

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF COOKS OF LONDON

(First Charter of Incorporation granted by Edward IV in 1482)

NEWSLETTER (Number 9)

Matters of interest to Members of the Company
for the year to November 1992, to be treated as
confidential. Edited by Past Master Sam Messent.

Assistance of Cookery.

The Company continues to gain recognition in the Catering Industry over a widening spectrum of activities. The Master has had a particularly busy year on our behalf and, we hope, a very happy one.

Our Jubilee Competition was disappointing overall by general standards, with basic kitchen disciplines and procedures falling below the expected levels. However, the Winner, by unanimous votes of all Judges, proved to be one of the most committed Catering Students we have come across for some time. The Company is currently funding him to pursue extra curricula study to aid him in gaining further qualifications in kitchen expertise. He maintained contact to inform us of his progress, and it is pleasing to know that his Executive Chef knew of our Competition and that he was instrumental in his placement. He is at present with a large international Company and hopes to gain practical experience with them in Europe, the Far East and U.S.A. He attributes his good fortune to the interest which the Company has shown in him.

Due to internal problems there was no live R.A.F. competition this year, but it is thought a resumption will be made in 1993.

The Royal Navy held their annual Salon Culinaire at Portsmouth in November and, as usual, it attracted a great deal of outside interest. The Master attended as Guest of Honour on the first day, and Past Master Graham Young was again invited to join the panel of Judges. Our own event for R.N. Young Chef of the Year was the final item of a successful Salon, and attracted a full audience with lively and enthusiastic support for the Competitors, including the family of the Winner who became happily emotional at his success. The Winner was again offered a week's experience at Brian Turner's Restaurant in Walton Street, London, and the Court has agreed to meet his accommodation expenses for that period.

Charities.

The Company's Benefactors Charity now receives an annual income of about £8,000, and it has been possible to increase some annual donations and to make others.

The amount which is now made available to the Master each year for gifts to his

selected Charities is £2,000.

Increased annual donations include £500 to the Warfield Parochial Church Council, and £20 pocket money per term to our pupils at Christs Hospital.

Other gifts include a grant of £500 to a Student at London Polytechnic, who could not continue without such financial assistance, and a sponsorship Grant of £250 to the R.A.F. Catering Unit in respect of a marathon run in aid of the R.S.P.C.C.

With regard to the Cooks Charity, the grant of £25,000 to the Hotel Catering and Industrial Management Association for 'Distance Learning' material has now been made, as they have acquired N.V.Q. status.

The proposed housing development by the Hotel and Catering Trade Benevolent Association has encountered problems and an alternative scheme for the purchase of Flats with the assistance of the Company is being considered.

The pièce de resistance of the Charity Committee has been a proposal by the Late Master to establish, in the first instance for ten years, a Centre for Culinary Research in partnership with a University. Detailed proposals have been put to the Committee after exhaustive research and enquiries by the Late Master. The matter is being actively pursued by the Committee under its Chairman, Past Master Michael Kenyon, and the cost of the scheme is estimated to be about £50,000 a year over the ten years. Advertising for a suitable University to join in the scheme is likely to go ahead shortly.

The Centre is intended to provide the focus for academic and operational research in the fields of cookery and catering with the principal objectives:-

- (a) Initiating research projects in those areas.
- (b) Providing advice to industry on matters of mutual interest and concern through the establishment of an annual conference/symposium.
- (c) Stimulating and encouraging advances in culinary education.

Admissions to the Court.

Members of the Livery may have been aware that, when a vacancy arose on the Court of the Company, the Senior Liveryman was approached by the Clerk to ascertain if he was willing to be nominated to fill the vacancy. The Court has now decided that such an approach should only be made to a Liveryman who has regularly supported the Functions of the Company.

Accordingly, Standing Orders have been amended to provide that, in future, only Liverymen who have attended at least sixty per cent of the Livery Dinners held in the two years prior to the invitation will be entitled to receive such an approach.

The invitation will be accompanied, as hitherto, by a detailed list of the duties of an Assistant and also the duties of Wardens and Masters. Before coming on the Court, the Liveryman will be required, as at present, to sign a letter of confirmation that he

will take on the Offices of Wardens and Master in due course.

Within the Court there is a similar rule whereby the Senior Assistant is not eligible to become Renter Warden unless he has attended at least sixty per cent of the Court Meetings held prior to his nomination.

Christs Hospital.

The Master attended the Speech Day at Horsham in the presence of the Lord Mayor.

Following correspondence with the Administration Officer of Christ's Hospital, the Company has used its right of presentation of a girl pupil, which is available at present, to nominate Lucy Durnford. Her Father served in the ACC, and she will sit the entry examination in January.

Aldersgate Ward Club.

Past Master Colin Cleugh has been elected Senior Warden of the Club for the ensuing year.

The Company has enjoyed a long association with the Ward by reason of its freehold interest in Aldersgate Street, and over the years many Members of the Company have held Office in the Club.

This year the Ward Alderman, Sir Francis McWilliams, is Lord Mayor. To mark the occasion the Club entered a float in the Lord Mayor's procession depicting the ancient gate of Aldersgate through which King James I rode from Scotland when visiting his Capital for the first time.

The Club organises a full and varied programme of social events during the year; the Guildhall Lunch to the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs and Beating the Bounds take place annually. In addition, about nine other events have taken place each year including attending the Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower and Dinner in the Royal Fusiliers Mess, a visit to the College of Arms, the National Army Museum, G.P.O. Headquarters and Breweries.

Because of the territorial association with the Company, Members of the Company are eligible for membership of the Club, and anyone interested should contact Past Master Cleugh.

Miscellaneous Matters.

Assistant Roger Atkin died suddenly, last October, when on a business trip to South Africa. He was a new Member of the Court and his loss will be deeply felt.

We have just heard that Past Master John Powell has died unexpectedly. He will be

sadly missed for his friendship and wise counsels and his expert administration of the cooking competitions.

The Company contributed £500 towards the Aldersgate Ward Float project for the Lord Mayor's Show.

The Silver Lectern presented by the Livery a few years ago for the use of Speakers was found to be too low for practical use. Following an approach by Past Master Christopher Kenyon to the Carpenters Company, he was put in touch with a Carpenter who has made an attractive wooden stand to which the Lectern is firmly attached. It is now a suitable height, and a wooden box to store both items has also been provided.

For the past few years the Livery Ladies' Dinner has been held in April in the Guildhall Crypt. It has been felt that it may spread the dates of the Company Functions more evenly if changes were made. Consideration is being given to holding this Dinner in October, which would fall nearer the end of the Master's year. It will not be possible to make changes before 1994.

The Common Council Livery Committee is arranging education courses for Wardens in preparation for Mastership.

It has been the practice of the Company for many years to make a presentation to the outgoing Master in appreciation of his services. This took the form of a cash payment to purchase a piece of silver and have it suitably engraved.

The Court has decided instead to present a reduced replica in silver of one of the Company's pieces. A stock of such replicas has now been obtained and the first was presented to Past Master Messent.

The piece copied is hall-marked 1656 and bears the following inscription:-
"The guift of Bartholmew Brombley twice Master of the Company of Cookes in London and thenafter to be presented to ye Master of ye said Company for the tyme being at such tymes as he sitts publickly in ye Hall at dinner, at his feast dinner in Remembrance of my loue for the said Company, for ever 1656." This wording is not on the replica but the Company's Arms are engraved as on the original.

The Late Master has expressed concern at being referred to as the late Master.

He may be more concerned to be told that the Father of the Company, Past Master Harry Tickler, was once reported in the Peterborough Column of The Daily Telegraph as having died.

This came about after he had been Master for the first time in 1962/63. The following year Peterborough was a Guest at a Livery Dinner of the Company, and he asked his Host who the previous Master had been. He was told it was the Late Master, Harry Tickler, and took it to mean it was the late Harry Tickler. This happened many years ago, and we are delighted that he is still with us and has been on the Livery for over fifty years.

Pen Portrait of the Master

Sidney and his Brother Peter are the third generation of Herbages to join the Cooks Company.

He has been a very active Member of the Company since joining in 1946 and served as Master in 1966/67. Since 1971 he has been Honorary Secretary of the Cooks Golfing Society.

Sidney is very proud that his three sons, Paul, Stuart and Richard have joined the Company and that his daughter, Elaine, is a Freemaider.

He was educated at Emmanuel School and Northampton Engineering College (now the City University), and gained a Diploma in Civil Engineering. After three years as a designer for Consulting Engineers, he qualified as a Chartered Civil Engineer. For the remainder of his career he was in Management for three large Construction Firms and dealt mainly with Public Utilities.

Unfortunately, five years ago, due to the depressed market, he was made redundant, so he retired to Norfolk. Here he pursues his life passion for golf, having played his first round at the age of seven. With his wife, Jean, he has joined a local Bridge Club and, also, they are both keen gardeners.

Since two of their children live abroad, they now enjoy travelling round the world. Immediately after the Dinner last November they were off to Perth, Australia via Hong Kong, to visit Stuart and then on to Dunedin, New Zealand where their daughter and three of their grandchildren live, returning home via Honolulu.

His cooking experience is limited to the icing of birthday cakes for the family. At Christmas time he makes Petit Fours.

He married Jean in 1949 and they have six grandchildren.

Report of the Late Master

It would be an impossible task to describe every Function or Appointment without writing a book and boring everyone to tears, but it would be appropriate to say they were divided approximately evenly between Official Functions, Meetings and the Company's Charity Project.

My Wife and myself were looking forward to the Ironbridge Museum visit, and booked to go but, after hearing the experiences of our Clerk and the previous Late Master, decided it was just too much for us. The Curator, James Stirling, agreed it would be more than we could manage and thought we should not attempt the trip.

Much of the year has been taken up with the Project. This has involved contact with over three hundred Colleges, Universities etc., and has been very time-consuming in visits, correspondence and telephoning, but I am pleased to say it is becoming clear and

beginning to take shape. As mentioned above, the Company hopes to establish and endow a Centre of Learning at one of our Universities. I am exceedingly grateful to the many Vice Chancellors and Professors who have offered advice during the past two years.

As Master I have very much enjoyed the contacts with other Livery Companies and organisations, although I probably ate much too much.

The Services figured largely in the events and involved my making a number of journeys to Aldershot. The first one this year will long be remembered for, in spite of the Parade being put back half an hour at a time, for inclement weather, it was forced to be held some two hours later than scheduled. In the event, standing on the parade ground, soaked to the skin and frozen stiff in a gale force wind, was not an occasion remembered with pleasure. Some spectators were led away crying with cold, although the splendid hospitality of the ACC did somewhat compensate.

A most enjoyable experience was the trip to HMS Raleigh at Torbay, although Plymouth did not prove easily accessible from my home at Wimborne Minster. In short, all three services provided splendid hospitality, for which I am exceedingly grateful.

Several Service functions were cancelled due to the shake-up that is presently taking place, and we must still wait to see what our connections will be when this is completed.

This year was somewhat marred by the continuous illness of my Wife, which forced several last-minute cancellations including the Royal Garden Party.

One of the highlights was the Lord Mayor's Banquet which, because of reparations at Mansion House, was held in Guildhall this year under the watchful eye of Gog and Magog. Sir Brian Jenkins proved a most popular and amiable Lord Mayor and, perhaps, now that I am the Late Master, I shall have time to complete his gift of a thousand piece jigsaw.

In October, representatives of the Charity Committee accompanied the Master on a trip to Bournemouth University to see the work in which the University is involved. We were suitably impressed by the scope and depth of the work and the research being undertaken. Again we were grateful to the Vice Chancellor and Professors.

One item I cannot fail to mention is the 'bonhomie', with which I met in all Companies, and the splendid fellowship which existed within the Livery of every Company. The privilege of being Master was well worth this experience alone.

Another ceremony that is well worth attending is the election of the Lord Mayor. Quite frankly, every Liveryman should attend at least once, in fact it is a duty. The Lord May Elect passes the comment that the outgoing Lord mayor had left a hundred Masters struggling over a thousand-piece jigsaw.

My Crowning Ceremony was carried out a few days after I rose from a six week period in bed and, unfortunately, just before completing my year of office I was forced to miss several functions due to a heart attack and other complications, being in Hospital when

I should have been in the Reception Committee to welcome the new Lord Mayor back to the Guildhall.

During the coming year I will still be negotiating on behalf of the Charity Committee for our Seat of Learning, but having spent some sixty years in the Catering Industry this is something I can enjoy and, hopefully, see to a fruitful completion.

Dates for 1993 (Subject to revision)

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| Tuesday 2nd February | : | Company Service at St. Botolph's and Luncheon. |
| Wednesday 10th February | : | Court Meeting and Luncheon for Prizewinners. |
| Friday 26th March | : | United Guilds Service at St. Paul's and Buffet Lunch. |
| Friday 2nd April | : | Company Ladies' Dinner in Guildhall Library. |
| Wednesday 12th May | : | Court Meeting and Livery Dinner for Lord Mayor. |
| Wednesday 12th May | : | Court Ladies' Dinner. |
| Wednesday 14th July | : | Court Meeting and Luncheon. |
| Tuesday 14th September | : | Election Court Meeting and Dinner. |
| Wednesday 20th October | : | Livery Dinner for the Services. |
| Wednesday 24th November | : | Court and Livery Dinner for Associated Companies. |