

ALDERMAN, WARDENS, MY LADY, Liverymen, Freeman, Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Thanks to Sir Robert Akenhead for his speech. He and I have been sparring partners for many years, at the Bar and latterly on Arbitral Tribunals, but most recently with Robert hearing challenges to my awards, which have generally been upheld, albeit with some hesitation!

It is strange that the Arbitrators should be a Modern Livery Company. I recently reviewed Derek Roebuck's latest book on Arbitration in the Golden Age—the reign of Elizabeth I. The review noted that in the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century, there existed a group of well-known arbitrators who seem to have cornered the market, and no doubt derived a good living from it--plus ca change!

These arbitrators were not all lawyers, but were all MEN of standing in society. While it would be another 4 centuries before women broke into the field, the tradition and practice in English Arbitration of Tribunals being persons of standing the their fields has continued up to the modern era. And this explains one of our great strengths---that arbitrators, and the members of this Worshipful Company, are drawn from a wide variety of professions, not just the law. So the rich variety of our membership includes specialists in shipping, in commodities, in construction and of course lady members (including past masters) from even more exotic fields such as Dentistry, all united through the traditions of the City of London, where international arbitration in particular is a major earner.

This dinner falls half way through our year and is a good occasion to look back and forward. So far this year we have welcomed 10 new Freeman and 2 new Liverymen to the Company. Our pupillage scheme, which produces many of our new members, gathers pace. The problem which the scheme always has is to find enough live cases for the pupils to observe—and we are hopeful that this will be eased by a new venture with IDRC by which Damian Hickman, its highly successful CEO, is going to assist us in finding Arbitral Tribunals sitting in Fleet Street who are able to accommodate our pupils for one or two days. Damian and his wife Pheona are here tonight and we look forward to developing this scheme in the coming months.

Looking forward, I should mention the Master's Lecture which is to be hosted by Herbert Smith Freehills next Monday, the 18<sup>th</sup> May. Places are still available. Sadly neither Paula Hodges of HSF nor our lecturer, Dr Jackie van Hoff, the new Director General of the LCIA could be present tonight; but the event continues our close collaboration with the City and with the LCIA in particular, they being one of our joint founders in 1983. The other joint founder was the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators which this year celebrates its Centenary with a series of events in London and elsewhere. I took part in the first conference in Birmingham in January and for the Guildhall conference in July the Company will be represented by a goodly number of our members who may be seen sporting robes and even the Master's Tricorn hat! Tonight we are pleased to see this year's CI Arb President Charles Brown, who is here as a member and thus even more welcome.

My personal guests tonight include all my children who have managed to take an evening off from their busy professional lives. Their Mother,

Diana, has also managed to combine a busy life with becoming a Livery Master—of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers. In that capacity I was accorded the distinguished role of Master's Consort and chief Joke writer. I learned a great deal about the livery from Diana and the Clockmakers, but any rumour that standing for Master of this Company was to get my own back is mere speculation. My professional life included, 4 years ago, becoming Treasurer of Gray's Inn, in which I was hugely indebted for the support and organising skills of the Under-Treasurer, Brigadier Tony Faith, who is here with his new wife Camilla who are most welcome.

We have all enjoyed the wonderful music provided by Guildhall Musicians. Diana and I are enthusiastic supporters of the Guildhall School where, for a small annual contribution, you can have not only the satisfaction of supporting hugely talented stars of the future, but will also get free invitations to a string of concerts, plays, operas and recitals. All this is down to the principal of Guildhall, Prof Barry Ife who is here with Dr Trudi Darby and they are most welcome.

The Senior Warden has already welcomed the late Lord Mayor and member of the company Dame Fiona Woolf and I am glad to have the opportunity of asking her to undertake on our behalf to convey to the Lord Mayor, with our good wishes, a cheque from our Charitable Trust for the support of his charities.

Finally I would like to thank on behalf of the whole Company our team of Clerks who have been responsible for the arrangements this evening. John White, the Clerk's Assistant, is the man who knows everyone and knows how everything works. If you need 500 flags at the best price, he

knows a man! More important he points out the errors of protocol before they are committed. Elinor, our new clerk, has been in post for 9 months and had nearly worked her way through our calendar of events. While she has been learning on the job, she never lets it show. She has charmed all the other clerks and now, fortunately, has memorised the names of all the other Masters. And most important she and John know how to work as a team. John and Elinor we are all most grateful for all that you for the Company.

PLEASE BE UPSTANDING FOR THE TOAST

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF ARBITRATORS  
MAY IT FLOURISH ROOT AND BRANCH