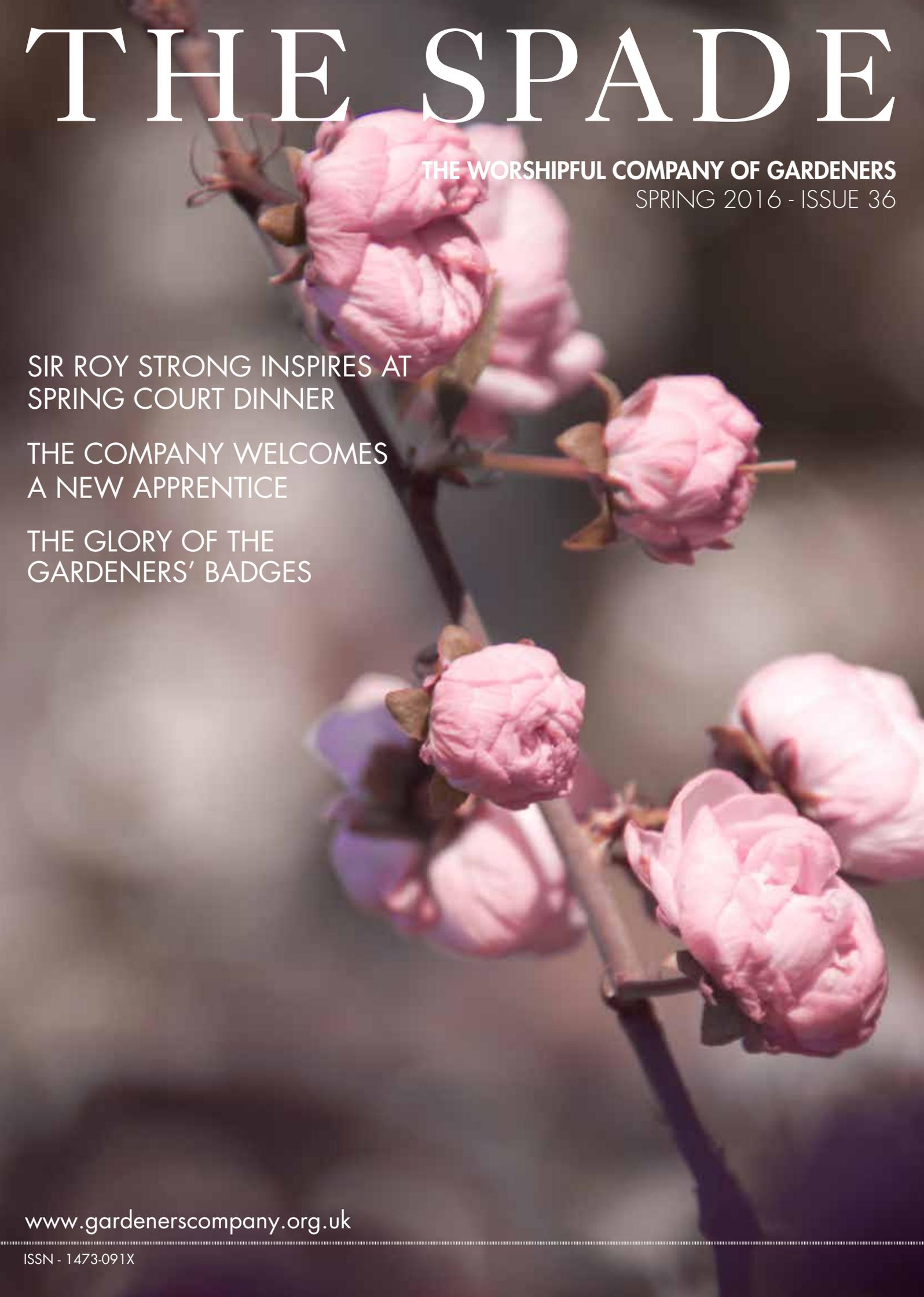


THE SPADE



THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS
SPRING 2016 - ISSUE 36

SIR ROY STRONG INSPIRES AT
SPRING COURT DINNER

THE COMPANY WELCOMES
A NEW APPRENTICE

THE GLORY OF THE
GARDENERS' BADGES

www.gardenerscompany.org.uk

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THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS

Master

Bernard Williams

Upper Warden

Paul Rochford

Renter Warden

David Green

Spadebearer

Margaret Prior

Clerk

Jeremy Herrtage
0207 149 6696

clerk@gardenerscompany.org.uk

The Gardeners Company
25 Luke Street
London EC2A 4AR

Welcome to your Spring Spade. Feedback is always very helpful, as are new ideas for articles. Most of the items in this issue are available on the Company Blog, usually at greater length and with more photographs. If you have not already done so, do obtain your user name and password from the Office and visit the Gardeners' Company website

John Gilbert, Editor.
john@john-gilbert.co.uk



Appropriately themed table decorations at Vintners' Hall.



Sir Roy Strong is welcomed to the event.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2016

10th May	Charity Dinner in aid of Future Gardeners, Carpenters' Hall
17th May	Fairchild Court, Lecture and Supper, St. Giles, Cripplegate
19-21st May	Courson/Chantilly
24th May	Chelsea Supper, Farmers' Club
2-7th Jun	Visit to Slovenia
25th Jun	Garden Party, Gardens of the Rose, St. Albans
6th Jul	Installation Court and Dinner, Clothworkers' Hall
12th Jul	Olympic Park Walk
19-21st Jul	Tom Stuart-Smith garden visit
13-16th Sep	Visit to the Black Country
21-22nd Sep	London Park visit
4th Oct	Harvest Festival Service and lunch, St Etheldreda's Church
28th Oct	RHS Lecture and Supper
8th Nov	Autumn Court and Dinner, Carpenters' Hall
15th Dec	Tradescant Court and Lunch
15th Dec	Christmas Carol Service, St Stephen Walbrook

Dates correct at time of publication

SPRING COURT DINNER AT HOGWARTS

Gardeners and their guests assembled for the Spring Court and Dinner at Vintners' Hall, the fine old façade in Upper Thames Street hemmed in by modern glass and concrete, trapped between river and the busy road. Once through the doors, we entered a cosy lobby with fire burning in the grate, Christopher Hanrahan our cloaked Beadle welcoming all inside.

I arrived with my family a little early for my admission to the Livery; despite a little nerves all went well and I was warmly welcomed by all at the Court, and what a Court! Aside from its noble members the room itself seemed – as my son observed – straight from Hogwarts. I didn't notice any of the fine paintings offering animated congratulations but the room was steeped in a history going back to the 1600's.

The Worshipful Vintners pre-date our own venerable company by many years but we share a long and successful history. Upstairs the reception room walls attested to that history with charters signed and sealed by Elizabeth 1, Charles II, and a note from Chaucer. Mention of growing vines and gathering crops revealed links between the two companies.

In the early evening as the guests arrived the company's fur-trimmed livery gown kept the cool of the upstairs at bay until I was wrestled from it by Major David our assistant clerk. As the champagne flowed the friends warmed the halls with animated chatter until dinner was called and a dignified throng headed for the magnificent Great Hall.

At dinner those links became clearer in the presence of Simon Leschallas the Master Vintner; Stephen Bellamy-James, Master Fruiterer; Michael Neal, Master Carpenter; Andrew Gill, President of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture and our own Bernard Williams, all truly Masters of the green world, representing a cooperative approach to future challenges and opportunities.

This was the theme of the heartfelt after-dinner speech by our principal guest Sir Roy Strong who took us on a journey through his own career, his successes and regrets. Through his words we visited his beautiful garden at The Laskett, now gifted to Perennial, the Gardeners' charity. He took us onwards with his thoughts on garden design, training of gardeners for the future, our garden heritage and its conservation and promotion - a whirlwind tour of an iconic life.

Preserving the theme of Viticulture and Horticulture, Assistant Nicholas Woolf welcomed guests with poetic and humorous greetings. Fine wine and excellent port, as you would expect in the Vintners' Hall, flowed during the toasts and responses, and a very full cup was had by all as the Loving Cup wove its way amongst puzzled and knowing diners.

Report by Ian Barrow

All photographs by Michael Warren



Sir Roy Strong proposes the traditional Toast to the Company.



Assistants (L-R) Helen Knight, Cindy Peck and Kate Jones enjoy the pre-dinner reception.



The Master, principal guests and Court members gather before processing into the dining hall.

PLANTING FOR THE 'WOW' FACTOR

The popular workshop series at Capel Manor College's Enfield site continues on the 14th May with "Enhancing Colour in the Garden": guidance on how to increase summer colour impact.

It will be a 'hands-on' day and participants will learn how to create vibrant and colourful borders. The use of tropical and sub-tropical plants to achieve a 'wow' factor will be explored, as will traditional annuals and plants good for infilling border gaps. Planting containers for maximum effect will also be covered.

The day costs £48, runs from 10.30am to 3.45pm and includes light lunch with wine, tea and cake. Booking forms have been circulated and are available for download on the Company Blog. They should be sent to Past Master Nicholas Evans, Capel Cottage, Bullsmoor Lane, Waltham Cross, EN7 5HR no later than 7th May.

NAVIGATING UNCHARTED TERRITORY

Robert Howard's View from the City

Global equity markets are recovering from their February lows. At the end of March, the President of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, announced a bold set of measures to ease monetary conditions in the Eurozone, with more focus on quantitative and credit easing.

The ECB actions may have helped markets, but other factors have also boosted sentiment. Emerging markets, excluding China, have rebounded strongly, driven by a recovery in the oil price and a weaker dollar. The Brent oil price has now rallied, briefly passing \$40 per barrel compared to under \$30 in February – and the relentless rise in the dollar appears to have come to a halt. From mid-2014 to early 2016, the trade-weighted dollar appreciated by 24%, but since peaking this year it has fallen by 5%. Also, in the United States the S&P500 has recovered to within 5% of its all-time high, helped by some better economic data.

So far, European and Japanese shares have performed poorly in 2016. Inflation expectations in Europe and Japan have fallen and it was assumed that the leading central banks had reached their limits of monetary effectiveness with a zero interest rates policy (ZIRP).

However, both the Bank of Japan and the ECB are now pursuing a negative interest rate policy (NIRP) to revive growth and bring about inflation. The ECB cut all its main interest rates. Its Quantitative Easing programme will be increased by €20bn per month to a total €80bn until March 2017 and investment grade corporate bonds issued by non-banks will be included. Four new TLTROs (total longer-term refinancing operations) will start in April with interest rates potentially as low as the deposit rate.

The big question is whether a negative interest rate policy will work. Switzerland adopted a negative interest rate policy in December 2014 and in January 2015 the deposit rate was reduced to -0.75%. The Swiss economy is expected to return to growth of 1% this year, but there is still deflation.

The negative interest rate policy has not really helped the domestic credit markets, as mortgage rates have increased. Although it is only a short time since the ECB introduced its own negative deposit rate (-0.1% in December and cut to -0.3% in January), to date it has not provided any economic traction.

The ECB has now reduced its inflation forecast further to 0.1% (from 1.0%) for 2016, well below the 2% inflation target, and its GDP estimate has been revised down to 1.4% (from 1.7%). Eurozone unemployment remains high at 10.3%, and although the ECB is doing "whatever it takes", there is still only marginal help from Eurozone fiscal policies and structural reforms.

It appears that the recent rally in markets could be approaching an important crossroads. If the bold measures from the ECB were to be combined with a more cautious US monetary policy, together with a stable Chinese economy (growth target of 6.5%-7% for 2016) and a further recovery in oil prices, markets could continue to rally - but as we know, we are in uncharted territory.



Snowdrops as far as the eye can see.

GLORIOUS GALANTHUS AT WELFORD PARK

Welford Park was basking in wonderful sunshine; it was a very good start. We were met and taken around by Deborah Puxley, who lives in the manor house with her husband James and their children. She has a passion for snowdrops.

Deborah explained that Welford Park is situated on the site of a monastery and church, one of only two remaining round-towered churches in the country. After the Dissolution, Henry VIII used the house as a deer-hunting lodge; the King then leased the property to Sir Thomas Parry and, after passing through various hands, it was inherited by Eleanor Wrottesley who had married William Eyre (laterly Archer) in the early 1700's.

The entrance gates are adorned with a wrought iron boot with spur, which is the Eyre family crest; and with us in our Gardeners' party we had a descendant of the Eyre family who was wearing a boot and spur signet ring – the lovely Jane Lyons, daughter of the late Past Master Roger Payton.

Deborah led us through the gardens with aplomb, explaining that the monks used snowdrop leaves for mal-de-tete, today known as Alzheimer's; the extracts of the plant are today synthesised for the drug Reminyl.

There are over 50 varieties of snowdrop in the gardens. Some of Deborah's favourites are *Galanthus nivalis* 'Lady Elphinstone' which has lovely yellowy petals; *G. elwesii*, which has its origins in the Crimea and has huge almost tulip-like leaves, and *G. plicatus*, also from the Crimea, which has funnel-like leaves to assist water droplets to travel down to the bulb. Deborah's top tip was not to buy a snowdrop that doesn't have a bloom on it.

She left us to wander through the unmanaged woods which, carpeted with swathes of snowdrops, are extremely beautiful. If you didn't join our day out, I recommend a visit next year. Truly exceptional, not to forget Welford Park is the location of the Great British Bake Off!

Report and photograph by Tara Holland Prior



The magnificent Crathes Castle and Gardens, one of the many attractions close to Craigendarroch - see Raffle below (photograph by Hartlepoolmarina).

CHARITY DINNER TO FUND THE FUTURE

Preparations are well advanced for the Master's Charity Dinner to be held at Carpenters' Hall on the 10th May. Proceeds from the event will go to fund Future Gardeners, the Company's exciting new project to help disadvantaged young people into education and employment.

A Royal Freeman will be present at the glittering event which will begin with a 'Fizz Reception' accompanied by a jazz quartet. Diners will sit at tables of 10 and tickets are still available.

Gardener, writer and television personality David Domoney will be the compere for the evening and will auction a fantastic range of prizes generously donated by members of the Company and other supporters. These include a number of luxury holidays, a piece of fine jewellery, a fully-catered day on a Belgian sea-going barge, an Edwardian "Singalong Evening", a Raymond Blanc lunch for two, rock festival tickets and a Champagne Afternoon at the Australian High Commission.

Company members and supporters have also donated a large number of smaller items for a Tree of Life. Buy a mystery envelope without knowing what's inside. You will get a surprise and an item worth twice the price on the envelope.

A raffle will also be held and this will give an opportunity for those unable to attend the evening to contribute. Thanks to a kind donation by a Liveryman you are offered the opportunity to win a one-week self-catering holiday for up to six persons in a luxury lodge in the picturesque Hilton Craigendarroch Time Share Development located near Ballater and Balmoral in Royal Deeside for the week beginning Sunday 23rd April 2017.

This is a superb resort offering a wide range of leisure activities including golfing, walking and visiting famous gardens and castles including the inestimable Crathes Castle and Garden and some nearby military forts. The winners will be responsible for their own travel to and from the resort.

Those attending the Charity Dinner in Carpenters' Hall will find a numbered envelope containing a card bearing the same number at their table place. You will be invited to put £20 in the envelope and remove the numbered card which you will wave excitedly if your number is announced as the winner when the envelopes have been collected and the draw made towards the end of the evening. There will be extra numbered envelopes on the table in the hope that you



Celebrity gardener David Domoney, compere and auctioneer for the evening (photograph by Trevor Adams).

will want to double (or triple or quadruple) your chances. Please come with the necessary cash or a cheque.

If you are unable to attend the dinner but would like to join in the raffle please send a cheque (made payable to the Gardeners' Company) to the Clerk and indicate how many tickets you wish to buy. In the event of your number coming up the Clerk will notify you the following day.



Mike Fitt shares his wealth of knowledge in Regent's Park.

NEW ALUMNI GROUP IS LAUNCHED

Under the guidance of Assistant Heather Barrett-Mold, the Company has formed a group of prizewinning alumni and their first get-together was held in Regent's Park last October. The Master was present, the future of the group was discussed and Assistant Mike Fitt gave a talk on the history of the Royal Park.

All members of this new group have previously been awarded prizes by the Company and most of them are now working in horticulture. The alumni organisation hopes to provide a support and information network, occasional visits to places of interest and opportunities for continuing professional development. It hopes to have a website linked to that of the Company.



MANSION HOUSE FLOWERS COME TO LIFE

The Mansion House was as pretty as a picture with flower arrangements that came to life in a way that recalled 'Painting the Modern Garden', this spring's blockbuster exhibition at the Royal Academy. During the Reception in the Salon the floral compositions were held in large gold picture frames with battery-operated candles and grapes flowing out of the frames—absolutely stunning and a great credit to Stephen Crisp and his team.

Later in the Egyptian Hall, the dining tables held smaller frames with bright spring flowers and fruits flowing onto the tables.

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, and both Sheriffs and their spouses joined us for champagne prior to going into the Banquet.



Following the delicious dinner, the Loving Cup, the sung grace and the toasts, Upper Warden Paul Rochford introduced our guests for the evening. They included: His Excellency the Dutch Ambassador, Simon J. H. Smits; Pietro Buonfrate, Deputy Master, Basel Gardeners; Stephan Gassmann, Master, Basel Gardeners; Allan McLaren, Deacon of the Incorporation of Gardeners of Glasgow; David John Oliver Dickson, Clerk to the Incorporation of Gardeners of Glasgow and Dr. Andrew Mair, Master Wax Chandler.

Musical entertainment for the evening was provided by a trio of young opera singers who performed a programme of classics including some that became 'sing-alongs'! There was something special and 'in the family' about the evening's speeches, especially as the Lady Mayoress, Lady Juliet Mountevans, is one of our Liverymen. The Rt. Honourable, the Lord Mayor, Alderman the Lord Monteans, gave the response on behalf of the guests, and cleverly wove many of our activities into the programme of his year and his charitable efforts. This correspondent felt it was a particularly warm and generous speech which ended with the Toast to the Company.

The Master gave the Response. He first recognized Robert Howard, Court Assistant and newly elected Alderman, who is continuing a long family tradition of service to the City. Then he presented the Lord Mayor with a donation toward his charities for the year.

This year marks the anniversary of the birth of Capability Brown and the Master made a connection to his charity for the year, Future Gardeners. We have always been a nation of fine plantsmen and women and the Company can help continue that tradition. All present were then asked to join the Master for a Stirrup Cup in the Salon, bringing a glittering evening to a most pleasant conclusion.

Report by Harriet Fraunfelder

Photos from top: The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress are welcomed to the banquet by the Master and Mistress. Steward Catriona Balfour with Steward Richard Capewell (right) and Steward Christopher Evans. As pretty as a picture: one of the stunning flower arrangements. Singing for their supper: three young opera singers provided the musical entertainment.

All photograph by Michael Warren



The Upper Warden's badge.



The Renter Warden's badge.



The Clerk's badge: Crossed quills.

THE GARDENERS' BADGES: JEWELS TO BE PROUD OF

Jeremy Herrtage, the Gallant Clerk, inspects the Company regalia

Amidst a plethora of attractive officers' badges across the Livery Movement, I believe we can truly say that those of the Gardeners' Company rank among the best.

We are fortunate as a Company that the Wardens' and Clerk's badges were all presented at the same time (1897) by the then Assistant William Thomas Crossweller (Master 1906) and, as you can see from the pictures, were made pretty much to the same design.

All are silver-gilt and enamel and each is inscribed on the back to indicate whose badge it is and with the words: "Presented to The Worshipful Company of Gardeners by William Thomas Crossweller F.R.INST. M.S.A. F.Z.S. Member of the Court of Assistants in commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria June 1897."

The Clerk's badge probably gets the most wear and has been showing more silver than gold until recently, when Past Master Daniel Caspi kindly removed it from me and had it re-gilded. It now looks even more splendid and, despite my adding the crossed quills of a clerk to the ribbon, I still get called "Master" by other masters and members of other liveries!

The two Wardens' badges are similar and again, in comparison with most other liveries' wardens' badges, are almost twice the size of the majority and infinitely more decorative.

The "pièce de résistance" is the Master's Badge as you would expect. Purchased by the Company in 1891 it was repaired by Lord Gainsborough (Master 1968). Although it is logged as being in gold and enamel, it was widely thought to be silver-gilt like the others – there were no hall-markings to distinguish it.

During Past Master Daniel Caspi's year of office – which was also the Queen's Diamond Jubilee - he very generously added a 60 point diamond to the bottom of the badge in celebration thereof and had it checked at the Assay Office where it was found to be solid 18 carat gold (that put the insurance up!). It was further enhanced by Past Master Nick Evans in 2014 with the addition of Past Master HRH the Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex's personal cipher with his permission in celebration of his year as Master. You can see it above the City of London Crest in the picture.

Next time you are speaking with the Master, Wardens and Clerk at one of our events, do take the opportunity to have a close look at these masterpieces. They are truly splendid, a privilege to wear and well worth a look.



The Master's badge: the pièce de résistance.



Many more pictures available on our members website

FLOWERS IN THE CITY STILL BLOOMING

Helen Knight explains how our competition works and how it continues to make a difference in the City

The original idea was sown by the Court in 1948 when London was recovering after the war with many blitzed and forlorn sites. Something was needed to brighten the City and after discussions with the London Gardens Society, a Competition for the Best Window Box or Balcony Display was launched in 1949.

During the 1950s the award scheme went from strength to strength. For the Festival of Britain in 1951, the Lord Mayor wrote a letter to support an appeal by the Master. This was sent to hundreds of City firms asking them to install window boxes. This received an enthusiastic response with nearly 2,000 window boxes lining the Festival opening route to St Paul's.

For the Queen's Coronation in 1953 many City firms again answered the call and window boxes became the fashion.

During the 1960s, the award scheme was reviewed and renamed "Window Box Awards". The emphasis shifted away from horticultural excellence towards the "decorative contribution to the beauty and gaiety of the City". An association with the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association was formed and the strapline "Flowers in the City" was adopted. The City Corporation also gave its support.

In 1985 the scheme reverted to being run solely by the Company with the support of the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of the City of London. Many new trophies have been added over the years. These have included an Atrium trophy in the 1980s, the best Floral Street in the City in 1992, an Indoor Display Award in 2003 and a Livery Hall Trophy in 2008. The newest award, introduced this year, is the Skyline trophy to recognize the trend in roof gardens and green walls.

Following a major review in 1997 it was decided to divide the awards into Summer and Winter Campaigns. The judges, all members of The Worshipful Company of Gardeners, visit their areas twice in each period and provide recommendations for trophies and plaques. Final judging for those put forward for trophies is conducted by the Master, Chairman, Secretary and head of judges, Ron Froud. Plaques are given to reward and encourage effort. They are produced in different colours for each season and are displayed on window boxes and buildings throughout the City.

The Summer Campaign has three overall categories. The first is for displays of window boxes, hanging baskets, tubs, troughs and pots. The second is for Garden Displays and the third is a number of General Awards including the Master's Special Award, given at the Master's discretion. In total there are 15 trophies awarded. The award ceremony takes place in the Mansion House to which the prizewinners, judges and all the members of the committee are invited.

The Winter competition is specifically aimed at brightening the City in the dull dark days of midwinter. There are four trophies awarded for the best displays in the City and one for the best of the best. The prize-giving for the Winter competition is held at Cutlers' Hall. The Committee are always keen to hear from those who would like to become judges. Chairman, Past Master Louise Robinson says: "Becoming a judge is not only worthwhile, but an excellent way to become more engaged with the Company's objectives and to meet other members of the Company. Flowers in the City is one way in which we can raise the profile of the Company in the City whilst enhancing the lives of those who both work and live there".

RON'S MUSIC ROOM IS IN FULL SWING

We reported two years ago on the fund-raising efforts being made by friends of the late Liveryman Ron Haylock to create a music room



The winner of the Dick Balfour Trophy in last year's Summer Competition: Saddlers' Hall in Gutter Lane. Photograph by Michael Warren.

at the Christel House School in Cape Town.

Funds were raised, a school band formed and, in November of last year, the Ron Haylock Music Room was officially opened and dedicated at a special ceremony.

Ron was a keen supporter of music at this South African institution, encouraging students to make the most of their opportunities to learn and enjoy music. According to the school, the music programme is now in full swing with hundreds of children learning music and playing an instrument thanks to the generosity of supporters from around the world.

The school says: "Thank you to all of you who made this possible - especially to those who helped to launch and organize the Appeal, you know who you are! It is a magnificent achievement and a wonderful lasting legacy in Ron's name".

The young musicians can be seen in action in a video of the opening ceremony. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfrrHST-ths>

ROAMING THE SEVERN AND WYE VALLEYS

The Master led a five-day visit in early September last year to a range of wonderful gardens in the Severn and Wye valleys. Reports by Corinne Knowles, Ann Underwood, Marjorie Dowbiggin, Pamela Hawley and Ann Rawlings

The Butterfly Garden, Cheltenham

There were no butterflies, but a good nursery of plants for sale and then an astonishing collection of wooden huts and greenhouses used for a huge variety of purposes and all manned by many enthusiastic young men and women from schools and colleges within a 50-mile radius. They are all disabled in one way or another and wholly committed to helping Liveryman Chris Evans make a go of the enterprise.

There was one shed where wooden pallets were being converted into furniture, a huge old greenhouse where thousands of old DVDs were being broken up into their component parts so they were not used for landfill. A fascinating collection of old garden tools was being carefully cleaned and oiled for reuse or to create a museum. Altogether, Chris Evans gives employment to over 100 students in many and varied ways and the passion he feels in helping them is reflected in the way they respond to him.

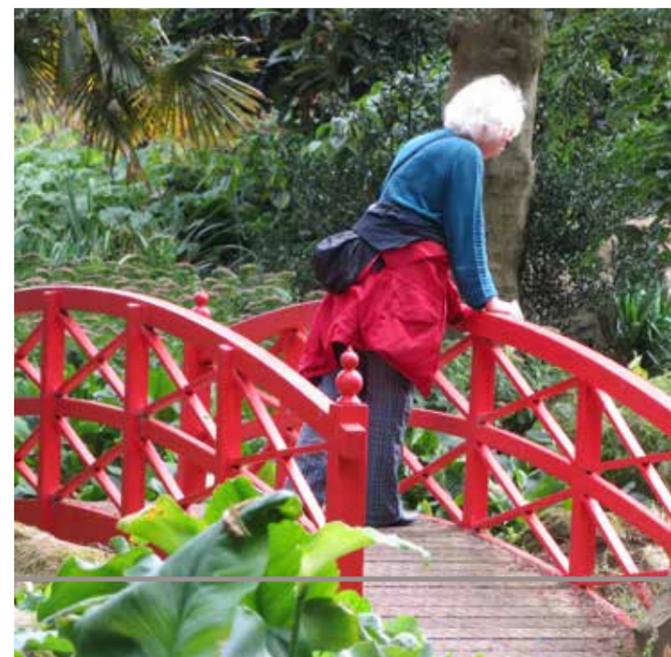
The Dragon Orchard and The Laskett

We were greeted at the Dragon Orchard by Norman Stanier whose 22-acre orchard has been tended by the same family for over 90 years.

He gave us a fascinating insight into the heritage and tradition of cider-making and apple juice production. A combination of excellent soils, a perfect mesoclimate and good orchard management has produced some of the best fruit in the UK.

We could have lingered but it was time to continue to the Laskett Gardens, one of the largest private formal gardens to be created in England since 1945. They are the amazing creation of the historian Sir Roy Strong and his late wife, the designer Dr Julia Trevelyan Oman.

Its stunning transformation over nearly four decades is a visual expression of their happy marriage and a reflection of their creative talents in the arts. Strong architectural structures abound and the garden features a series of stunning garden rooms, vistas, ascents and descents.



A pause for reflection at Highnam Court Gardens.



Norman Stanier, our host at the Dragon Orchard.

Highnam Court and the Three Choirs Vineyard

Most of Friday was spent at Highnam Court Gardens and the first thing that struck the group was a wood carving of a fox, carved from the stump of a tree in the car park. We soon realised that such carvings were the highlight of the gardens.

Originally laid out in 1840, by 1874 Highnam was one of the finest gardens in England but was neglected in the 20th Century until the property was bought by Roger Head in 1994. He has since restored the house and gardens, also adding new areas to complement the original design.

Our final stop was at Three Choirs Vineyard where we had an unusual wine-tasting. We were greeted with a glass of sparkling wine and we then carried our glasses, regularly refilled with different wines, as we toured the vines and the whole wine-making process.

Brobury House Gardens and Hampton Court (Herefordshire)

The eight acres of Brobury House Gardens have been evolving since Victorian times when the site was a vegetable plot for the Vicarage.

Wonderful mature trees gave grandeur and structure to the site as did the terracing. A number of water features with quiet pools and ponds added to the restful feel of the garden. The planting, however, was not without excitement and the stand of white paper Birches in a shaded area was breathtaking and unexpected.

The afternoon was at Hampton Court where we spent two hours of happy browsing in the Victorian walled gardens adjacent to the castle. These have been recently restored and redesigned.

Westbury Court Garden

Westbury Court Garden is a rare example of a late 17th Century formal water garden, typical of a small estate of that time. The creator was Maynard Colchester. The garden was in an extremely poor state when it was purchased by the National Trust in 1967 and it was the first scholarly garden restoration undertaken by the Trust.

The unabridged version of this article is available on the Company Blog.

Photographs by Jeremy Herrtage.



Temple Church was beautifully dressed for the occasion.

NEW IDEAS AT THE EDEN PROJECT

Members of the Gardeners' Company gathered to hear a most interesting RHS lecture by Gordon Seabright, Director of the Eden Project and the man responsible for the next phase of exciting ideas and challenges.

He began his lecture in Vincent Square with slides and took us back to the very beginning of the Eden Project in the disused china clay pit of 15 years ago before bringing us up to the present day.

Plans are now underway to create colourful flower beds surrounding the walkways to encourage visitors to explore the attractive landscape.

Members were very interested in the new scheme to promote horticultural degree students and apprenticeships for young gardeners. It was a pleasure to listen to Gordon who is so enthusiastic about the challenges ahead. (The Master's recent visit provided an opportunity for members to see the progress).

The Master then guided us to a nearby restaurant for an excellent dinner prepared and served by young students of the Westminster School of Art, concluding a very interesting and enjoyable evening.
Report by Janet Hammond

RIVER COTTAGE WINS GARDENERS' AWARD

This year's Prince Edward Award for Excellence in Horticulture has been won by River Cottage near Axminster, the headquarters of television chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. The centre features an extensive kitchen garden and cookery and chef schools. The award will be presented by the Master at a special event there on the 28th of June.

GARDENERS SING FOR THEIR LUNCH

Wonderful displays of flowers arranged by Liveryman Stephen Crisp and his team greeted the many cheerful members of the Company who attended the Gardeners' Harvest Festival at the magnificent Temple Church, London. Beautiful organ recitals and heartily sung hymns were the order of the day.

Our Master Bernard Williams read the lesson - the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount. The history of the Magna Carta, it's contents and connection with the Temple, were fully and entertainingly explained in an address by the Master of the Temple Church, The Reverend and Valiant Robin Griffith-Jones, wearing a splendid embroidered cape specially commissioned to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the signing of the historic document.

The service concluded with a rousingly sung National Anthem. Members and their guests then walked to the Yacht moored on the Thames chatting to friends and renewing acquaintances along the way. A very convivial time was spent on board with fine white wine and a buffet lunch. The Master gave a rousing speech welcoming the four new liverymen and one new freeman who had been admitted to the Company at the Harvest Court earlier in the day. Senior Past Master Tom Gough paid a vote of thanks to the Master.

Most excellent weather and fine views of the Thames completed a most happy and memorable day.

Report by Roger Dungey, Photograph by John Gilbert

A VERY SPECIAL VISIT TO HIGHGROVE

Assistant Heather Barrett-Mold reports on a highly prized day out with Prince of Wales Trophy finalists

The Prince of Wales Perpetual Challenge Trophy is given to the horticultural student who, in the eyes of the judges, most demonstrates a valid commitment to sustainable horticultural practices. In 2015 it was presented to Sid Hill from Duchy College at the Installation Dinner.

The judges were Debs Goodenough, Head Gardener to TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall; Bob Sherman, previously Chief Horticultural Officer at Garden Organic; Senior Past Master Ramsay Shewell-Cooper and myself. We drew up a shortlist from the applications and interviewed the three finalists.

Debs then very kindly organised for the three finalists, together with a guest each, to go on a very private tour of the organic gardens at Highgrove. The visit was highly prized and enjoyed. Julia Lock from Moulton College wrote the following as part of a 'thank you' to Debs, Bob and myself:

"Every area that we were taken through was a feast for the eyes, with so many colours and organic forms tying all aspects together. Even the setting of the garden in a broader landscape was a wonderful thing to see. Loved the avenues of trees stretching away from the front of the house.

Anyhow I was so taken with the place that I had to do a sketch when I got home lest my brain ever forget, which is doubtful. One memory I shall treasure. I am honoured to have had the opportunity to share it with my mum too who also enjoyed the day very much indeed".



FUTURE GARDENERS SCHEME FLOATS AT THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

Eighteen Liverymen and family members making a party of 25 braved the rain to support Master Bernard in The Lord Mayor's Show procession and to launch the Future Gardeners project.

As the Gardeners' two floats passed the Mansion House grandstand, some opportunistic guerilla gardening took place. Banners, surrounded by colourful planting, were unveiled at the entrance to Bank station directly opposite the Lord Mayor and his party of guests. The aim was to highlight the Company's ambitious pre-apprenticeship scheme to introduce young, disadvantaged people to horticulture.

The stunt was remarked on by the BBC TV commentator and the strategic placing of the banners and planting meant that the Company's message was visible during much of the television coverage.

The Gardeners' second float was sponsored by Bartlett Trees, Ernest Doe, Capel Manor College and Paul Cable who also drove the tractor. It was accompanied by a team of Bartlett "Treepeople" carrying shrubs on their backs and a group of enthusiastic young people from BOST (Bankside Open Spaces Trust), one of our key partners in the Future Gardeners scheme.

And what a grand occasion it was to celebrate the 800th year of the Lord Mayor's Show. There were 146 floats by organisations around London and farther afield - from The Sea Cadets to Livery Companies, Great Ormond Street Hospital and the AA. There were 7,000 participants in all and huge crowds along most of the four-mile route. Military and school bands helped to keep our spirits up.

Following the massacre in Paris on the previous day the whole procession and the City fell silent for two minutes at 11 am in an atmosphere of sombre reflection - a poignant reminder of how vulnerable we all are to these threats.

The Gardeners' floats were well received by the crowds at Mansion House and the mood was even more joyful as we passed the Church of St Mary-le-Bow with the bells pealing out across the City. What a cacophony of sound - bells, bands, cheering crowds! The procession featured 24 marching bands, 200 horses, two reindeer, a flying pig, a motorcycle stunt team, and the latest James Bond car.

Over a packed lunch on the Embankment we were entertained by music from the Great Ormond Street Hospital float and could at close hand inspect the AA lead vehicle - registration AA1 displayed on the Renault Park Phaeton dated 1905, owned by the AA for the last 50 years and kept in running order by Dennis the custodian for the last 15 years. Memorable too was the float of the Paviers with its large, pink flying pig - recognising their early work in the City cleansing the streets and rounding up stray pigs!

The homeward journey to St Martin's Le Grand took about an hour with further encouragement from ever larger crowds lining the route. One member of the crowd was heard to say, "Never seen a garden on a trailer behind a tractor before!"
Report by John Dugdale Bradley

Photos from top: The Master assembles the troops before setting off on a long, wet journey. The new Lord Mayor Jeffrey Mountevans sets off from Guildhall. The first of the Company's two floats. The second was sponsored by Bartlett Trees, Ernest Doe, Capel Manor College and Paul Cable. Young people from BOST march in support of the Future Gardeners project.
Photographs by Michael Warren, John Gilbert and Photoshot





Noah Franklin and his mother Kristina pictured at the binding ceremony with SPM Peter Franklin and the then Master, Stephen Bernhard. Noah is currently studying Art, History and Biology 'A' levels at his grandfather's old school Dulwich College. He is very interested in conservation and hopes to go on to study Zoology and Biological Sciences at university. Peter Franklin said: "It was certainly a very proud occasion for me and my family and I hope very much that Noah will in time enjoy the good fellowship of the Company just as I have for over 40 years!" (photograph by Michael Warren).

NOAH IS BOUND TO HIS GRANDFATHER
 A highlight of last year's Spring Court at Goldsmiths' Hall was the binding of a new Apprentice. Noah Franklin, only grandson of SPM Peter Franklin, was bound to his grandfather. Honorary Archivist and former Apprentice Cindy Peck puts this memorable event into its historical context and reveals some of the fine print in the Deed of Indenture

In centuries past, the principal way to join a livery company was through "servitude", as an apprentice to a member of the company. An apprentice would receive food, lodging, clothing and instruction in the trade, craft or profession and in return he would agree to serve his master faithfully and diligently, normally pay a premium and possibly receive wages.

The apprentice would also undertake various obligations such as agreeing to keep clear of ale houses, gambling dens and the like and not to marry during the term of the apprenticeship. The Master and his apprentice were bound by a contract known as a "deed of indenture". The name derives from the fact that the contract was on parchment which after execution was cut in two with an indented (or wavy) line. This allowed both parties to keep a part of it to evidence the existence of the contract and as a protection against fraud.

In recent times, obtaining Freedom by Redemption is the norm in most livery companies, and indeed in some livery companies freedom can now no longer be obtained by servitude. In the Gardeners' Company the number of bindings of apprentices dwindled gradually during the 19th Century, although there was a bumper year in 1914 when there were seven bindings and in both 1919 and 1925 there were four.

The contract of apprenticeship is still called an Indenture, but has been updated in various respects. The draft of the contract invites the Master to include a provision banning the Apprentice from contracting matrimony, but this is no longer a requirement of the Indenture.

The Indenture may be inrolled at the Chamberlain's Court in the Guildhall which undertakes a check to make sure that there is compliance with the "Custom of London relating to Apprenticeships in Livery Companies". The Custom requires that any apprentice, male or female, must at the time of binding be unmarried, above the age of 14 and below the age of 21.

Despite the modernisation of the Deed of Indenture, anyone thinking of becoming an apprentice should read the small print of the contract before binding himself or herself. In addition to agreeing to serve their Master faithfully, not waste or lend their Master's goods and not sell any goods without their Master's permission, a prospective Apprentice should bear in mind that a number of activities are banned altogether during the term of the apprenticeship. The contract provides, for example, that: "He shall not commit fornication... He shall not play at Cards, Dice, Tables, or any other unlawful games... He shall not haunt Taverns nor Playhouses", although it may be a relief to the reader that there is no definition of "haunt".

Unsurprisingly, the majority of those now on the Court joined the Company by Redemption although a few joined the Company by Patrimony. There is a much higher proportion of members of the current Court who joined by servitude than in the Company as a whole (Past Master Louise Robinson, Spadebearer Margi Prior and Assistants Cindy Peck and Robert Cohen), but they do not seem to have started a trend.

GARDENERS STAGE DAZZLING DISPLAY AT RED CROSS CHRISTMAS FAIR

A concerted effort by the Company raised £5,000 at December's Red Cross Fair at the Guildhall.

Led by the Upper Warden, Paul Rochford, some 40 Gardeners built up and staffed the Company stall at the event. Many also attended a workshop organized by PM Nicholas Evans at Capel Manor the week before to make wreaths, decorated bulb baskets, small Christmas trees and other decorative items for sale. The team put on a dazzling display of high quality plants, bulbs and sundries, full of colour and interest. The stall was in a prime position close to the entrance where, on the Gala Evening, the Master and his lady were able to greet the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress, Liveryman Lady Mountevans, together with the guest of honour, Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra. The Master presented a posy to Lady Mountevans and a buttonhole to the Lord Mayor.

For the whole of that evening and the following day the team worked cheerfully and tirelessly to sell the wonderful goods on offer to the huge crowds attending the Fair. All the items had been generously donated by members of the Company and an excellent result was achieved in support of a very worthwhile cause.

Report by Felicity Brown

Photos clockwise from top: The Company stall was in prime position near the entrance. Seasonal wreaths were produced in variety at the Capel Manor workshop. Santa's little helpers busy preparing quality items for sale. The colourful displays were much appreciated by visitors to the Fair. Part of the Company's extensive display of attractive plants and decorations.



CELEBRATING THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Setting aside worldly pre-Christmas concerns of gift-shopping, pudding-stirring and office-partying, over 60 Gardeners and guests gathered in St Stephen Walbrook on the 14th of December for the traditional Carol Service. Situated in the very heart of the City a few steps from the Mansion House, this most architecturally distinguished of all Wren's churches, with its dome supported on 16 columns, looked even more lovely with the impressive floral decorations provided by Ron Froud and Stephen Crisp.

In good voice we sang half a dozen well known carols, accompanied on the organ by Joe Sentance, who, with soprano Emma Corke, uplifted us with pieces by Bach and Handel. 'We Three Kings of Orient Are', with the congregation divided into three sections, drew out our competitive natures in lusty harmony, whilst Christina Rossetti's beautiful 'In the Bleak Mid Winter' evoked a more reflective tone.

The Master, the Clerk and Assistants Susanna Morriss, Heather Barrett-Mold and Cindy Peck read the lessons. Conducting the service with warmth and wit, our Hon Chaplain Peter Delaney spoke of the historic, contemporary and future relevance of the Christmas message of peace and goodwill not only to Christians but to those of other faiths and of none.

Whether the after-service wine and canapés lived up to their billing as a 'shindig' may be open to dispute, but it was a delightful occasion to meet friends old and new before braving the mid-winter dark to return to homes and families, better prepared in body and spirit for the Christmas ahead.

Report by Richard Capewell

LIVERYMAN RICCARDO LING 1921-2015

Riccardo was the most senior member of the Livery, the "Father of the Company", when he died on the 22nd October last year. He joined the Gardeners as a Liveryman in 1952 with his sister Stella, when his father was Master. He was a gentle, kind and unassuming man who never aspired to take office in the Company.

He was educated at Dulwich College. Following his father, he trained and worked as a building surveyor, practising in Limpsfield, Surrey. During the Second World War he served in the Royal Artillery as a surveyor and rangefinder, fixing the positions of the guns in his battery so they all fired at the same target. In this job he landed on Gold beach in Normandy on D Day in 1944.

He lived all his life on Crystal Palace hill from where, in 1936, he witnessed the burning down of Crystal Palace. His father, however, had bought a small farm at Daneshill, West Sussex. This became the love of his life. He was a keen organic farmer and was a founder member of the Soil Association.

He was very conscious of the importance of maintaining the organic status of his land and he had a passion for land stewardship and wrote many articles on the subject.

Although he was a regular attendee of events early in his membership of the Company we did not see much of him in later years. The last time he attended a function was at the Tradescant lunch in 2011 when he was the Guest of Honour to celebrate his 90th birthday.

SPM David Longman



The church was decorated with glorious floral displays. (photograph by John Gilbert).

PIRATES EXCEL AT W.S. GILBERT'S HOME

Grim's Dyke, W.S. Gilbert's atmospheric house in Harrow Weald, was the setting for a wonderful Company outing in March.

At the end of a long wooded drive unfolded a 19th Century Elizabethan fantasy of a house designed by Richard Norman Shaw in 1870 for the exotic painter Frederick Goodall, subsequently bought by Gilbert in 1890. Despite being close to dense conurbation as we stepped out of the car we were treated to silence and were transported back into an elegant world where windows were leaded and gardens formal.

The Company and guests assembled for drinks in the mullioned hall and library of the house, now an hotel, and we were called to ascend the grand stair to where the operetta and dinner were served in the Great Hall on the first floor. The hall is indeed great with its magnificent Cornish alabaster chimneypiece in the Jacobean style with carved satyr supporters, this flourish added by Gilbert to what had been Goodall's studio. This is where Gilbert wrote his last 10 works.

The Pirates of Penzance was sadly not written here and pre-dates Gilbert's arrival at Grim's Dyke by 10 years but it was not difficult to imagine an audience, such as ourselves, settling in with the same level of anticipation. Our private performance was given by Grim's Dyke Opera. The company was formed in 2001, following the demise of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, and performs regularly in Gilbert's music room at Grim's Dyke, other country houses, Inner Temple, and with the Royal Philharmonic at the Royal Albert Hall.

It is no wonder, then, that we were treated to the most fantastic performance - great singing, wonderful costumes, and delightful exuberance. The casting of the singers was magnificent - each epitomising perfectly the role. James Irving, baritone and narrator, set the scene and swash buckled vigorously with the Pirate King, Clive Bebee. Barry Clerk was wonderfully credible as the modern Major-General declaiming his attributes with fantastic precision, clarity, and speed. Equally convincing was Bruce Graham as the Sergeant of Police hunting the Pirate King who hid behind PM Louise Robinson.

Report by Charles Rutherford