

Installation Day Speech

Master Steve Hodkinson

Wednesday 22nd October 2014

Wardens, Past Masters, Assistants, Fellow Liverymen, ladies and gentlemen, a very warm welcome once more to this Installation Lunch in such beautiful surroundings.

Thanks to IPM

I would like to begin by saying a big thank you on behalf of us all, to our Immediate Past Master and Mistress for representing the Livery during this past year with such commitment and professionalism.

Nick, I know we will formally thank you at the Ladle dinner but we should recognise that you have personally attended over 200 functions (actually 231) on behalf of the Livery.

In your year you have challenged us with good strategic thinking and with your strong leadership we've made good progress in several important key areas. You have set a fine example for us to follow going forward.

I would also add that on a personal note how much I've enjoyed working with you and being a part of these changes during your year.

Debbie, I know also has diligently supported you - and that cannot be easy! You have attended many engagements in your own right to represent the Livery; we thank you for this and as a small token of our thanks, Debbie could you please accept these flowers...

....but this has also been a family affair from the Gales and it's been marvellous for us all to have seen the help and support you've received from Annabel, Charlie, Jamie, and of course Edward who we're delighted to see here today. I hope we'll continue to see you and the rest of the family at future events.

Supporting the Lord Mayor

This last year has also been special because our very own Court Assistant Alderman Fiona Woolf has been the Lord Mayor. With her busy calendar Fiona has found time to attend several of our major events this year; The Annual Lecture, the Annual Banquet at Mansion House and the Masters day at the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton. We also celebrated her inauguration with a Plumbers float in the Lord Mayor's show. Last Friday marking the conclusion of her year we attended the Lord Mayor's Ball at the Guildhall.

Proud to be Master

It is an honour to become the Master Plumber and I feel truly privileged to do this in our 650th year since our Grant of Ordinances. The Mistress Plumber and myself know it is an important year for us but it's a more important year for the company.

Approaching the role of Master can be quite daunting – even though you'd have thought I'd served my apprenticeship by joining the livery 23 years ago, proposed by Past Master Alec Moir, and by being on the Court nine years.

Strategy

People ask 'what's your theme going to be' – so I've calculated I'm the 346th different master - I think that could be an awful lot of themes!!

So my answer to that question is '**continuity**'.

We will continue our strategies;

- To raise still further the profile of the Plumbers,
- To continue the good technical work we do in our industry and I would like to see us engaging better with the manufacturing sector where we see a great deal of innovation in the areas of energy and sustainability;
- We will do this with more transparency, inclusiveness and affordability wherever we can whilst maintaining our high standards.
- As Nick said last year - we have to ensure that the Plumbers are a Livery fit for the 21st century.
- We will remain true to our Aims and Objectives, which focus on our Craft, Our Charity and the City, whilst enjoying each other's Friendship.

.....and of course we will achieve all this at the same time celebrating our 650th anniversary and having some fun!!

The company is in fine health with good reserves, a very active membership and a strong profile in the city.

Events

With the help of the stewards and with the leadership of Ken Newnham my Chief Steward, we have a good social programme with some great events.

In this anniversary year I wanted a slightly technical edge so, sorry to mention this over lunch but, we will visit a sewage pumping station, but at the other end of the scale we'll also visit Aston Martin.

On 8th November after the Lord Mayors show we still have a few places for a bonfire night cruise along the Thames to the Battersea Park Fireworks Display that are spectacular especially seen from the river. Please book as soon as possible if you would like to come.

Our very successful Annual Lecture for this year will be held on World Plumbing Day (11th March 2015) and given by Professor Jamie Bartram, Director of the Water Institute at the University of North Carolina. For this special year the lecture will be coupled with a conference held earlier in the day in conjunction with the Royal Society for Public Health entitled 'Plumbing for Health'. We have a brilliant line up of international experts that will explore the science behind good quality water and it's safe delivery to the tap with the latest design and installation technologies.

As a result of this we have moved the Annual Banquet at the Mansion House from March to 11th May.

On the celebratory and fun theme we will enhance some of our regular events for example the Autumn Festival will be replaced an Autumn Ball to be held at the Honourable Artillery Company on 26th September.

The Masters weekend next year will be 26th – 28th June and we will travel to the beautiful city of Reims to celebrate in style and perhaps just taste a little champagne. This is a change of date from that previously published – we've had to pull it forward a week.

Not forgetting that we are the **Worshipful** Company of Plumbers we will also arrange a service of thanksgiving for this very important anniversary.

It's going to be a very busy but enjoyable year!!

Charity

For our size our charitable work is significant;

- the time and effort our people give freely for the support and development of our industry is considerable,
- the awards and cash bursaries support young people starting off in their careers
- and our lead craft demonstration facility at Singleton is a wonderful example of how we support the history and traditions of our craft.
- We also support other charities – this year in particular the Lord Mayor's Appeal.

Of course with more funds we could do much more.

So we'd like to set ourselves a target in this our 650th year and that is to achieve funds across our charities of £650,000 (nice round number).

To do this we need to raise about another £100,000.

We think we could do this over the next three years. This should be achievable bearing in mind that Wendy Hamilton and Liveryman Joe Sibthorpe raised nearly £5000 doing a gruelling walk round the Isle of Wight this summer and the Immediate Past Master raised £2500 in a week of walking round the city with David Hamilton, skydiving and abseiling – is there no limit to his abilities!! (No pressure there then). Anybody with fundraising ideas please get in touch.

We'd also like to encourage all liverymen to make regular monthly donations to our Charity.

Clerks Cupboard

Please go to the website and have a look at the Clerk's Cupboard for all the 650th memorabilia.

Thanks

I would like to conclude with a couple more thanks. Could I thank on behalf of us all, Father Phillip Warner who conducted our really excellent service earlier, and once more Paul and Sharon for their hard work today – these events just don't happen on their own.

And finally to finish, a toast, if you could all be upstanding, to the Worshipful Company of Plumbers, may it flourish root and branch forever... The WCP