

4TH ANNUAL LIVERYMEN'S DINNER

This year the annual Dinner was held in the Ironmongers' Hall. This beautiful Hall was first opened in 1925 and is a Tudor style Hall. Liverymen, Freemen and their guests enjoyed a Champagne Reception before the Dinner, where everyone caught up with friends and colleagues, both old and new. Prior to the Dinner, two new Freemen had been admitted to the Company; Roy Ellis, former Head of the Public Carriage Office and Steven Luton, a taxi driver who had become involved with the Company through the Cab Guiding Course. Twenty seven drivers had attended and passed the recent course and many of them were present to receive their certificates. Some stayed on to enjoy the evening with their partners.

Terry Spurr MBE and John Stubbs are well known in the Company for their continuing support of The Magical Taxi Tour. Both are from the London Ambulance Service and are dedicated to their charity work. They were both clothed in livery on the evening, becoming Honorary Liverymen of The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers.

At this Dinner, the Master Alan Parker and his wife Christine had a surprise in store for the diners. Firstly, the toast to the Queen was accompanied by John Beesley playing the National Anthem. Then entertainment was provided by a barber shop quartet called "By Appointment". This group sang beautifully and was enjoyed by everyone. Then it was on to the speeches, with Kevin Coles, the Head of business Enterprise for Lloyds TSB Cardnet Services. The evening was one of fine wine and dining with good company.

The Ironmongers' Hall is splendid and it is good fortune that guests are to be able to enjoy these surroundings. Back in December 1940, a German Air Raid set fire to all of the adjacent buildings, but luckily this Hall escaped, although all the lead in the pipes melted, along with the glass in the windows. In 1966 the Hall was nearly subject to a compulsory purchase order by the City Corporation to make way for the new Museum of London.

The Cab Guiding Course has become extremely popular with taxi drivers. Throughout the course, there are not just in classroom lessons. Visits are made to museums and walks are also organised.

Drivers who have attended the course have given a big thumbs up to the course with the response they have given in a questionnaire after the completion of



Drivers from the Cab Guiding Course with Graham Woodhouse, front right

the course. This questionnaire asked questions as to 'How informative' the course was, 'Was it value for money' and how good were the 'walks', 'guides' and 'visual aids'. When the forms were returned, course organisers were delighted to see a high percentage of "very goods" and "goods". No-one had ticked poor to any of the questions. If you would like to know more about know more about the Cab Guiding Courses, please contact Graham Woodhouse on 07939 070 224.

The Worshipful Company of Hackney Drivers has many facets but one common goal – to promote the world renowned London taxi trade. The Company is involved in charitable events such as The Magical Taxi Tour; Education embraces the Guiding Course. Throughout the year The Master and his wardens attend various events in the City and beyond, raising awareness of the taxi trade. If you would like to know more about the Company please contact The Clerk on 01494765922.



Terry Spurr MBE (left) and John Stubbs

THANKSGIVING SERVICE FOR BENEFACTORS' DAY

The Priory Church of St Bartholomew the Great, the church of The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers', held their Annual Thanksgiving Service recently, for Benefactors' day, followed by the Annual Dinner. Masters and Wardens of Companies affiliated to the church are invited to the service along with those involved with the Church and its charities. Other Livery Companies associated include the Haberdashers, Butchers, Founders, Fletchers, Farriers, Farmers, Information Technologists', Tax Advisers and The Guild of Public Relations Practitioners.

The Heritage Trust unites those who have a particular interest in the Church. It also raises funds to ensure that the church building is maintained, externally and internally, in the best possible condition. The Benefactors'

Day Service and Founder's Dinner - is an occasion to celebrate all those who have contributed to the beauty of the Priory Church. Guest speaker this year was John Torode, who was recently married in the church. John co-presents the TV programme Master Chef and owns the restaurant 'Smiths' of Smithfield.

The church choir gave a wonderful rendition of hymns and this year were accompanied by trumpeters. The Revd Dr Martin Dudley CC welcomed his guests after the service with a champagne reception and guests then enjoyed asparagus and wild herb salad with duck eggs followed by duck and then citrus pannacotta.

