

Past Masters

2012: Alderman Sir Michael Bear

Alderman Sir Michael Bear was admitted as a Liveryman of the Paviers Company in 2002, and was Master in the year following his term as Lord Mayor. He was knighted in the 2012 New Year Honours for services to regeneration, charity and the City of London. Professionally, he is a civil engineer, currently holding the positions of Managing Director of Balfour Beatty Property and non-executive director of Arup.

Michael's career has been anything but traditional. The son of a South African geologist working for the British Colonial Service, Michael was born in Kenya, went to primary school in Cyprus, boarding school in Bristol, and obtained his first degree at a South African university. His civil engineering career started with airport design and construction, initially throughout Southern Africa and subsequently in Northern Ireland with Sir Frederick Snow & Partners. He took a year out in 1980/81 to study for an MBA at Cranfield University and then joined Balfour Beatty. Here he developed renewal energy projects in China, Nigeria and Cameroon. He then moved into property development with London and Edinburgh Trust, but subsequently moved back to Balfour Beatty as Managing Director of property. Here, he worked on PFI/PPP projects and was responsible for a large development portfolio, including acting as Chief Executive for the Spitalfields development in the City of London, now owned by Hammerson. Michael is a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers, a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and a Founder Member of the British Council of Offices. Just prior to his term as Lord Mayor, he was elected as an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering.

The Spitalfields development whetted Michael's appetite for regeneration and community involvement, and in 1993 he was appointed chairman of the City Challenge public/private sector partnership for Tower Hamlets. This focused on improving a run-down inner-city area adjacent to the City of London. His role then extended to board positions on successor companies and charity work in Bangladesh. These activities brought him into contact with many residents of Bangladeshi origin living in the Portsoken Ward of the City of London. In 2003, Michael was elected a common councillor for the predominantly residential Portsoken Ward, where he put his regeneration skills to work in tackling the inner-city problems that beset local residents. The following year he was elected Deputy Alderman for the Ward, and made Alderman in 2005. This required him to sit as a magistrate on the City Bench. Michael served as a Sheriff of the City of London in 2007/8 - a role that also involved, on a rota, unlocking the Royal Courts of Justice at the Old Bailey.



*The Master
Alderman Sir Michael Bear*



*The Master with (L-R) Upper Warden
John Dance and Renter Warden Nigel Kempner*



*The Master with Barbara
and son Marc*

Michael's other voluntary work has included charity projects in Africa, Bangladesh and throughout the UK. He is a Director of CRASH, Spitalfields Market Community Trust, The Drinking Fountain Association, and is a Governor of the Sir John Cass Foundation and primary school, Thomas Coram Foundation for Children, Clifton College, Hackney City Academy, the City Arts Trust, and of the London South Bank University.

Michael is married to Barbara, who is a Liveryman of the Musicians Company, a qualified teacher, musician, artist and therapist in complementary medicine. They have two teenage children, Amy and Marc. Michael lists his hobbies as wine, opera, rugby, tennis and theatre.

2012 Master's Message

It is a singular honour and privilege to be Master of our vibrant and dynamic livery company, the Paviers - especially in a Diamond Jubilee and Olympic year. This year, more than any other, will provide an ideal opportunity to showcase the massive contribution that the Livery makes to the City and the nation. The whole world will be watching. London will be on display and we must make sure that the world sees us at our best: relevant, creative, organised, welcoming and tolerant.

I take over the baton at a time when the reputation of the Company is high, and its finances in good shape. I am delighted that the Paviers gained some Mansion House lustre from last year and from the seventh Pavior Lord Mayor in the Company's history.

One of the most important changes for the Company in the year ahead is the change of Clerk. I would like to take this opportunity to thank John White for the wise advice and support he has given both to myself and Past Masters as Clerk, and also for the efficient way he has run the office for the last 14 years. At the same time, we welcome our new Clerk, John Freestone. We will be working to make sure that he settles in well.

I am planning an action-packed year, during which I hope to build on the excellent work of my predecessors. Together with my Wardens and committee chairmen, I would like to make progress on extending our charitable giving through events, contributions and legacies; continuing the excellent initiative of using sponsorship to defray costs; re-invigorating support for our Military Affiliates; extending opportunities for networking and fellowship at all events, especially dinners; and ensuring that our links with our trade remain strong and relevant. Above all, I would like to promote the Paviers as the livery company of choice to new members, making full use of our new home at Paviers' House, which is working so well.

The Past Clerk and our new Clerk have helped to arrange some interesting venues for events. Our first Livery Dinner at Saddlers' Hall will be on 19 April, the Master's Jolly to Lake Garda in May, a technical visit to the new Crossrail station at



John White, Past Clerk with Memento from The Master



Installation of new Clerk John Freestone by The Master



Concordia Foundation Artistes at the Spring Livery Dinner in Saddlers' Hall, 19 April 2012

Tottenham Court Road, plus a visit to the London Festival of Architecture Exhibition in June, a Midsummer event in the City, a Banquet at the Mansion House (my old tied cottage!) in September, a Livery Dinner at Goldsmiths' Hall in November, and a Charity Gala Dinner at the end of January to raise additional charitable funds. My Master's Charity this year will support Coram, London's foremost children's charity, and we will continue our tradition of supporting the City and the Mayoralty with our excellent float in the next Lord Mayor's Show. I am fortunate to have the full support of Mistress Barbara, who will be organising her Ladies' Livery Lunch at Coram towards the end of my year. Most importantly, I am looking forward to sharing an enjoyable year with you all.

Master's Reflections

It has been a very busy and enjoyable year as Master, a year in which much has been achieved. Our new Clerk, John Freestone, now has his feet well and truly under the table and firmly on the paving stones and, may I say, doing an excellent job. I am delighted to report that our Charity Committee has successfully restructured its investments to focus on income-generation. Worthy recipients of our largesse included the Paviers' Budding Brunels under the auspices of the Construction Youth Trust. Another highlight of the year was the Banquet that we hosted successfully at Mansion House. It was very well attended and Lord Levene's speech was witty and informative. Our affiliations continue to flourish and I greatly enjoyed my visit to RAF 29(R) Squadron at Coningsby accompanied by Past Master John Mills and our Clerk. I am pleased to say that the simulator was put through its paces both above and below ground! I was not able to attend the visit to HMS Argyll, but the Company was well represented by Upper Warden John Dance and Past Master Tom Barton - lucky them. I have to admit that I underestimated how busy this year would be, as my additional duties in the Civic City, including acting as Lord Mayor Locum Tenens, took up more time than expected. Barbara and I are not wanting for food, wine or good company! I would like to thank all Members for their support and hard work throughout the past year.

Michael Bear



Murray Craig proposed the Toast to the Master at Goldsmiths' Hall

The Master enjoying "Bear Necessities" at the Autumn Livery Dinner also.



Isola del Garda visited during the Master's Jolly to Lake Garda 3rd to 6th May 2012



The Musical World of Charles Dickens, performed by Concordia Foundation Artistes at the Master's Dinner in the Guildhall Crypts 26 June 2012



View of Tottenham Court Road U/G Station works from 18th floor of Centre Point—Master's Technical Visit 2012

