

The Worshipful Company of Cooks *of London*



NEWSLETTER number 20

December 2000

edited by The Second Master Michael Messent

Our New Master Cook

It is a great honour to become your Master and I hope to be able to do the job to the satisfaction of the Court and Livery. It will be impossible to live up to my predecessor, Paul Herbage, who has been amazingly industrious and spread the name of the Company far and wide. My congratulations and those of the whole company to him on a splendid year. The Millennium celebrations were a great success, due in no small part to Paul's determination that they would be so.

We don't have the excuse for another major celebration so for my year I feel the Company can return to basics and concentrate on its charitable work, particularly the assistance of cookery. I am delighted that we now have a third major project to add to the Bournemouth University Centre for Culinary Research and Hackney Community College. The *Adopt a School* project of the Academy of Culinary Arts seems a hugely worthwhile idea, particularly now that basic food skills are not in the national curriculum.

I am looking forward to seeing all three projects in action. To make this even more interesting, our centre for Culinary Research is holding its two-yearly conference in Cairo and I hope to be there. It could inspire some exciting menu choices in the coming months!

For those of you who don't know me, I have spent my working life in the City, first as a marine insurance broker and then as a marine underwriter. I have been running a syndicate at Lloyd's for ten years and have been a director of various insurance companies and Lloyd's managing agencies.

I have been in the Cooks Company since 1969 when my uncle, John Wright, (Master 1980), asked



The new Master, Peter Wright, greets the Lord Mayor of London

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which I would prefer for my 21st birthday: a contribution towards my first sports car or to become a Freeman of the Company. Much to my family's surprise I chose the Cooks. I never



did acquire the sports car, but am fast approaching the age when a second attempt might be expected. I have never regretted the decision one jot. Despite the Mini, Patricia still agreed to be my wife 27 years ago. I know she is looking forward to the coming year as much as I am and I am grateful to her for taking time out from running her art gallery (and most other things in our village in Suffolk).

Our two children are also now set to benefit from John's gift to me made all those years ago: William is already a Freeman and Katie hopes to become a Freemaideen when she finishes her degree next year. I am pleased to report that not only is Patricia a splendid cook but so are both of the children. As for me, I have been known to incinerate the odd item on the barbecue and I have a splendid appetite which, together with an enthusiasm for the art and craft of cookery, I hope will be sufficient qualifications to be Master of the Worshipful Company of Cooks.

Peter Wright, Master

New Freemen

At the Company meeting on the 29th November 2000 four new Freemen were admitted.

John Bennett is a caterer, and is presently Managing Director of Granada Food Services. He is also a member of the Hotel Catering and Institutional Management Association and counts among his interests cooking, wine, golf and his family. He is married to Kay and lives in West London.

James Saunders is the grandson of Honorary Freeman Max Saunders, and is currently spending a good deal of his time in Canada where he is presently Executive Chef of a restaurant in Ontario.

Robin Easton is the General Manager of Simpsons in the Strand. He and his wife Margaret live in South East London. Robin is a Member of the restaurant panel of the B.H.A and a Member of the Reunion des Gastronomes.

Benjamin Powell is the eldest son of Past Master Keith Powell and Jill. He is the first of the fifth generation of Powells to be associated with the Company, and is currently working as a surveyor in Cambridgeshire.

Company Photographer

➤ The attractiveness of the Company newsletter could be enhanced by more photographs and by informal photographs of people attending Company functions. This is especially so of the Company Ladies Night and our main Livery Dinners. Do we have any Member of the Company who is also a good photographer and who would be willing to risk the wrath of some Members but please others, by taking informal photographs during the Receptions? If you are interested in being appointed Company photographer by the Editor then please telephone 023 80321000 (day time).

The Academy of Culinary Arts

At the lunch following the July Court meeting the Master presented a Company plaque and scroll to Sara Stanes, the Director of the Academy of Culinary Arts. Also present was Richard Sheppard CBE of Langans Restaurants who is the President of the Management Committee of the Academy.

The Academy was founded in 1980 and is now widely regarded as Britain's leading association of the most respected executive chefs, restaurant managers and quality suppliers to the catering trade. Their principal function is to promote public awareness and appreciation of the highest standards of food, cooking and service by example and education; and also to encourage young people into the industry through training.



The Academy in this country is an offshoot of the equivalent academy in France, which was founded in 1883 by Joseph Favre a Swiss living in Paris with a particular interest in food. Since its establishment in this country the Academy has gone from strength to strength and was recently honoured by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who agreed to become the Academy's Patron.

Bournemouth University

As is customary, Professor John Edwards presented a verbal report to the July Court meeting on the progress made in the past year. On this occasion he was accompanied by Dr. Nigel Hemmington.

A new development is the establishment of a new periodical to be published quarterly and to be called *Food Service Technology*.

He also reported that the next international conference on culinary arts would be held in Cairo in April 2001. It is hoped that some Members will attend and support the Master, the late Master

Paul Herbage and Past Master Harold Taylor, who will represent the Company. The conference starts on Tuesday 17th April 2001 and finishes on Friday 20th April 2001. If any Member is interested then please contact the Clerk's office.

History Wanted

➤ It is intended to produce a supplement to the Company History by Spring 2001. If any Member of the Company has any documents or memorabilia relating to the Company, or indeed if anyone feels they have anything useful to contribute, then please contact the late Master, Paul Herbage.



Hackney College

Representatives of the Hackney College were present at the July Court lunch and your editor learned that during the past academic year the College has continued to be successful in recruiting students with a wide range of ability and they continue to offer special support to those with severe and moderate learning difficulties, and visual and/or hearing impairment. It is pleasing to report that the college publicly acknowledged their debt to our Company, which has enabled the college to install new cookers of modern design and fit one of their teaching kitchens with specially adapted equipment for those students who have special needs. Young Students are trained in preparing meals for themselves or others. More senior students can cook for invited guests, as well as being permitted to sell cakes to other students as an enterprise activity! In addition a number of individual students have benefited from the one to one training offered by the Cooks



Company post holder at the College who uses the facility of the training flat which is also financially supported by the Company.

Past Master Peter Herbage - an obituary

Past Master Peter Herbage passed away on the 16th October 2000 having not enjoyed good health since a stroke left him paralysed in March.

He was admitted to the Livery in October 1942 as the first of the third generation of the Herbage family to join the Cooks Company. War service saw Peter with the Artists Rifles and subsequently commissioned into the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. An insurance career that took Peter abroad delayed his progression on to the court.

After his return to the United Kingdom, Peter, Tania and the family - a son, Bryan and two daughters, Svetlana and Diana settled in Christchurch, Dorset where he opened a restaurant. Peter was one of only a small number

in the Company actually to practise the craft. Peter served the Company as Master from 1974-5 and again in 1982 for a short period following the death, in office, of Peter Sherrard.

Peter will be remembered for three particular contributions to the Company. It was partly due to his efforts in the early 1970's that the Company formed its association with the Army Catering Corps in 1975. A keen golfer, Peter was often to be found representing the Company through its Golf Society. As Historian, Peter, assisted by Past Master A. Goodinge, revised the 1966 History of the Company which was published to mark our Quincentenary in 1982 and at the time of his stroke he was working on a supplement to cover the last twenty years of the century.

A stalwart Court attender, Peter could be relied upon to pay attention to detail - in addition to his work on the history, the current Standing Orders are a testimony to his efforts. Peter's wise counsel will be sorely missed at Court meetings and our sympathies are with his family in their loss.

“LOGVEC”

The Livery October Group Vocational Education Committee, generally shortened to Logvec was set up in October 1994 with the aim of improving vocational education primarily within the boroughs of Hackney, Islington, Southwark and Tower Hamlets. This is achieved with the financial and practical help of the Livery Companies so that Logvec acts as a catalyst between the schools and the Livery. Several state schools in the boroughs immediately surrounding the City are now directly linked with Livery Companies, many through Logvec's help.

Logvec has enabled Livery Companies to find out how others are supporting apprenticeships and further education colleges and has been able to bring to the Government's attention any problems that have arisen. It has helped Companies and Liverymen to keep abreast of what is going on in the rapidly changing world of education and training.

Work within Logvec is entirely of a voluntary nature (apart from a part time secretary) and the City and Guilds make a small office available. Last year Logvec had a deficit of £4,062 and this was underwritten by the City and Guilds. About one third of the Livery Companies belong and all subscribe the same amount by way of annual subscription. If the number of subscribers can be increased then the subscription will remain unchanged.

There are two active working groups, the Adoption of Schools Working Party and the Learning and Skills working Group. The former has established relationships with 44 schools and has a waiting list of 10, mainly in the underprivileged areas of London. It gives advice on governorships, lectures, Livery Hall visits and vocational occupation career discussions, which prove helpful to young people. The latter focuses specifically upon post 16 vocational education; its objectives are to promote an understanding of the needs of young people and to channel the goodwill and expertise of the Livery to support them.

Working parties meet three times a year and are addressed regularly by representatives of the relevant bodies.

Information is disseminated to the Livery Companies at the Spring Seminar in May and at the AGM in October, where there is an address by a leading figure in the world of business, education or training. There is also a newsletter published in the summer.

In January 2000, Logvec organised a visit to the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell; I attended as your representative along with some 20 other Companies to see how officer cadets were trained. Most of the Companies attending had links with the RAF, but I was disappointed to hear that this particular area of learning had switched from in-house catering to Granada. The cadets I spoke to all said that in-house catering was vastly superior to other outsourcing arrangements and I was able to tell them a little of our Company's involvement with the armed services.

Logvec does a necessary and thoroughly worthwhile job in bringing together the schools that are in dire need of help and the Livery Companies who can contribute in various ways. It is an organisation of which the City can feel justifiably proud.

Assistant George Rees

New Snuff Box

➤ Past Master Michael Powell has secured a replacement for the snuff box which was presented by Past Master Herbert Powell in 1974. The replacement is a silver box which bears a splendid inscription which notes that it was wrestled for by men of Cumberland and Westmorland residing in London. It is dated April 9th 1841. It is also inscribed with a suitable reference to the generous gift made by Past Master Powell.



Photographing Food

Food, what a wonderful subject to write an article about.

I recently attended the Companies Ladies dinner at the Great Hall of St Bartholomew's Hospital. Whilst enjoying the fine feast and good company, my conversation with Michael Messent turned to food. He was surprised to learn that I am a food photographer and the gentleman opposite was a chef! A true Cooks dinner.

Having thought on Friday night that my work was finished for the week, somewhere between the white port and the red port I found I had agreed to write a thousand words about my profession for the Cooks Newsletter. Michael Messent can be very persuasive when he tries.

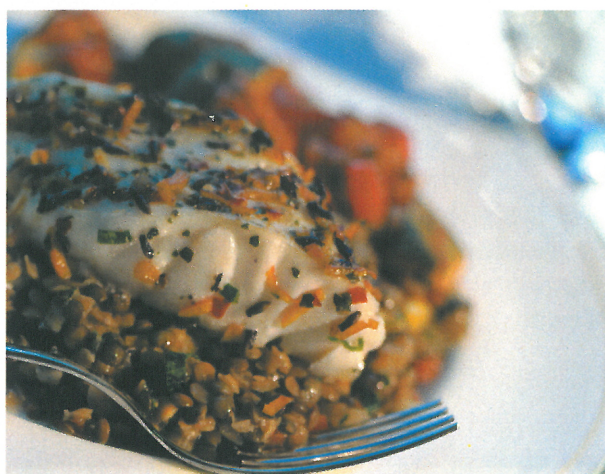
I have been a member of the Company since 1982 (the Cooks half millennium). My mother Ann Pollock and my sister Joanna Allsop are Freemaids. The Cooks lineage has been handed down through my mother's family, the Goodinges' for many generations. My Grandfather, Wallinger Goodinge, was an active member of the Cooks for many years. My attachment to food and drink has therefore been life long.

I was eighteen when my Godmother gave me a camera. This gift, although I did not realise it at the time, would change the course of my life completely. I started as an apprentice in London and have since set up my own studio in Camden. My fascination for food and still life photography with due respect to fashion and portrait photography, is that you can leave for a spot of lunch and the still life would still be there waiting for me to be suitably inspired.

Perfect I thought, so food and drink it has been for over ten years now. Yes we do get to eat and drink the goodies so I can confirm our clients do use the best ingredients. Magnums from Jacobs Creek have been a great success along with Veuve Clicquot.

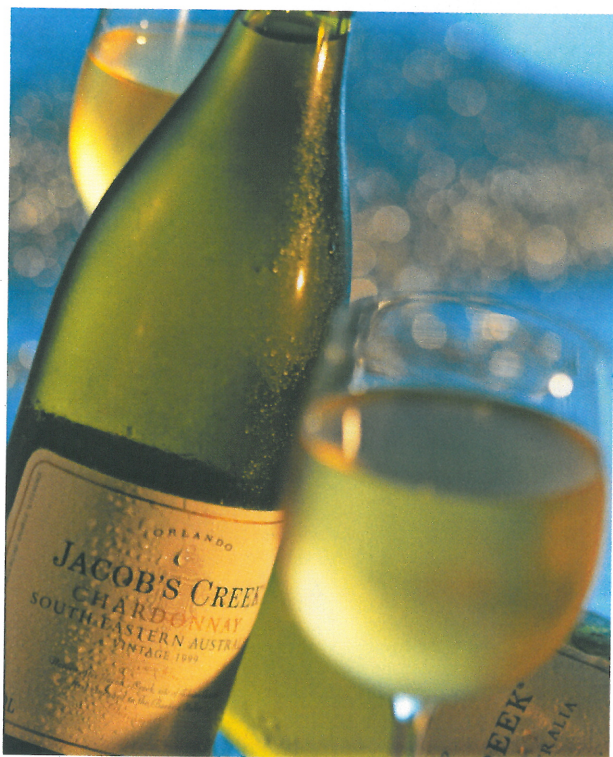
For your interest I have included four commissioned photographs and will briefly outline the process used.

The shot of 'Cod on a bed of lentils and ratatouille' was for a client who wanted some



recipe cards. I have a food stylist who creates unique recipes and the client on this occasion selected six that they wanted. In this particular shot, the fish had to be as fresh as possible, so bar going to the North Sea and catching it myself, the food stylist went to the fish market at 05.00 in the morning.

The brief to shoot the Jacob's Creek wine was interesting as we had to create sunny pictures with condensation on the bottles and glasses and this takes some doing in our climate. The technique that finally worked was to place everything in the deep freeze for a length of time and turn the heating up to maximum in the studio, lo and behold condensation! The easier way is to go to Orpheus Island on the Great Barrier reef, order a glass of white wine and watch the ocean whilst the condensation forms naturally on the glass. The bonus of the latter is that you can put the price of the airfare as a business expense!



Ice cream has the opposite problem to wine as the studio needs to be cool. A technique that we used for this shot was to place the scoops of mango and vanilla ice cream onto a block of dry ice, at minus 40 degrees Celsius. Once the ice cream has hardened it can then be placed into



the glass dish. The passion fruit and pureed mango sauce was poured over the top at the last minute. A shot was taken every minute as the ice cream melted which took ten minutes. This particular shot will be used as a front cover for a well-known kitchen mail order catalogue.

It was not so many years ago that a mixture of lard and other ingredients were used to create the right velvety texture of the ice cream. These days and quite rightly so, we have to shoot the real thing.

The antipasti shot was a photographer's delight as all the food could be at studio temperature.



The main aim was to keep the food looking as fresh as possible. The olives had some olive oil drizzled on at the last moment to enhance the shine. The key technical issue with anything that shines is to block out unwanted reflections. This shot for example took about 90 minutes to light appropriately.

I hope this article has gone some way to help you understand how the end result is achieved in the art of food and drink photography and that you may look at future pictures in a new light. If you want more information you can visit my web site on www.jonathanpollock.com or call me on 020 7387 8427.

Now I have said my piece, it is now time to enjoy the fruits of one's labour. Cheers!

Liveryman, Jonathan Pollock

Christ's Hospital and The Cooks

It is more than probable that the Cooks, in company with the Skinners, the Fishmongers, the Mercers and other City Livery Companies, responded to Sir Richard Dobbs' appeal in 1552 for charity in establishing a school for the 'fatherless and other poor men's children.' Ridley, Bishop of London, had preached before Edward VI, exhorting the rich to be merciful to the poor and willing those in authority to take practical steps in coming to their aid. The young King lost no time in requiring that the Lord Mayor take action and, 'not only travail, but report progress!' Sir Richard straightaway formed a committee of 30 leading citizens, who divided the poor into 3 classes - the orphans, the sick and the vagabonds and whores. He then appealed to the Wardens of the City Companies; and it is inconceivable that the Cooks' benevolence did not play a part in the founding of Christ's Hospital in the following year - a place of refuge and learning for those in that first category. St. Thomas's and St. Bartholemew's took care of the sick, and Bridewell was established for the down and outs and wanderers.

Although manuscript evidence cannot readily be traced before the mid 16th Century, the indication of an early link between school and Company is convincing but it is not until 1674 that firm evidence exists of this link in the form of the Will of John Phillips, 'Citizen and Cooke of London.' John Phillips bequeathed parcels of land which included wind and watermills, a wharf, ale house and orchard in West Ham - even fishing rights - upon trust for the education of children at Christ's Hospital, and in particular, he stipulated the inclusion of two poor children of deserving members of the Company. Indeed, the Company's rights of presentation in respect of this ancient benefaction, were, for many years, bestowed only on the child of a liveryman, and the principle of 'being in need' had still to be observed. For well over 300 years the Cooks have continued to present boys and girls to this exceptional institution, the most recent beneficiary having entered in September 2000.



Christ's Hospital in Newgate Street about mid C19

Christ's Hospital is unique and without parallel in our educational system. Entry is by no means easy, for the vital presentation has to be secured at an early date, followed by stiff examination and tough interview. This year 300 candidates competed for 100 places. Historically, qualification for admission has always been that of 'need of assistance.' This still obtains today, although tempered over the years, and is what distinguishes Christ's Hospital from the other great public schools.

Traditionally, the Lord Mayor honours Speech Day with his presence, an event also attended by our own Master and his wife. On these occasions the Senior Grecian gives an oration which is essentially, a report on the school year. The first such oration was given by Edmund Campion, who addressed Mary Tudor in 1553.

Successive Old Blues, the name by which former scholars are known, have never quite achieved Campion's saintliness, but many have excelled in widely ranging sphere - Constant Lambert and Colin Davis in music, Bernard Levin in journalism, John Edmunds in trade unionism, B.P.'s Lord Simon and Lamb and Coleridge, Pepys as Governor, Lord Mayors, Admirals,

Generals, and the greatly esteemed Barnes Wallis, to mention a few. Many have reason to thank this Company for their privileged start in life; for the beneficence of the Cooks which has enabled many deserving children to share the same educational experience as those luminaries and no doubt our present young and worthy nominee will have cause for pride and gratitude.

What remains a 'mystery' however, is whatever happened to the fishing rights!

Liveryman Sir Michael Tims

Paul Marsh

Members will know that Paul Marsh has not been in the best of health in recent years but for the time being, we retain the privilege and pleasure of his service as our Company Beadle.



Paul first came to the Innholders Hall in 1934 aged 5, and left it 60 years later aged 65. His father Gordon Marsh started work for the Innholders Company in 1934. He became the Beadle of the Innholders in 1950 and it was at about that time that Paul became increasingly involved in the catering side of the operation at Innholders Hall. Later in the 50s, Gordon Marsh developed a distinguished toast mastering career, and Paul took over the catering completely.

He met June on holiday in 1957 and they were married by the Master of the Innholders Company, the Reverend E.G. Turner, in 1964. June joined Paul at the Hall to help with the catering and became very proficient in taking charge of the preparation of the tables for banquets, and was of course always ready in time to greet guests for functions.

Paul became Beadle of the Cooks Company in

Resignation

➤ With regret the Court have accepted the resignation of the Reverend Bill Atkins as the Company's Honorary Chaplain. He has been in poor health of late and feels that the time has come to step down. At the Court meeting on the 29th November 2000, Past Master Reverend Keith Powell was appointed as the new Company Chaplain.

September 1963, but was familiar with the Company for many years before then.

In 1972 Gordon Marsh died and June and Paul took up residence at the Hall as Hall Keeper, and Beadle of the Innholders Company, as well as the Cooks Company and a number of other Companies. From 1972 until the Hall was closed for refurbishment in 1989, Paul and June developed the catering, making the Innholders Hall one of the most popular in the City.

After the refurbishment was completed, the Innholders decided that external caterers should be appointed to undertake catering for banquets at the Hall, as Paul was by then of an age when he felt unable to start up everything again, particularly as all his staff had dispersed in the intervening 2 years.

Although no longer directly involved in the catering for our functions, Paul has continued to be a familiar figure at all our functions. He now travels up from his home in Herne Bay to be with us, and we hope that he may feel able to continue to undertake this journey for as long as his health permits.

Appointment

➤ Bob Fox, the Hall Keeper at Innholders Hall, has been appointed Assistant Beadle of the Company and will assist Paul Marsh.



Company Golf

The 25th meeting of the Company's Golfers with the Army Caterers was held on the 4th August 2000 in superb weather over the two glorious courses at The Berkshire. The Cooks' team was the largest for some years and was well matched by many old friends in the Army team. Personal friendly rivalries from former matches were exploited in most cordial fashion.

The first of the morning 4 balls started twice. The Cooks were 2 down at the second green when the Greenkeeper came up on his buggy to advise that they were on the wrong course. 'But we always play the Blue in the morning.' However, they re-started on the Red course and won 4 and 2. We went in to the sandwich lunch 3-all. After lunch, both teams were fortified by players playing on just 18 holes. At the end of a splendid day's golf, the Army won 11-8. We were particularly pleased to see the Master and the Father of the Company as we came to the last couple of holes.

After golf, we repaired to St. Omer Officers Mess, where we were joined for a splendid dinner by The Master, Second Master and four Past Masters. The Army team were supported by several non-golfing members of the ACC Officers Dining Society.

The respective Captains spoke, welcoming the guests, thanking players for their sterling support, thanking the secretaries for their organisation, and toasting the health of the opposition teams. The Duff Cup was presented to the winning Army team.

The Master then spoke of the celebration of this 25th match, a little of the history and the great value which the Company places on this annual sporting occasion. He then presented an engraved decanter to Warden Michael Messent who was the only player to have played in every one of the 25 matches.

The formal proceedings of the evening were rounded off by Sidney Herbage, Father of the Company and previously Secretary of the Golf Society, calling all the diners to toast *The Match*.

Fixtures for 2001

Prince Arthur Cup -Walton Heath - Thursday
17th May 2001

Cooks Golf Day - Burnham Beeches -
Wednesday 6th June 2001

March v ACC - The Berkshire - Friday 3rd
August 2001

Freeman Bob Lawrenson, Captain of the Golf Society



The Newest City Freeman

On the 22nd November 2000 the Officers of the Company and their ladies attended a special Service at St. Paul's Cathedral to mark the Feast of St. Cecelia, and the event was followed by a charity banquet at the Guildhall in support of



the Musicians Benevolent Fund. The finish of the meal happily coincided with the attendance of Freeman William Wright at the Guildhall for the purpose of his Freedom Admission Ceremony in the Chamberlain's Court Room. It was a happy occasion for the Master and for Patricia, although the attendance of the combined might of the rest of the Officers and ladies may have been a source of slight embarrassment to William.

Bridge

➤ The next annual inter-Livery Bridge competition will take place on Monday 12th March 2001 at the Plaisterers Hall, starting at 5.30.p.m. There is no limit to the number of pairs a Company may enter, but one of the participants must be a Member of the Company they represent. The closing date for entry is 6th March 2001. There must be some good Bridge players out there. Is it not time that we Cooks made more of a showing at this event? Please contact the Clerk's office for further information.

Xmas Cards

At the Millennium Banquet last February the then Second Master was impressed by the Bishop of London's plea for funds for the proposed Centre for Peace and Reconciliation at St Ethelburga (the church in Bishopsgate destroyed by a terrorist bomb).

Our Master resolved to use their Xmas Card to send out to members this Xmas, but then discovered they had not produced one.

Undeterred his wife Patricia had one prepared at modest cost and a donation reflecting the commercial cost of a normal purchase has been sent to the appeal on the Company's behalf.



The Master with his sheep on London Bridge



Year End Report

When I wrote in July it seemed as though many of the Master's key events had already taken place. This was not the case. Sheep herding across London Bridge on the morning of the 27th June attracted over sixty Livery Masters in their robes and a fun time was had by all - the exercise of the ancient rights of Freeman attracting attention from the media as well as raising money for Barnardo's chosen Lord Mayor's Charity. This was followed, a few days later by the World Traders' Banquet at Greenwich when each table had to nominate someone to carve the sirloin of beef and loin of pork. The photograph shows your late Master rising to the challenge.

September started with a trip to the Black Country Living Museum, Dudley's rival to Ironbridge, which also offered a Livery day. Livery Masters trudging through a coal mine and sitting in class at the Victorian School were sights to be seen.

Our links with the Services continue to play an important part in the Master's Diary. The Royal Navy's Supply Officers' Dinner on HMS Raleigh was a memorable *out of town* event. I had hoped to go one better than Past Master Hodgson by visiting a submarine but service requirements meant it sailed the day before my visit so I had to content myself with HMS Sheffield instead. In the Wardroom I noted the link that particular ship has with the Fletchers Company.

Back on land, Rosemary and I enjoyed a good day at St. Omer Barracks with the Second Master, Warden and their wives looking at the work of the Training Centre. For the first time live victualling at the abattoir was included, whilst Peter and Michael tried their hands at cake decorating. A week later I found myself back at Aldershot presenting a special certificate to Mick Marshall for his particular contribution to Military Catering.

Earlier in the year Rosemary was told by another Master's Lady that people do not hear very much about the Cooks. The Millennium Year has given me an opportunity to enjoy the company of some 22 other Livery Companies and so spread the word about what we do. Some ancient companies invite Masters to Church services and formal events whereas many of the newer Companies have established lectures and receptions as part of the



circuit. Rosemary and I have been able, through these events, to meet colleague Masters and share information on charitable activities and other work. I also used these contacts to recruit support for my defibrillator project. As a relatively young Master I have felt able to put a fair amount of effort into promoting the Company and have joined the Committee of the Millennium Masters Association. Some of you will have seen me out at the Lord Mayor's Show that is truly a great City day even if the weather was a bit inclement. I do not know when the Cooks last had a float (if ever) in their own right in this colourful spectacle but this year Livery Companies received a good *plug* in the TV coverage.

The year ended with the St. Cecilia celebrations and because 2000 marks the Quincentenary of the Musicians Company all your Officers processed into St. Paul's Cathedral with most of the other Livery Companies. The music and choral accompaniment to the service were of the highest standard, after which we all lunched in Guildhall.

The Master's Year is an experience I will never forget. I cannot but conclude with thanks to my Officers and Clerk and their ladies for their support and the Court and Livery for allowing me to serve in this ancient office.

The Late Master, Paul Herbage