



# THE COMPANY OF ARTS SCHOLARS

Summer 2012

## FOUNDER MEMBERS

The Rt Hon Lord Brooke

Jonathan Horne

Geoffrey Bond

Mark Bridge

Robert Brooks

Robert Butler

Dermot Chichester

Mark Dalrymple

Anthony du Boulay

Michael German

Philippa Glanville

Anna Haughton

Brian Haughton

John Hudson

Valerie Kaufmann

Stephan Ludwig

Nicholas Shaw

Michael Shortall

Kevin Smith

Nicholas Somers

Kim Tassel

Eleanor Thompson

Clemens Vanderven



Her Majesty the Queen with Prince Philip aboard the Royal barge for the Jubilee river pageant. See page 5 for the full story of the finials that embellished her throne.

## THE COMPANY OF ARTS SCHOLARS

FURNITURE MAKERS' HALL,  
12 AUSTIN FRIARS, LONDON EC2N 2HE

MASTER

**Christopher Claxton Stevens**

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**Nicholas Somers FRICS, FRSA**

MIDDLE WARDEN

**Alderman Ian Luder**

RENTER WARDEN

**Alastair Leslie TD**

DEPUTY MASTER

**Philippa Glanville FSA**

PAST MASTERS

**Mark Bridge**

**The late Dr Geoff Egan FSA**

**The late Jonathan Horne MBE, OStJ, FSA**

**Geoffrey Bond OBE, DL, FSA**

**The Rt Hon. Lord Brooke**

**of Sutton Mandeville CH, FSA**

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Chaplain, H.M. Tower of London

## NEWS



To mark the opening of *Butcher Baker Candlestick Maker* at the Guildhall Art Gallery on June 22, Geoffrey Bond, centre, was presented with a specially commissioned picture by the curatorial advisory panel – left to right: Jo Mabbutt, Huon Mallalieu, Philippa Glanville, Sonia Solicari (Principal Curator of the Art Gallery), Nicholas Somers, Mark Bridge, Alderman Alison Gowman, Christopher Claxton Stevens and Tim Schroder.

## Flying start for Livery treasures exhibition

IT is well over three years since Geoffrey Bond first voiced his intention of mounting a major exhibition celebrating the City's Livery Companies as a contribution to the Cultural Olympiad in 2012. His dream came true on June 22 when the Lord Mayor opened *Butcher Baker Candlestick Maker – 850 Years of London Livery Company Treasures* at the Guildhall Art Gallery.

As chairman of the Curatorial Advisory Panel he worked very hard to create a show that conveys not only the magnificence of the ceremonial side of Livery life, but also the important role of the Companies in fostering trades and crafts and their huge contribution to charitable causes.

Treasures come in many guises. There are items of great historical importance

like Holbein's painting of Henry VIII and the Barber Surgeons and the original 1155 charter of the Weavers' Company, but there are more humble objects too.

From the Bakers, for instance, comes a pair of bread scales designed to prevent short weight and from the Pattenmakers an iron patten for keeping the wearer above the filth of London streets.

The Livery Companies have always had one foot firmly on the ground, but there are flights of fancy, like the tree of 1851 blades made for the 1851 Great Exhibition from the Cutlers' Company.

More than 3000 people rushed to the exhibition on opening day and visitors have kept coming. The Arts Scholars will be visiting en masse on September 18.



## Recovered

A MEDIEVAL Nottingham alabaster carving of St Hubert stolen from the Crypt Museum of All Hallows by the Tower in April has been recovered. The plaque was returned following an alert circulated to all Arts Scholars. As a result it was illustrated in *Antiques Trade Gazette* and a Camden Passage dealer realised he had unwittingly bought the carving from the opportunist thief who ripped it from the church wall.



## Get your pin

THE head of Mithras worn as a pin is the distinguishing mark of the Arts Scholars. Each pin is a work of art in its own right, specially designed by Lexi Dick and produced in silver for Freeman and silver-gilt for Court Assistants. The latest batch are of an improved design which sits more neatly in the lapel. To order yours please send a cheque for £50 made out to the Company of Arts Scholars to The Clerk, Furniture Makers' Hall, 12 Austin Friars, London EC2N 2HE.

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# THE MASTER'S REPORT

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## Our Masters reflect diverse expertise of Arts Scholars

**A**s I introduce myself to you as Master it is worth noting that I am the first from the art market since Jonathan Horne in 2008. We are always mindful of the balance in our membership between the four areas of academics, art market, art services and collectors and happily this has been reflected in the background of our Masters.

Philippa Glanville, now the Deputy Master, is a scholar of international repute of the history of silver and the dining table. We owe her a great debt for using her impressive fund of contacts in the academic world to the benefit of the Company. Before her, Mark Bridge has had an inspiring career as a journalist and editor in the world of antiques, and Geoff Egan was an archaeologist par excellence.

My own training came in the Furniture and House Sale Departments at Christie's in the 1970s, followed by 28 years specialising in buying and selling 18th century English furniture at Norman Adams Ltd in Knightsbridge, London, until we closed the business in 2009. My parallel interest in contemporary furniture comes from 35 years in my Mother Livery Company the Furniture Makers, of which I was Master in 2002.

Like the Arts Scholars, the Furniture Makers is a 'modern' company, next year celebrating 50 years of its Grant of Livery, and every member is involved in the furniture industry in some way. As in our case, it is a great asset when everyone shares an interest in the same trade or craft.

Among my other linked involvements is being a trustee of two museums, the Geffrye in Shoreditch where we will spend an evening on November 22, and the Chiltern Open Air Museum in Buckinghamshire. I am also a trustee of the Art Workers' Guild, a wonderfully idiosyncratic organization in Bloomsbury which has been running since 1884.

### Arts Scholars all

One thing I omitted to announce at our Installation in May was that the Court of Aldermen had just granted permission for us to shorten our name to the Company of Arts Scholars. I hope that nobody feels excluded by this change, but I can assure you that the use of the longer name was becoming unwieldy in the City. Just as the name Furniture Makers covers the whole of the industry (design, manufacture, retailers, suppliers etc), so we are now all grouped as Arts Scholars. I believe it to be a positive step for us and it will certainly save a lot of ink!

Many will be aware of our sustained progress towards Livery status. Thanks largely to our immensely successful auction last September, we have the requisite amounts of £300,000 in our charitable bank account and £50,000 in our corporate account, which we need to hold there through two years' audits. Well over a hundred of our members are now Freemen of the City, and of these an increasing number have made non-refundable donations to the Company towards becoming Liverymen when the time comes. We would welcome more, so please contact the Clerk if you would like to take advantage of the special rates offered before September. If we can successfully petition the Court of Aldermen



Philippa Glanville hands on the Master's mantle to Christopher Claxton Stevens .

to become a full Livery Company in 2014, that will be a most exciting time for us and this is a great opportunity to be part of the history of our Company.

In the meantime we are in the process of obtaining a Grant of Arms from the College of Heralds (we should be able to publicise this before long), and a committee is working hard to help Tom Christopherson to draw up Ordinances and Regulations appropriate for the future governance of the Company and acceptable to the Court of Aldermen.

Our membership continues to rise and currently stands at 225. If you are one of the few who has still not taken the oath and signed the book please do contact the Clerk and come along at the next opportunity. You are not a full Freeman of the Company until you have done so.

I would very much like to offer thanks to Ralph Gough who has put in a great deal of work as Treasurer of the Company for much of its life so far and who has now retired from the post, handing over the financial reins to Assistant Colin Sewell-Rutter.

We were shocked to hear that our loyal and cheerful beadle, Geoff Fairfax, has recently suffered a stroke. He is now back at home and we all wish him a good recovery and sustained improvement.

I hope all members realise what an unusually active events programme we offer. May I particularly point out our 6th Annual Lecture on Tuesday, October 23, which a growing number of City dignitaries and Masters and Clerks of other Companies now attend. With the Modern Companies we shall again be represented in the Lord Mayor's Show on Saturday November 10, an exciting day out for all the family. And please keep Monday, January 28 free for our annual dinner at Merchant Taylors' Hall where we shall be joined by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress.

### Join us at home

Diana and I hope that we shall manage to meet every member during the course of the next year, not least at a series of At Home evenings which we shall be hosting in November. Where better to share our common interests in informal surroundings? I hope too that this might inspire others with collections or businesses to share their passions and knowledge with fellow Freemen.

Seven years on from our foundation as a Guild we are in excellent shape and I am proud to be your Master. Every good wish to you all.

**Christopher Claxton Stevens**

## City on Fire!

Were Charles Dickens or Henry Mayhew to join Olympic visitors to London in 2012 they would find little that was familiar.

And Londoners who were there on the night of December 29, 1666, know why. I was in Ealing and saw the red glow that lit up the sky from north to south and watched it pulsate as the high explosive bombs rained into the cauldron. Winds created by the blaze itself consummated the work of the incendiaries until it seemed that the whole city was burning.

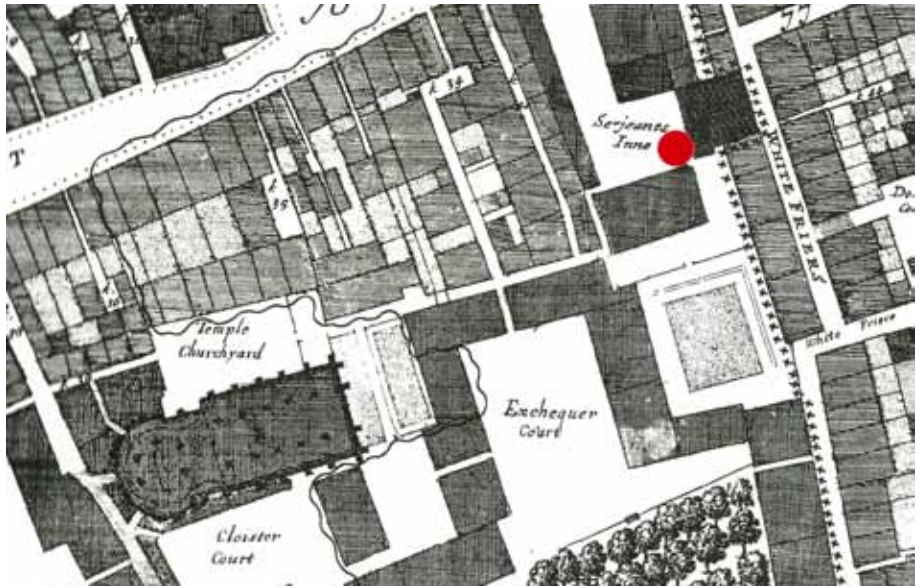
Another witness who saw the whole of London ablaze recalled "how horridly the sky looks, all on fire in the night, was enough to put us out of our wits, and indeed it was extremely dreadful ... and the whole heaven on fire." But he was not describing the night of December 29, but of September 4, 1666. And the writer, of course, was diarist Samuel Pepys.

From its source in Pudding Lane, the Great Fire of 1666 spread east almost to the Tower and west into Fleet Street. Blowing up houses in its path stopped it yards short of the Temple Church.

Nearly 300 years later, as I was walking down the adjacent Sargents Inn in 1952, I came upon a newly opened pipe-laying trench that cut through the black ashes of the Great Fire. Thrown up onto the spoil heap were fragments of a delftware cup, its surface blistered and cracked. There were numerous pieces of rusted iron, unrecognisable save for one that had been a cupboard hinge, and a single piece of slightly melted casement window glass.

Completing the trove were two tobacco pipes, both heavily burned. While one was of a type characteristic of the third quarter of the 17th century, the other was much smaller and of a type usually associated with the early years of the century. But both being similarly burned, there was ample reason to accept that they had been smoked in the same house in the summer of 1666.

But on that day in 1952, it was the piece of window glass that carried me back nigh on 300 years to September 5 when Samuel Pepys walked gingerly home past the ruins of the Mercers' Chapel. He picked up a piece of its window glass "where much more was, so melted and buckled with the heat of the fire,



A detail from Ogilby and Morgan's City of London Map, 1776. The wavy line marks the western extremity of the Great Fire, and the red dot the trench location at "Serjeants Inne".



Fragments of a mid-17th century delftware cup burned in the Great Fire. The sherds provided precedent for a reproduction delftware mug commemorating the famed Mermaid Inn in Bread Street that burned in the fire. The inscription recalls Francis Beaumont's line "What things have we seen Done at the Mermaid." The reproduction is the work of Michelle Erikson, who is potter in residence at the V & A from July to September, 2012.



Left: an iron cupboard hinge and clay tobacco pipes from the debris of the Great Fire.



Right: casement window glass from a house destroyed in the fire of 1666.

like parchment..." , adding "which I keep by me."

And so have I.

Sixty years later I am still stirred by the touch of it and continue to ask myself who it was who last looked through that window before the flames reached it? Who last drank from that mug, and who last lifted the latch on the cupboard door?

Did he, or was it she, snatch out its contents in the hope of saving clothing, silver, or perhaps a Parmesan cheese like the one Pepys saved by burying it in his garden?

And so it is that a handful of monetarily worthless fragments can speak more loudly of their history than can many a costly antique.



# Crowning glory on Jubilee day

As millions around the world watched the Queen board the *Spirit of Chartwell* for the Jubilee river pageant on June 3, the attention of a small number of us was focused not on Her Majesty and her entourage, but on the turned and decorated finials surmounting the two velvet-upholstered thrones prepared for the Royal couple.

And the fact that the Royal party spent a large portion of their long, wet trip down the Thames standing and waving from behind the thrones, rather than sitting on them, meant that we had much more time than we might have expected to enjoy the little urn finials that were the fruit of an intensive joint effort and joint sponsorship by the Turners and the Arts Scholars.

The commission to provide finials came about when Steve Chapman, a Liveryman of the Upholders' Company, approached the Liveries Wood Group (Turners, Carpenters, Furniture Makers, Upholders and Joiners & Ceilers) at the end of February.

His firm, Albert E. Chapman Ltd, Upholsters and Soft Furnishers by appointment to Her Majesty the Queen, had been asked to supply two thrones and a matching banquette in red velvet, but he was looking for help with the finishing touches. With no time to be lost, Arts Scholars Upper Warden Nicholas Somers, a Liveryman of the Turners, took up the challenge and commissioned the renowned turner Stuart Mortimer to produce the six oak finials.

Stuart specialises in spiral work and approached the task with typical application, taking three hours to turn each finial and producing two sets of three with mirrored left and right-hand threads for the two sides of each seat.

The results were beautiful in themselves, but the job was only half done. The overall design for the Royal barge by set-designer Joseph Bennett called for finials to match the rich red of the velvet upholstery, so Nic turned to Arts Scholars founder member Valerie Kaufmann of



The finials are of English oak in the shape of a lidded chalice with knobs in the form of acorns with spiral-fluted cups and rope twist around the rims. The twists are left- and right-handed for each side of the chair.

Plowden & Smith, conservators by Royal Appointment to her Majesty the Queen.

Matching the shifting hues of the velvet pile proved a project in itself and samples passed back and forth three times before Joseph Bennett finally gave his approval and they could go back to Plowden & Smith for gilding by Anthea Bisson.

As time ticked on Nic co-ordinated the progress of the finials from being turned in Hampshire, to painting in Wandsworth, to test fitting at the upholsters in Barnet and finally back to Wandsworth for gilding – all under a veil of the utmost secrecy. So it was a great relief to see them safely in place on the big day.



The finials painted and gilded ready for delivery.

# COMPANY NEWS

## In our natural element at the Cheapside Fair

On Saturday, June 23 the Company ran a stall at the Cheapside Fair. Like the London Bridge Fair in 2009, this was a revival of a medieval City tradition where roads were closed for a mixture of displays by Livery companies showing their trades and crafts (blacksmithing, horseshoeing, turning etc.) and commercial stalls in Guildhall Yard which included a splendid display by the Fruiterers' Company and fascinating demonstrations of wood graining and marbling by the Painter-Stainers.

We were able to pursue our own trade by selling antiques and collectables which was well received by a steady crowd throughout the day and the stall formed an excellent platform for handing out literature and spreading the word about us. There could be some new members as a result.



Among particularly appropriate items for sale were a Victorian pewter pint tankard (left) from a pub round the corner in Wood Street, Cheapside (now demolished) and a collection of Billys and Charleys with their links to mudlarking. (If you want to know more about Billys and Charleys see page 9).



Master and Clerk in their element at the Cheapside Fair.



Arts Scholars all: John Hudson, Andy Thompson, Simon Langton and James Drabble form their own dismounted detachment of the Honourable Artillery Company Light Cavalry during the Hyde Park Pageant in the Park during the Jubilee.

## OBE for Peter Barber

CONGRATULATIONS go to Arts Scholar Peter Barber who was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to cartography and topography. Peter is Head of Map Collections at the British Library, has made a number of excellent television programmes and gave last year's Mithras Lecture.



Robin Barlow is currently serving as High Sheriff of Devon. He is pictured here with his wife Sue on the morning of his installation.

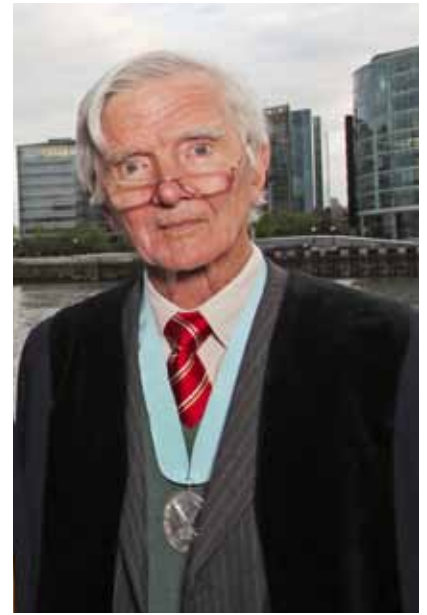
If you have news or pictures that would be of interest to fellow Arts Scholars, send them to the editor – [markbridge@atgmedia.com](mailto:markbridge@atgmedia.com) – for inclusion in a future newsletter.

## Our shooting stars



Following a creditable performance last year a number of Arts Scholars again joined the Gunmakers' Company for their annual visit to Bisley on April 24 and the team emerged triumphant with the top score of the day. Pictured clutching their champagne prizes are Mark Bridge, Alan Cook, Alice Gran Stimpson, Derek Stimpson, Robin Ford and Nicholas Somers.

The programme consisted of five disciplines: 900yd target rifle, 100yd stalkers' test, 50yd .22 gallery rifle, black powder pistol and running boar target.



## Alastair Leslie Renter Warden

**A**lastair Leslie is a lifelong collector of antiques. Over the years he has collected Stevengraphs, treen, miniature furniture, snuff mulls and snuff rasps. He recently completed a scholarly monograph, *300 Years of Tobacco Stoppers - Fine Works of Art in Miniature*, based on his own 1400-piece collection. He is currently collecting Scottish pottery.

Alastair did National Service with the Royal Scots Fusiliers in Malaya in the early 1950s and continued to serve with the Territorial Army until 1962, winning the Territorial Army Pistol Cup at Bisley in 1960. He became an insurance broker at Lloyds in 1957 with Willis Faber & Dumas Ltd, becoming managing director of their Lloyds broking business in 1976. He was a founding director of five other Lloyds agencies and a founding director of United Goldfields NL. He was also a director of a wide range of companies involved in antiques, wine, mining, leasing and oil services.

After retiring in 1991 he became Master of the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers in 1998 and is a member of the Royal Company of Archers, the Queen's bodyguard in Scotland.

He is married to Rosemary and lives in Perthshire where his interests include fishing and other country pursuits.



Arts Scholars Ian Kelly and John Tuckwell together with their wives joined an archeological trip to the Ring of Kerry which was organized by fellow member Niamh Whitfield. During the week many ancient stone forts, ruined monasteries and castles were visited. A delightful day was spent at Muckross Friary and the 19th century Muckross House. Our photograph shows the Scholars attempting to move a particularly large boulder. Ian reassures us that despite their best endeavours no damage whatsoever was done to Ireland's archaeological heritage.

# COMPANY EVENTS

## In Royal company at Westminster Abbey

**Right:** the Henry VII Chapel, home of the Order of the Bath.

**Far right:** the view from the triforium with the central tower of the Palace of Westminster glimpsed over the seldom-seen but wonderfully decorated buttresses of the Abbey.



Under the watchful gaze of the literary geniuses of our realm in Poets' Corner, our tour of the unfrequented parts of the Abbey began as our guide, Dr Tony Trowles, escorted us up to the triforium.

This wonderful space overlooks the north and south transept and nave and runs round the chancel and apse of the Abbey. It is currently used for storage with dusty carvings and Medieval masonry at every point, resting on wide 18th century floorboards and beneath adzed medieval beams, themselves supported by the 'spider beams' added by Sir Christopher Wren in the late 17th century.

Here we found memorials to Sir Christopher Hatton (1540-1591), Lord Chancellor of England and favourite of Elizabeth I and the poet John Gay (1685-1732). These were moved up here from Poets' Corner in 1937 when the amazing 13th century wall paintings of St. Christopher and St. Thomas were discovered behind them during preparations for the coronation of George VI.

The triforium, with its wonderful views over the nave and across Parliament Square, is never opened to the public but may now be transformed into a place for visitors to view objects and relics that are not generally seen. An ambitious project for which £14m is needed.

As we descended from the triforium we were carried along on the musical wings of Sir Hubert Parry's 'I Was Glad', played at full choir volume and reaching its crescendo as we neared the Royal tombs.

We entered the Henry VII Chapel dominated by the Renaissance masterpiece of his bronze and ironwork tomb with his effigy by Pietro

Torrigiano (1472-1528) of Florence, covered in pure gold. The Chapel itself survived the Dissolution during the 1540s and the later 17th century Reformation largely intact leaving the incredible carvings of the nine orders of angels in serried ranks, surrounded by the heraldic dragons, greyhounds, double-roses and portcullises of the Tudor dynasty.

Not everything here is Tudor. The Eastern window above is a commemoration of the Battle of Britain by Hugh Easton and its colour and radiance was a joy to behold, surrounded by the protective Archangels Michael and Raphael and a host of Seraphim.

The Chapel is the home of the Order of the Bath, the original early 16th century choir is now decorated with stall plates and hung with the colours and banners of the present Knights of the Bath.

We moved on quietly to the side Chapel of St. Faith, with its 13th century depiction of the saint in a long flowing robe holding her symbol of martyrdom, the griddle. Her agony over, she now gazes across an original medieval encaustic-tiled floor, rich with running ornament and geometric designs; a rare survival in any religious house today.

Then it was back towards the main altar and one of the great glories of Westminster Abbey, the Cosmati Floor, a mosaic of some 80,000 tesserae brought specially from Rome. These include porphyry, agates, gold, glass and richly-coloured marbles, intertwined in radiating geometric patterns that are unique to a design that now dazzles after cleaning and restoration.

Except at Royal weddings and coronations, only the ghosts of kings now walk over this pavement, but to touch some of the pieces near

the edge of the design was to touch the history of British monarchy.

Just as electrifying was to be able to touch the space where some of the most famous monarchs of the medieval period now lie. We gazed upon the recumbent figure of Henry V, victor of Agincourt, and looked to the right over the gilded effigy of Edward III, calm in death with his wife Philippa of Hainault, parents of the Black Prince.

Then we viewed the tombs of Henry III (1216-1272) and his wife Queen Eleanor of Provence. Henry, son of King John, oversaw the Abbey's greatest phase of building and the glory we see today belongs to him.

The history of the central sanctuary of the Royal tombs centres on the tomb and shrine of St. Edward, the Confessor King. Canonised during the reign of Henry III, his bones lie within a great mosaic-covered tomb, temple-like in its dimensions.

He became one of the most venerated of all English Saints and pilgrims flocked to him from home and abroad. Dutiful monks dismantled the tomb during the Reformation, and his bones were hidden from the iconoclasts, only to be replaced at the restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

At the shrine of St Edward our tour ended and we thank not only Dr. Tony Trowles for his very informed and interesting talk but also Valerie who helped field our many questions. Thanks also to our Master, a member of the Abbey Fabric Committee, for her guidance and to the Clerk and John Hudson for arranging one of the most interesting visits I have ever had the pleasure of making.

**Paul Crane**



# COMPANY EVENTS

## DIARY OF EVENTS 2012/13

Thursday September 6 <sup>th</sup>	Membership Committee meeting
Tuesday September 11 <sup>th</sup>	Events Committee meeting
Wednesday September 12 <sup>th</sup>	Charity Committee meeting
Tuesday September 18 <sup>th</sup>	Visit to <b>Butcher, Baker, Candlestickmaker</b> exhibition at the Guildhall Art Gallery
Wednesday September 19 <sup>th</sup>	Court meeting
Tuesday October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lunch at Watermen's Hall
Wednesday October 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Livery Status Committee meeting
Tuesday October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	The 6 <sup>th</sup> annual Mithras lecture <b>The Classical Country House</b> given by Prof. David Watkin
Saturday November 10 <sup>th</sup>	The Lord Mayor's Show
Tuesday November 13 <sup>th</sup>	Events Committee meeting
Thursday November 15 <sup>th</sup>	Charity Committee meeting
Wednesday November 21 <sup>st</sup>	Livery Status Committee meeting
Thursday November 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Admissions ceremony and reception at the Geffrye Museum
Wednesday November 28 <sup>th</sup>	Court meeting
Sunday December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Advent Service at St Peter ad Vincula
Wednesday December 12 <sup>th</sup>	Carol service with Furniture Makers at St Mary le Bow
Wednesday January 9 <sup>th</sup>	Membership Committee meeting
Tuesday January 15 <sup>th</sup>	Events Committee meeting
Monday January 28 <sup>th</sup>	The 8 <sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner at the Merchant Taylors' Hall
Wednesday February 13 <sup>th</sup>	Charity Committee meeting
Friday February 15 <sup>th</sup>	Visit to the Soane Museum
Wednesday February 20 <sup>th</sup>	Livery Status Committee meeting
Wednesday March 6 <sup>th</sup>	Election Court meeting
Tuesday March 12 <sup>th</sup>	Events Committee meeting
Wednesday March 13	Butchers' Hall lunch followed by a talk
Friday March 15 <sup>th</sup>	United Guilds Service at St Paul's
Friday March 29 <sup>th</sup>	Good Friday
Monday April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Easter Monday
Wednesday April 10 <sup>th</sup>	Membership Committee meeting
Thursday April 18 <sup>th</sup>	The Fakes Progress: history of fakes & forgeries in English silver. An evening talk by Alastair Dickenson at Sotheby's Institute
Wednesday April 24 <sup>th</sup>	Charity Committee meeting
Wednesday May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Court meeting
Wednesday May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Installation of the new Master and Wardens with supper

- Company meetings
- Special events
- City events
- Annual events



Celebrated fakes: a selection of Billey's and Charley's from the Arts Scholars' stall at the Cheapside Fair.

## Billey's and Charley's – a Victorian Controversy

In the middle years of the 19th century, the London archaeological world was shaken by a law suit over the authenticity of a large quantity of supposedly historic lead and bronze alloy artefacts which were said to have been found in the Thames.

William Smith and Charles Eaton, two young and illiterate locals, turned out to be the eponymous forgers of these pieces. They began as mudlarks, searching the Thames at low tide for items of value, and they sold most of their finds to an antiques dealer named William Edwards. But in 1857 they started to produce their own 'finds', cast in plaster of Paris moulds and bathed in acid to simulate age.

Their commonest products were supposedly medieval medallions with suspension loops, between two and four inches in diameter, often with early Arabic dates and meaningless inscriptions. They also copied Roman antiquities such as brooches, daggers and statuettes and sometimes larger objects.

With scientific archaeology in its infancy, eminent scholars were split as to their authenticity and date, until a dealer named George Eastwood sued the publishers of the *Athenaeum* magazine for libel in connection with them in 1858. The case failed, which should have discredited the Billey's and Charley's, but the attendant publicity led to a revival in interest and sales.

However in 1861 the fraud was exposed by an antiquarian, Charles Read, who exhibited some of the moulds at the Society of Antiquaries. Even then Smith and Eaton, who escaped prosecution, managed to refine their techniques and broaden their area of operation, continuing to fool some archaeologists until 1870 when Charley died and Billy disappeared from history soon after.

It has been calculated that they might have manufactured between 5000 and 10,000 pieces during their careers, but how far the dealers might actually have been behind their operation is unclear.

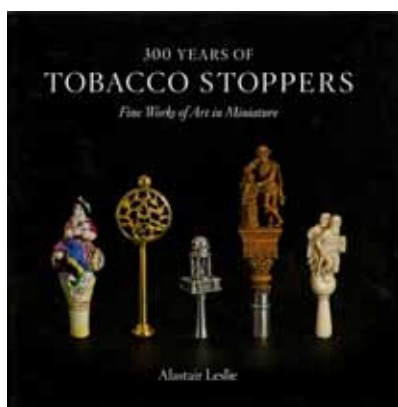
Today these Billey's and Charley's are recognised as Victorian confections but they have become highly collectable in their own right. Several museums hold examples of their work, but probably the best collection is in the Cuming Museum in Walworth Road, Southwark.

Christopher Claxton Stevens

# MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS

## A first for tobacco stoppers

**300 Years of Tobacco Stoppers – Fine Works of Art in Miniature** by Alastair Leslie, privately published. £95



ALASTAIR Leslie makes a good case for tobacco stoppers as the netsuke of England. Like those intricate and highly collectable Japanese carvings, stoppers were small but essential fashion accessories and their decoration draws on similar sources, ranging from folk heroes to famous figures, from monkeys to memento mori, from the pornographic to the politely restrained.

Unlike netsuke, tobacco stoppers have not been well documented and in many cases they go unrecognised for what they are, hence this book which draws on the author's experience of collecting and researching tobacco stoppers over 45 years.

For 300 years (especially in England where pipe-smoking was the norm) men carried small implements to keep the tobacco well compressed in the pipe bowl and they are often found in combination with other tools such as prickers and corkscrews.

Stoppers are most commonly found in the form of a bent human leg (male or female). Beyond that the range is huge and over 900 are illustrated. There are stoppers in glass, porcelain, wood, bone, ivory, silver, brass and steel. And not all are carved, among the most elegant illustrated are a group made from the unadorned penis bone of a racoon. Some, like the five examples illustrated on the cover would be considered fine examples of applied art in any context.

Alastair Leslie places stoppers in their evolving historical and social context. At the same time he documents previous collectors and the dealers whose knowledge started him on the long path to publication.

His scholarly approach is reflected in a bibliography which includes 70 references to relevant books and journals, but no previous books on tobacco stoppers themselves, for this is the first.

[alastairleslie@btinternet.com](mailto:alastairleslie@btinternet.com)

## Mrs How's spoons

### **The Benson Collection of Early Silver Spoons**

by David J. E. Constable, Constables Publishing. £95

THE Benson Collection of early spoons is already well known as one of the great landmarks of silver collecting. It was first documented in 1952 when Commander George How and Jane Prentice How (née Benson) published their own record of the remarkable pieces they had been able to bring together in those halcyon days for antique collectors.

Some of their silver was sold at auction after Mrs How's death in 2004 but their 45 finest spoons and one fork were lent to the Ashmolean Museum where they are now on show in their own display case. It is this Ashmolean display than has now been carefully documented by David Constable.

The 133 pages illustrate and fully describe each piece in chronological order with information updated, where applicable, to reflect current knowledge on the subject.

There are also chapters devoted to the history of the firm How of Edinburgh and to the life of Jane Prentice How, the larger-than-life collector and dealer who certainly did not suffer fools gladly and was famous for her put-downs, but was not averse to offering a pot of honey from her own bees to go with a rare and expensive spoon.

[sales@constablespublishing.com](mailto:sales@constablespublishing.com)



Mrs How walking her old English mastiffs in London.

## New Members

### **Rosamond Clayton FGA DGA FIRV.**

Freelance jewellery specialist. A fellow of the Gemmological Association and of the Institute of Registered Valuers.

### **Mike Collinson:** Director of Besso Insurance.

A Liveryman of the Coopers' Company and a Freeman of the City.

**Nicholas Cooper FSA.** Architectural historian and author.

**Daniel Crouch.** Dealer at Crouch Rare Books in St James's, specialising in antique maps.

**James Drabble.** Independent IT consultant with an MA in History of Art, specialising in Islamic art, heraldry, genealogy and military history. Collects sporting prints and writing equipment. Member of HAC.

**Audrey Eiffe:** Eclectic collector. Originally studied fashion design at St Martin's and went on to teach it at the London College of Fashion

**Simon Fitzpatrick.** Lawyer. Partner at Boodle Hatfield, head of the Art Group.

**David Garnett.** Chairman of Zibby Garnett Travelling Fellowship. Formerly a land agent with the National Trust.

**Anne Glendinning.** Collector of Japanese prints and ceramics. Formerly ran the antiques shippers Masterpack. Member of Japan Society and Anglo-Japanese Ladies' Association.

**Mrs Willemien Hines.** Collector of English furniture, ceramics and Old Masters.

**Victoria Holvik:** Lawyer, formerly in Sotheby's legal department, now with Charles Russell, specialising in art-related legal matters.

# THE CLERK'S COLUMN

## It was wet but it was all worth it

On June 3 Ralph and I were lucky enough to be invited to take part in the Diamond Jubilee Pageant, which was very special. We were due to board our boat, the *Sapele*, at Chelsea Harbour and when we arrived I was surprised to see Tony Morrow, Clerk to the Butchers' Company, rushing around in a pair of jeans and an open-necked shirt. (He didn't see me!).

All became clear when he re-appeared, suitably attired, on the *Britannia* launch to ferry the Queen and Prince Philip to the *Spirit of Chartwell*. Tony was Commodore of the Royal Yacht when it was decommissioned and he had resumed his old role for the day. The launch is beautiful and looked immaculate, as did the Commodore!

Once the flotilla got under way, the *Sapele* followed that marvellous array of man-powered boats headed by *Gloriana*, with the little ships from Dunkirk behind us.

What a day. However it might have looked on the television, the atmosphere throughout the trip was magical as thousands, indeed, millions of people lined the river route on both banks, waving their Union Jacks and cheering until they were hoarse.

Talking of horses, we were fortunate enough to see War Horse, snorting, prancing and rearing up on the roof the National Theatre as we all passed by.

There were all manner of people on our boat including several mayors from London boroughs and a wonderful group of people who had either received the George or Victoria Cross, including Johnson Beharry who was delightful.

Food and drink flowed all day long and when we finally moored near the Tower of London we were able to watch the rest of the procession, safely inside out of the wet and cold! By this time the rain was falling in

torrents and when that gallant group of sodden singers belted out *Land of Hope and Glory*, I was finished!

And what about those finials! (see page 5) – it was and still is wonderful to think that the Company of Arts Scholars, so new in the long history of the Livery, was able to make its own small contribution to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. I believe the thrones will be on display in due course at the Museum in Docklands.

The following day, we had a small party in the garden (brave) and I make no apologies for letting you all enjoy the stunning Jubilee pudding that my sister made specially for the occasion.

I would like to welcome our 18 new members and look forward to

seeing them officially admitted as Freeman of the Company at the Geffrye Museum on November 22.

In the meantime I would like to draw attention once again to the excellent City Briefings run by the City Livery Committee.

These evening introductions are an interesting and entertaining introduction to the City and Livery Companies. Do please look at the website: [www.liverycommitteecourses.org](http://www.liverycommitteecourses.org). The next briefings are on October 9 and November 11.

Our first event of the autumn will be a special visit to the Butcher, Baker, Candlestick Maker exhibition which has been masterminded by Geoffrey Bond with a number of Arts Scholars playing an important role in its organisation.

This is a rare chance to see treasures from the Livery Companies and is as splendid as it is educational. Details of the evening will be sent out in due course but make sure you put September 18 in your diary.



**Helen Jonas.** General valuer at Sworders auctioneers. Previously at Boulton & Cooper.

**Michael Michael FSA.** Director of Christie's Education and a specialist in Medieval art with many publications to his name.

**Barbara Newman CBE.** Collector of glass, ceramics and jewellery. On the Court of Common Council, a Liveryman of the Turners' Company. Liveryman of the Coopers' Company and a Freeman of the Tallow Chandlers' Company.

**Alice Stimpson.** Collector of antique firearms and art. A Liveryman of the Gunmakers' Company.

**Fabio Strazzer:** Managing Director of Besso Insurance, specialising in Italian art.

**Nicholas Trimming.** Dealer. Partner of Daniel Crouch at Crouch Rare Books in St James's, specialising in antique maps.

**Carey Wallace.** Specialist in pop and entertainment memorabilia at Christie's South Kensington.

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# Master's installation

## – May 16

This year's installation of the new Master and Wardens marked a new departure for the Company, taking place in the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula within the precincts of the Tower of London followed by choral evensong conducted by our Chaplain, Rev Roger Hall MBE QHC.

Christopher Claxton Stevens was installed as Master by Philippa Glanville, who now becomes Deputy Master for the next year. Nicholas Somers was installed as Upper Warden, Ian Luder as Middle Warden and Alastair Leslie as Renter Warden. Maureen Mellor was admitted to the Court of Assistants.

After an evensong service graced by the wonderful choir of the chapel, the newly-installed wardens led the attendant Arts Scholars to Tower Pier where the evening continued aboard MV *Erasmus* with the annual reports from the committee chairmen, the admission of new Freemen to the Company and a buffet dinner.

All this was accomplished to the backdrop of a spectacular sunset over the City as the *Erasmus* slipped down river to the Thames Barrier and back.



Ian Luder is installed as Middle Warden



Barbara Newman and John Barber



Toby Parker



Genevieve and Graham Mather



Carey Wallace, Jane Oxenford and Victoria Wolclough



Bridget and Andrew Jobson



Michael German and Paul Crane