

Chairman's Report to the Livery Committee
Wednesday 12th February 2014

I am honoured to be writing my first report as your Chairman, and thank you for electing me at our last September meeting. I am delighted to be working with the new Deputy Chairman, Ian Seaton. I should also like to put on record my personal gratitude to my predecessor Deputy William Fraser, and to thank him on behalf of the whole Committee for all his diligent hard work and courteous leadership of our deliberations.

On a more melancholy note, the year has started with the sad news of Deputy Robin Eve's death. Robin had been a long serving member of our Committee until he stepped down last summer. I was pleased to be able to represent the Livery Committee at his well attended funeral. Also Judge Hugh Stubbs has become ill, and been forced to step down from his disappointingly short tenure on the Committee. Not so serious, but I wish Alderman Sir Michael Bear a speedy recovery from his recent spinal surgery.

I have been quite taken aback at the number of matters which come the way of your chairman, and whilst all need a response, most do not merit a detailed airing in the full committee, but perhaps do deserve to be considered by others than just the chairman/deputy chairman. For this reason I remain keen to re-activate our Livery Companies Working Group. I am grateful to Victoria Russell for agreeing to lead this Group, and for her work on updating the Liaison Member scheme. Amongst many, two new issues that have arisen recently I report below.

First our practice of distributing an email Briefing to all clerks, following each of our meetings (ie three times a year), has become entangled with the PRO's quarterly briefings to livery companies. In discussion with the Town Clerk and PRO departments, it has now been agreed to combine these two (seven) into one bi-monthly email Livery Briefing, which will include reports of the Committee's business, and matters of more general interest from the City Corporation to the Livery.

An early ambition of mine is to create a Livery Committee website. This project is in its early stages, but I envisage it will become the gateway to, for example, the Livery Committee Courses website, and the so-called Fishmongers' website, as well as a host of other livery related information that already exists on the web, but is presently scattered about and hard to find. The good news is that such a site, I discover,

already exists, at <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-the-city/working-with-and-for-others/Pages/city-livery-companies.aspx>

If, like me, you had not come across it before, then the less than snappy domain name perhaps explains why not! There is also <http://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=383> Work is now in hand to make these sites more accessible, and to promote the first (with a new intuitive domain name) as the home of all livery committee related information, and ensure that such information is easily found there.

I formally welcome the Worshipful Company of Educators as the 109th livery company. The Arts Scholars and the Public Relations Practitioners are expected to follow in due course, and I wish them well. But in that context, it may be worth noting that no new guild has been formed in the City since the Public Relations Practitioners 14 years ago. It is possible that when these two “companies without livery” do become full livery companies, it may be that for the first time in recent memory, there are NO guilds or companies in the pipe-line wishing to join our ranks. This may not matter, but I propose to air the matter briefly as an agenda item at our meeting.

The achievements of the Livery Companies Skills Council (LCSC), and of the Livery Schools Link (LSL), continue thanks to the hard work of their active committees and modest staff. Their formal relationship with our Committee is not recorded (as far as I am aware), but we certainly take an interest in their activities, not least through Ian Seaton and Paul Herbage respectively, to whom my thanks. LCSC has been particularly responsible for the creation of the new and government funded Livery Company Apprenticeship Scheme Ltd, whose chairman, Peter Cook, will be addressing us at our meeting.

Meanwhile LSL are repeating their successful Showcase Event at Apothecaries' Hall on Tuesday 18 March. The event is an opportunity for the Livery to demonstrate their skills, trades and professions to an invited audience of students and teachers throughout the day. The aim is also to raise the profile of the Livery among schools, to inspire students to consider careers from a wider range of possibilities and to reinforce the relevance of the Livery in today's world of work. There will be over 25 stands representing over 30 Livery Companies.

Members of our Committee are invited to the Private View and Reception on 18th March from 5 - 6.30. To register please email Alison Truphet alisontruphetlsl@gmail.com

On domestic matters, I am delighted to report that our Clerk Gemma Stokley is expecting her first child, and hence will shortly be leaving us to go on maternity leave. Her replacement as our Committee Clerk is Sean Cable, and both of them will be at our February meeting. Following the retirement of Assistant Town Clerk Peter Nelson, we will increasingly have the benefit of Lorraine Brook's attendance at our meetings. And while Assistant Town Clerk Simon Murrell is not a direct replacement for Peter (for he retains all his pre-existing duties and responsibilities) he will be in evidence as often as his commitments allow. To Gemma our best wishes, and to the others named, a warm welcome.

Nigel R Pullman
Chairman

1st February 2014