a new web site for the Guild. This is now 'up and running' and Guildmen and Apprentices are encouraged to visit it for up to date news of the Guild and its activities. James also welcomes your comments and news for inclusion on the site. His e-mail address is: [hughesje@hotmail.com](mailto:hughesje@hotmail.com)

The web address is:

[www.civicgom.com](http://www.civicgom.com)