



## THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF CHARTERED ARCHITECTS

### Newsletter

Issue 9 - July 2007

#### *From the Master*

As I write this I am desperately trying to clear my desk before I set off with a small but delightfully balanced party of architectural tourists from the Company for the pleasures of Rio de Janeiro, Paraty, Ouro Preto, Belo Horizonte and, of course Brasilia. We look forward to a rewarding ten days or so and, particularly, to the meeting which we have managed to arrange with Oscar Neimeyer. I am confident that either Mervyn Miller or Jaki Howes (or possibly both) will compose a trip diary or report which can feature in the next newsletter.

I have returned to my desk hot foot from a very helpful briefing given by the Lord Mayor at Mansion House dealing principally with the subject of the succession in the Court of Aldermen. He was, he noted, pleased to have the 007 Masters on his side. flanked as he was by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Livery Committee (respectively M and Q). He felt, that when he stood down at the end of his Mayoralty he might have time for the traditional Bond pursuits but he was not sure what Miss Money Penny (that is to say, the Lady Mayoress) might have to say about that.

The thrust of his talk was to set out as clearly as possible the procedures which now govern the selection of those seeking election as an Alderman, Sheriff or the Lord Mayor. An Appraisal Panel has been set up consisting of the Lord Mayor, four other senior Aldermen, two senior Common Councilmen and two independent distinguished City businessmen. Those seeking election subject themselves to a rigorous appraisal which, if survived, will give them some confidence in believing that they might go as far as their ambitions lead them. A number of concerns had been raised by various Companies about the changes in the process and the Lord Mayor set about dealing with them.

He dispelled the myth that future Lord Mayors would need to have a financial background though, clearly, this will help as he or she will increasingly, have to represent the business community in the City. All Companies are encouraged to identify talented individuals and to encourage them to stand for office. It is clear that 'buggins turn' is a thing of the past. The Lord Mayor also refuted the notion that the holders of his office were somehow beholden to and take instructions from Ministers and that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office dictate the pattern of overseas visits. If anyone would like further detail of what was said, please contact the Clerk who will let you have a copy of the transcript of the talk.

This has been a most interesting year for me and I am grateful to have had the chance to serve as your Master. One of my predecessors kept a diary of, among other things, what he had eaten - particularly the puddings. I too have been slightly surprised that my figure has not suffered unduly but am envious that my successor has been given the chance to take part in a sponsored walk that will set out (clad in gown, chain of office and hat) to visit all 40 Livery Halls in the course of a day. This will take place a mere two days into his Mastership and help him burn off a few calories in anticipation of what is to come. He will be asking you all to sponsor him to raise money for the Company's and the Lord Mayor's charity and I, for one, will be happy to sign the sponsorship form. Please do likewise - the Charitable Trust needs the additional funding.

It has been an interesting year for the Company in which we have not only had approval to enlarge our membership catchment pool but have been able to elect new members as a result of that initiative. We have elected and welcomed Alderman Sir Robert Finch as an Honorary Liveryman and have seen some of our students move into the Livery and have welcomed replacements to their ranks. Very many thanks for all your support during the year - I do hope that you have an enjoyable summer.



## News from the Court

The July meeting of the Court saw the Company's officers for 2007-08 elected. **Jonathan Ball** is to be Master and will take up the reins in September. He will be assisted by **Ian Head** as Upper Warden, **Roger France** as Renter Warden and **Chris Colbourne**, who will shortly finish a period of his life which has seen him domiciled substantially in the United States, joins the team as the Junior Warden. **Richard Saxon** will be the Deputy Master.

The chairmen and members of the three committees were also agreed on and details will be published in the next newsletter.

**Three new Freemen** were elected - all under the new franchise rules. **Peter Murray** is founder and Chairman of Wordsearch - an organization specializing in explaining the importance of architecture to the public at large. In this capacity he has been the guiding light behind the London Biennale. As an Honorary Fellow of the RIBA he is eligible for membership. So too, as an Affiliate member of the Institute, is **Tom French**. Tom is, of course, a former Student of the Company who, having completed his Part 1 studies found himself seduced in his year out by the wider allure of the property world. He works for Grosvenor Estates but retains his interest in both architecture and the Company. He is to be congratulated on his recent marriage. The third new member is **William Murray** son of Peter with whom he works in Wordsearch. He organized the highly successful Extreme Architecture event in the Painted Hall earlier in the year with which the Company was pleased to be associated. William will be the first member admitted under the rule which allows a small percentage of our membership to be drawn from 'friends of architecture'. All three will be admitted to the Freedom at the next Court meeting.

**Two new Liverymen** were admitted.



**Richard Brindley BSc**  
**DipArch RIBA MInstM APM**

Richard trained at the Bartlett, has Business Management qualifications from the Open University and has a certificate in Project Management. He had early experience in a variety of

practices dealing largely with the residential sector before taking up a post with Llewellyn-Davies as Operations Director (1990 to 1999). This was followed by stints at Broadway Malyan where he was appointed head of the Residential Centre of Excellence and as a Director of Clague Ltd for whom he set up a new London Office.

Having coupled his professional work with involvement at RIBA local, regional and national levels he accepted the post of Director of Practice at the Institute in 2003 and he is currently also Acting Executive Director of RIBA Professional Services. His wide remit includes CPD, procurement, contracts, legislation, indemnity insurance, dispute resolution and professional conduct. He is a frequent contributor to the RIBA Journal and other publications on practice matters.

### **Rosemary Curry Dip Arch RIBA BA(Hons)** **LanArch MLI**



A native of Cheshire, Rosemary was a very early Freeman of the Company. She studied architecture at Sheffield University and landscape architecture at Greenwich. Her initial work experience was in Sheffield, Newcastle upon Tyne and Teeside where she was active in the local RIBA branch - serving as a North East Region representative on RIBA Council.

On coming south she joined Ellis Williams Architects and worked as a Senior Project architect, Associate, Design Manager and Landscape Architect to the practice. She also oversees the document production for all projects in the practice.

Her recent projects have been substantially in the education sector - both public and private including PFI projects. She has also been involved with arts and recreation complexes in Durham, Oxford, London and Gateshead.

Rosemary's first duty as a Liveryman was to take on the role as Mentor to a **new student Member Nick Szczepaniak**. From Derbyshire, Nick completed his BA in Architectural Studies at Newcastle University and has been working at Ellis Williams Architects since 2005. He has yet to decide which academic establishment will benefit from having him as a Part 2 student in October this year.

This process of 'binding' or indenturing students aims to reflect as closely as possible the traditional apprenticeship custom of the City of London. For the sake of political correctness and to protect the Company from possible challenges in the European Court of Human Rights we have removed from the traditional indenture form the undertaking given by apprentice masters that they will (personally) feed, clothe and train the apprentice and the reciprocal undertaking that the beneficiary of such largesse will abstain from fornication, matrimony, offensive language and partaking of spirituous beverages for the term of the apprenticeship. Students have all the luck these days!

Approval was given to the causes suggested for support by the Charity and Education Committee. The Trustees advised that a sum of £7,500 was available for disbursement - this being the interest on the capital sum held by the Trust. Support will go to the Student Travel Award, prizes at the City Schools and the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, the annual Team Build Competition, Architects Benevolent Society, the Lord Mayor's Appeal and the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund.

## Recent Events

The **Master's Weekend in Dublin** took place over the weekend of 18 - 20 May and was greatly enjoyed by those who attended. Two full days were arranged commencing with a meeting at the Dublin Docklands Development Authority for a briefing by John McLaughlin - its Director of Architecture and Urban Design - which set the scene for a subsequent walk around the area. Ambitious plans are in hand to create extensive mixed use, commercial and residential areas retaining and reusing as many of the better dock and warehouse buildings as possible.

High profile architects have been brought in and nowhere will this be more obvious than in the impressive Grand Canal Square designed by American landscape architect Martha Schwartz. The square will be graced by a Daniel Libeskind Theatre and a new 5 star hotel by Manuel Aires Matues. There are plans too for a new conference centre by Kevin Roche and a new home for the famous Abbey Theatre.

The remainder of the day was spent exploring other areas and buildings along the river including John Gandon's late 18th century classical masterpieces - the Customs House and Four Courts Building - and John

Rennie's 1821 cast iron wine and tobacco ware-house now refurbished for retail and restaurant use.

Saturday was spent in the care of the estimable Marianne Gorman, a highly experienced and knowledgeable authority of the architecture of her city. Her tour included the joys of Trinity College, the classical Georgian squares (including visits to two private member clubs in St Stephens Green), the Royal Irish Academy building, the National Library (which was hosting a wonderful WB Yates exhibition) and the National Museum finishing in the National Gallery with its Benson and Forsyth extension. Many of us will, when we think back on the visit to the historically protestant Trinity College remember Marianne's splendid piece of doggerel verse

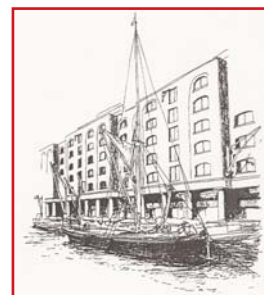
*'Your children may loot, plunder and shoot,  
Fornicate and have carnal knowledge  
But don't be dismayed  
Their souls will be saved,  
If they don't go to Trinity College'*

Few, if any historic sights were missed and the group dinner at the end of the day was most welcome.

People were left to their own devices on Sunday prior to making their ways home by divers means. Many visited the superb library at Trinity College for the Book of Kells exhibition and some took the opportunity to take in a concert and lunch at the Hugh Lane gallery. Others walked and photographed. We were greatly indebted to Madeleine Phillips at University College Dublin for her help in putting the programme together and in establishing contact with our guides.

Two Davids are to be thanked for the **lunch on the SB Ardwinna on Friday 1 June.**

We were fortunate that David Rolfe could, again, arrange for us to have the use of the boat and that David Penning could arrange such an excellent occasion. He had cunningly persuaded his local Waitrose to contribute a couple of magnums of champagne to accompany the splendidly nautical fish and chip lunch.



The Master (who works as a Planning Inspector) had arranged for Katrine Sporle - Head of the Planning Inspectorate - to give the Company a talk on the work of her department. This proved to be an inspired



speaker selection as the white paper on the future of the planning system had been published that week. The speaker went through the work of the Inspectorate before inviting questions - possibly a foolhardy offer given the presence of a number of eminent town planner members of the Company. Questions were handled with consummate skill and the occasion was informative and enjoyable. The Master was pleased that we could give the surplus after costs had been met of £350, as a donation to the RNLI to assist in their appeal for the new lifeboat for Sennen Cove.

In his role as Hon Life President of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Dr Mervyn Miller organized a **walking tour of the Suburb** in its centenary year on a gorgeous Saturday 2 June. His un-paralled knowledge of the Suburb was backed up by the expertise of Jane Blackburn - the current Manager of the Trust and David Davidson - its Architectural Advisor. Starting from Central Square we looked at two complimentary but very different Lutyens churches and the



Hampstead Garden  
Suburb  
WCCA Visit  
Saturday 2nd June 2007

photographs by Tom Ball



School building before moving into the residential areas to see the work and influence of Lutyens, Soutar, Parker and Unwin, Baillie Scott, Sutcliffe and others. This was followed by a generous lunch and then further walking to the artisans' quarter and Temple Fortune before a stop at London's smallest art gallery and an opportunity to purchase a copy of Mervyn's excellent and highly readable book on the Suburb. The day gave an insight into what Pevsner, writing in the souvenir programme for the 50th anniversary of the Suburb, called '*the most nearly perfect example of that unique English invention and speciality, the garden suburb*'.

A **visit to offices of Make Architects** was arranged by Simon Lincoln and Peter Williams on 23 June. The opportunity to be shown around an office producing a wide range of interesting work made for a good Saturday morning. The office conveys the impression of a workplace in which staff are enjoying the stimulation of a high level of design freedom spread across a diverse workload. Peter and Simon are to be thanked for giving up their time and for organizing an excellent vegetarian lunch in a nearby Indian eatery.

The **Annual Service** preceding the **Election Court Dinner** on Monday 2 July differed this year in that the Junior Warden Roger France not only arranged the service and music but also preached the scholarly and thought-provoking sermon. While it is generally acknowledged that anything that happens once in a modern Company becomes a tradition, those aspiring to high office in the WCCA should not be deterred - as a Lay Reader, preaching sermons is part of Roger's other job description - not that of the Junior Warden!

Dinner was held in Armourers' Hall and was a sell-out. The Company entertained just one RNLI Coxswain - Raymond Karolewski of the Berwick on Tweed Lifeboat and his wife. Sadly his colleague, Coxswain Robbie Maiden of the Hartlepool Lifeboat and his partner were prevented from attending due to a family bereavement. It is always a pleasure to entertain guests from our 'link regiment.'

We also entertained the winners and runner-up of the award the Company makes for the most significant contribution to the Architects Benevolent Society each year. The award takes the form of a circular platter painted by a prominent architect - (Chris Wilkinson



left - Award Platter

Below: Artist Chris Wilkinson, Irene Crapnell, ABS President David Rock, Robert Crapnell and the Master

Below - Stephen Bayley

photographs by Robert Greshoff



this year) and was won by Robert and Irene Crapnell who have, over the past couple of years, raised a considerable amount of money for the Society through a golf day - now part of the RIBA Golf Society calendar and have done much to raise the profile of the ABS. The Runner-up, Phil Lloyd collected his certificate.

The Master welcomed the Masters of the Carpenters', Masons', Constructors' and Apothecaries' Companies and the newly elected Sheriff, Alderman Michael Bear and his wife. Alderman Bear is no stranger to the world of architecture having spent 33 years in the construction industry and the property sector. He retains a role with both Balfour Beatty and Hammersons.

The principal Guest was design guru Stephen Bayley - among other things, founder of the Design Museum and a known commentator on modern culture. The quotation from his website that he is *'blessed with the courage of his own convictions, he leans to extremes, black or white. Never grey. You simply can't ignore him'* was borne out in his response to the toast to the guests which finished with a toast to the Master.



## Coming Events

**The Famous Five go to Brazil** - at the time of publication a small but seasoned band of travellers will be headed for Brazil on the Company's annual study trip. Details of their adventures including their encounter

with the legendary Oscar Neimeyer will appear in the next edition.

**Open House Weekend** is scheduled for **15-16 September** and Patricia Stefanowicz and Stephen Wagstaffe will welcome help as they seek volunteers to steward those City churches that have agreed to open for all or part of the weekend. If you can spare a half a day please contact Stephen on 07956 881848. If you have volunteered in the past there is a fighting chance that he will contact you.

The **Installation Court Lunch** will take place on **Monday 17 September** at Trinity House. The Master's principal guest will be Admiral Sir Jock Slater GCB LVO DL - Chairman of the RNLI on whose board the Master Elect serves. Tickets have been priced at £63.00. Early applications are both welcomed by the Clerk and are recommended.

**Common Hall** for the election of the Lord Mayor will be held on **Monday 1 October** and will be followed by a lunch at the nearby Farmers' and Fletchers' Hall. Please apply to the Clerk for the pass you will need to obtain access to the hustings and let him know if you wish to join the lunch which is likely to be priced in the region of £45.00.

Tom Ball has organized a further practice visit - this time to the **Allies and Morrison studio on Tuesday 9th October, 6- 8 pm** - The practice has a very successful track record of architecture, interior design, landscape, conservation and master planning and operates from its new building in Southwark. Their recent two year regeneration of the Royal Festival Hall and work on the South Bank has been very well received; as has the new centre at the Observatory at Greenwich. They are playing a key role in preparing the masterplan proposals for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games; the Olympic Park design and site wide infrastructure in the Lower Lea Valley. This will be a very interesting and illuminating visit to one of our leading practices; please book the date in your diary. While there is no charge for students, members and guests will be charged at £5 to cover administration costs.

The **Master's Reception** - Cornish Fizzy & Canapes is to be held on Tuesday 20 November at the Athenaeum, Pall Mall. Jonathan will show those attending



around the accessible bits of the Club and it is hoped that we will be able to inspect the original Decimus Burton drawings. Please reply on the attached form.

The annual **Carol Service and Supper** with the Furniture Makers' Company is scheduled for **Wednesday 12 December**. The service will be held at St Mary-le-Bow with a supper at Furniture Makers' Hall. Arrangements are still being finalized for the supper and will reflect the concerns of some who felt that the arrangements last year were less than satisfactory as a result of over-crowding. A calling notice is attached.

## Dates for the Diary

The **Livery Banquet** is to be held at Mansion House on **Wednesday 12 March**. The Master Elect has invited his fellow Cornishman Alderman Sir David Brewer as his principal Guest.

The **Master's Weekend Visit** will be on **15-18 May** and will be to the Isles of Scilly - more details with the next Newsletter.

The **2008-2009 Architectural Study Trip** - plans are being worked out for a visit to the West Coast USA for a fortnight commencing Monday 25 August. This date might move by a few days once the itinerary has been put together. Broadly, the plan is to fly to Phoenix with a view to visiting Taliesin West and Paolo Soleri's fusion of architecture and ecology at Acrosanti before going to Los Angeles and up the coast to San Francisco and the Napa Valley. Mark the dates in your diaries now as this is likely to prove popular. Those who came on the trip to Chicago will be pleased to know that the detailed arrangements will be handled by Karen Bergenthal.

## Of General City Interest

Continuing the occasional series on officers of the City of London Corporation whose titles do not necessarily suggest their roles it might be helpful to you to have a little background about the historic **Office of Chief Commoner**. This is a one year post and is a title given to the Chairman of the City Lands and Bridge House Estates Committee which is responsible for the oversight of the City's Estate. - the property and land belonging to the City.

He or she is elected by the Members of the Committee and is by tradition the "Leader of the House". As the senior Common Councilman he or she represents the views of colleagues on Member related issues, counsels Members and advises on privileges and other matters. The post holder supports the Lord Mayor and the civic team on behalf of colleagues, chairs the Hospitality Working Party and acts as Deputy Chairman for the Reception Committees.

The status of the Office derives from its association with the City's Estate - land granted to the citizens of London by a Royal Charter of Henry VI (1444). The Estate has been added to over the years and the revenue from buildings now standing on this common land provides the major part of the City Corporation's private income. For over 400 years the management of this land and property rested with the City Lands Committee and, because it was regarded as the premier committee of the Corporation, its Chairman was considered as the Chief Common Councilman.

Over the years the Chairman of the committee came to be known as the Chief Commoner, a title which appears to have gained currency during the last quarter of the 19th Century. The title was certainly in current usage by 1880 at a "Presentation Dinner" in honour of a Mr George Shaw of the ward of Farringdon Within, who, in one of the first official uses of the title, was referred to as "the late Chief Commoner" - hopefully because he had handed the role to his successor!

In 1969 the City Lands Committee was merged with the Bridge House Estates Committee. The Chairman presides as a trustee for the citizens of the City and ensures that the common estate is preserved for Commoners of future generations. The post of Chief Commoner is currently held by Pauline Halliday, the Deputy for the Ward of Walbrook.

*(The Editor is indebted to Paul Stevenson in the Office of the City Remembrancer (about whose role, more next time) for the background information on the role of the Chief Commoner)*



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