

The Worshipful Company of Tax Advisers



Master's Report 2017 – 18

It has been a wonderful privilege to represent the Worshipful Company of Tax Advisers as its Master for 2017/18.

I hope that, as members, you have felt engaged in the Company's year and the Master's activities via my newsletters and news items on our website.

My Installation was on St Matthew's Day, the start of the Company year, at Vintners' Hall, where the principal guest at our Dinner was Maurice Avent, who explained how landfill tax supports charities such as Butterfly Conservation, of which he was the former chair.

The Master is heavily involved in the running of the Company, and in promoting the Company and the tax profession at numerous events in the City. We are recognised for playing our part in civic life through our roles in the Lord Mayor's Briefing Group and the Financial Services Group, which represent the modern services and professions of the City of London.

As part of our contribution this year, we co-hosted (with the CIOT) the Lord Mayor's Tax Debates evening at Mansion House, supporting the Lord Mayor's "Business of Trust" agenda. One of the topics had a UK theme and the other an international flavour. It was even mentioned in the Financial Times!

Our Budget Banquet was at Merchant Taylors' Hall, where the principal guest was Dame Valerie Strachan former head of Customs and Excise, who explained how while there is life after tax, tax never quite leaves your life! Entertainment was provided by renowned musicians Crispian Steele-Perkins and Leslie Pearson, who played the hosepipe, trumpet, and piano culminating in a set from West Side Story. We were lucky enough to have representatives from our navy affiliation HMS Bangor and RAF 101 Squadron in attendance.

The Civic and Charities' Lunch was held at Trinity House. Sheriff Neil Redcliffe was the principal guest, and I had the pleasure of presenting cheques to our tax charities, Tax Help for Older People, TaxAid, and the Bridge the Gap Campaign, as well as for the Tax Advisers' Taxi in the Magical Taxi Tour to Disneyland Paris for disadvantaged children, our Army Cadet affiliation, the Lord Mayor's Appeal and the Mansion House Scholarship Scheme. During the year I was invited to visit London's Air Ambulance Helipad following our support.

As Master I also had the honour of presenting Company prizes at the summer camp for our City of London and NE Sector Army Cadet Force, to our St John Ambulance Westminster affiliation, and at two CIOT prize giving ceremonies.

There are a number of opportunities for the Master to process in our magnificent bonnet and gown, which epitomise the pomp and ceremony of City tradition, such as the Common Halls for the election of the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs, the United Guilds and Sons of the Clergy Services at St Paul's and the St Cecilia Day Service at Westminster Cathedral. The opportunity to meet other Livery Masters and to become more involved in the life of the City was tremendous fun, and the Master's badge is one of the most admired of all the Livery Companies.

The Company ran a busy and varied social programme, including visits to Trinity House, the Assay Office at Goldsmiths' Hall, the HSBC Art Collection, the London Metropolitan Archives, the Thames River Police Museum, the gardens at Sheffield Park followed by Afternoon Tea on the Bluebell Railway, lunch at Ironmongers' Hall, a carol service at our Guild church of St Bartholomew's followed by supper at Haberdashers' Hall, a Sherlock Holmes walk, a curry night at the Oriental Club and a trip to the Birmingham Royal Ballet. A Court Dinner was also held at Gunmakers' Hall.

Each Master organises a weekend away, and mine was in Bath where I grew up. We were blessed with fabulous weather and enjoyed a Georgian Fare Walking and Tasting Tour with food inspired by Bath's heyday, a trip to the Roman Baths, a private dinner in the Baldwin Room at the Ivy Brasserie, Choral Matins at Bath Abbey and a boat cruise, or towpath walk for the energetic, to the village of Bathampton for a pub lunch.

We held two very successful History of Tax events, one on the Women's Tax Resistance League for the centenary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act, and one on The Politics of Land Taxation in the British Empire.

As Livery Company number 107, we are members of the Modern Livery Companies, and the 100+ Club, (and the list of new Livery Companies grows most years). All these various groupings have lectures, events, dinners and lunches which I had great pleasure in attending, as well as dinners hosted by other Companies and Guilds such as the Mercers, Vintners, Basketmakers, Entrepreneurs, the Guild of Young Freemen and the Chartered Architects amongst others.

I was lucky enough to be invited to celebrate some Anniversaries during my year of office, including a dinner at London Zoo marking the 325th Anniversary of the granting of a Royal Charter to the Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers and the 25th Anniversary of the Management Consultants' foundation as a Guild, at which I "sabraged" a bottle of champagne for the first time.

There are so many wonderful events to attend, but highlights would probably include:

- Jailed and Bailed, where gowned Livery Masters are "arrested" at the Old Bailey, taken to the Tower of London in an historic bus and then escorted by the Beefeaters to their mess before being released once "bail" has been paid to the British Red Cross;
- Treloars, a truly inspirational school for disabled children in Hampshire, which is supported by many Livery Companies including ourselves;
- Ironbridge Gorge Heritage Museums, where all Masters are invited to a weekend gathering which is an excellent chance to learn more about the Industrial Revolution and meet all the other Masters in the same year before forming a Past Masters' Association (and for my year it is named the "Spitfires", to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the RAF);
- The Lord Mayor's banquet, a white tie affair at Mansion House in the presence of the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs and all 110 Livery Companies;
- Lunch with the Old Bailey Judges and the chance to sit in on a real life Old Bailey case;
- The summer reception at RAF Brize Norton with a parachute jump, historic and modern aircraft flypast, marching band and sunset ceremony, and of course,
- The Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

I would like to thank the Deputy Master, Wardens, Court, Committee members, Clerk, Beadle and Assistant Beadle, Honorary Treasurer, our two Assistant Clerks, our Administrator and the Consort Tax Adviser who hosted a Mistresses' and Consorts' lunch and represented the Company on the Consorts' circuit, for all their help and support during the year. Running a Livery Company is very much a team effort!

I wish my successor, Marcus Fincham, every success for the year ahead, and I hope he enjoys his year as much as I have enjoyed mine.

Morag Loader
September 2018