

## THE MASTER'S BLOG 34

### WATER CONSERVATORS' LUNCH- MONDAY 9 JULY 2018

It is Installation Day for the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators and the Acting Clerk and I have been invited to join the Company at Lunch in Stationers' Hall. The weather continues to be excellent and pre-lunch drinks are taken in the Hall's garden. The lunch is good and includes a toast which is drunk in water (how appropriate). I have come to know the now Immediate Past Master, Mike Williamson, quite well during the last 9 months (and indeed had met him some 30 years ago in the context of water regulations). It is good to meet the new Master, Simon Catford, at events during the remainder of my term as Master Plumber.

### GUILDHALL SCHOOL GALA EVENING- MONDAY 9 JULY 2018

We gather this evening in the Garden Room at the Barbican Hall for supper as part of the Guildhall Gala Evening before moving to the Silk Street Theatre for a performance of "Fiddler on the Roof" by final year students of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. There are 21 of us in the group from the Plumbers' Company and we enjoy a very professional performance by these young people. We feel sure that many of them will go on to have successful careers in their chosen profession.

### PLUMBERS v ROYAL HOUSEHOLD CRICKET MATCH- TUESDAY 10 JULY 2018



Never having attended a cricket match before, we travel to Windsor today for the Plumbers' Cricket Club v Royal Household Cricket Club charity cricket match. What an amazing day! Good weather (again!) and we meet up with around 200 others who have gathered both to watch the cricket and to raise funds for the Plumbers' Charitable and Educational Trust.

As today marks the flypast over Buckingham Palace to mark the centenary of the RAF, we have the added bonus of some of these aircraft flying over Windsor Castle (with the display being concluded by the Red Arrows).

Not knowing much about cricket and its rules, I find this afternoon fascinating and am delighted when the Plumbers win (by 101 runs). This has been an excellent Company event, due almost entirely to the organisation of Past Master Nick Gale and his wife Debbie, to whom the Company owes much thanks.

### BEHIND THE SCENES OF CHANGING THE GUARD- WEDNESDAY 11 JULY 2018

One of the Liverymen of the Company, James McElroy, is a guardsman and some time ago he had the idea of proposing a visit to Wellington Barracks to see what happens behind the scenes of changing the guard. We gather outside the Barracks at 0915 for what proves to be a most interesting morning. Coffee in the Sergeants' Mess (in a building which was donated by the Duke of Wellington) is followed by us watching the Canadian Air Force and its band prepare for their duty at Buckingham Palace and St James' Palace. The guards are inspected, the colours presented before the soldiers march off to the respective Palaces. We then return to the Mess for a dressing-up opportunity with several members of the group having the chance to wear dress uniforms and the bearskins which many of the guardsmen wear. We then return to the parade ground in time to see guardsmen of the RAF Regiment and their band returning from their duty.

As is normal practice with our social visits, food is involved, and



we proceed from the Barracks to the Rubens Hotel for lunch. This has been a fascinating, behind-the-scenes visit.

### **VINTNERS' LIVERY DINNER- THURSDAY 12 JULY 2018**

The Acting Clerk and I are guests at the Vintners' Livery Dinner at Vintners' Hall this evening and I find myself seated between their Upper Warden and their newly-installed Master, Sir Andrew Parmley (Lord Mayor of the City of London in 2016/2017). I have a lovely chat with my fellow organist (although Sir Andrew is many notches above me on the scale of organist proficiency) and I am bemused by the rendition of the Vintners' Song which shows that many Liverymen of this Company have really strong lungs!

### **KARAOKE AT MANSION HOUSE- FRIDAY 13 JULY 2018**

No, there is no mistake in this heading. Friday evening truly did see the Egyptian Room in Mansion House rocking to the strains of various Consorts and some Masters at an evening hosted by the Lady Mayoress, Samantha Bowman, to raise funds for the Lord Mayor's Charities. The Master must own up that he did not sign-up for this event and left the Mistress and one of his sisters to exercise their singing talents and to enjoy the fish and chip supper which was provided. He was given a blow-by-blow account, however, of which Master and which Consort did what but he is sworn to secrecy- "What goes on in Mansion House stays in Mansion House." (at least on karaoke evenings).

### **INTER-REGIMENTAL POLO FINALS- SUNDAY 15 JULY 2018**

This has truly been a week of firsts- my first cricket match on Tuesday and now my first polo match at the invitation of the Master of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Surveyors. The location is the Guards' Polo Club on Smith's Lawn in Windsor Great Park and the match of the day is the finals between the Irish Guards and the Queen's Hussars. Prior to today, my knowledge of polo was similar to my previous knowledge of cricket- minimal, but I quickly understand what is taking place on the lawn. I even participate in the practice of helping to restore divots unearthed by the polo ponies (horses, actually) at half-time. Our group was apparently supporting the Guards and they won (which was good). Even better, for me, was the fact that one of their number was a Scots Guardsman.