

The Worshipful Company of Arbitrators.

20th February 2004. Master's Speech. Andrew Drysdale.

Wardens, My Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My Lord Mayor, I can assure you that tonight in the world of Arbitration, everybody who is anybody is here.

The theme of my Mastership is Liaison. So first we have three of the great Arbitral bodies of this country; the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, the London Court of International Arbitration and my own Alma Mater, the Insurance Arbitration Society, ARIAS.

And that is only a starter for 10 as Bamber Gascoigne would say, and he is sitting over there.

Next there are the Arbitrators, ourselves, your hosts, Sir. Never was there present a finer body of Arbitrators, than you see tonight.

Then we have the Judges, looking very wise as they undoubtedly are, who with kindly words correct us when we err.

Finally we have the most important people of all, the Parties to arbitration, who supply that meagre crust of which tonight's simple supper is, I assure you Lord Mayor, merely the ordinary fare of an impoverished arbitrator. Representing them are 4 Titans of the Insurance Industry, the world from which I spring..

I want to mention, now, two of our Livery who deserve special note.

Education is a principal activity of Livery Companies. We are proud not only of our Company's efforts but also of our Members. Michael Goodridge was awarded the MBE in the New Years Honours List for "Services to further education". His college, Godalming College, got a 99% A Level pass rate. My House Master was a passionate classic. He instructed all us boys to fail our School Certificates in Science. We eagerly obeyed. Perhaps that explains Michael's missing 1%. Well done him.

Bertie Vigrass is the plinth upon which stand the three colossi of Arbitration; the Worshipful Company, the London Court and the

Chartered Institute. He was present at the birth of the first. He stimulated the resurrection of the second. He prepared the third for life eternal. He is an Apostle of Arbitration and appropriately he and Betty were married last October, not in some modest country church but at the High Altar of St Paul's Cathedral, a rare distinction and one richly deserved.

One person links the disparate parts of this Banquet to an extraordinary degree. Alan Trill was Lord Mayor and is an arbitrator. Once Chairman of his own firm of Lloyds Brokers, he is Alderman for Langbourne Ward, where Edward Lloyd had his famous Coffee House. Alan loves music. He was Master of the Musicians Company 4 years ago, a link with your Charity, Sir, the LSO Discovery Project, which we applaud and support.

Sadly he lacks one ingredient of a lover of music—He is not Welsh. As all Welshmen know, the English don't really like music. All they like is the noise it makes.

Sarah Trill and I share a love of hunting. We have both been Masters of Hounds. She once invited me to a meet at their home. It was a filthy wet day, too wet for the lawn so we met in a farmyard. "Give you a leg up?" asked a helpful bystander and promptly threw me over the horse into the midden. "I didn't get that, Sir", said the photographer for Horse and Hound. "Would you mind doing that again?"

"Music, when soft voices die, Vibrates in the memory" said Shelley.

I attended the Open Day of the LSO's music education and community programme, when you launched your Appeal for "Music and the Arts for Everyone". The memory of that day vibrates still.

Watching the Leader of the LSO's second violins sitting in London teaching pupils in Renfrewshire with a gigantic Computer screen to help was truly amazing. So was his playing of Vivaldi's Spring with students from the Guildhall School of Music. I should add that we are sponsoring Elizabeth Courtney, one of the Guildhall School's talented instrumentalists; she is an oboist, and we hope to hear her play at our Spring Livery dinner.

We wish your appeal every success and it gives me great pleasure to hand you this cheque..

In a world of hectic change, where rubbing out even as ancient an office as that of the Lord Chancellor can be attempted in just one line in a single speech, the stability and continuity of the Mayoralty and of the Shrievalty are things we of the Livery honour and venerate.

In days gone by a Sandwich board man used to parade outside the Mansion House. At a time of high political drama on the front of his Board were written the words “The Lords have thrown out the Reform Bill. What will Gilliewater do?” On the back was written, “Gilliewater will continue to sell his celebrated Bears Grease at 2 shillings per pot”.

Confident in the ability of the Mayoralty to manage change, yet certain of your determination and that of your Sheriffs, to defend and maintain the Stability and Continuity of your ancient offices, I know that all in this room will welcome and will support the Civic Toast, which I now have the honour to propose.

Ladies and Gentlemen, To the Lord Mayor, the Corporation of the City of London and to the Sheriffs.