



THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF CHARTERED ARCHITECTS

Newsletter

Issue 16 - May 2009

From the Master

It is that time again, when our Clerk applies his diplomatic (or not) pressure on the Master to write his piece for my penultimate Newsletter. It seems incredible how nine months of my year has flown by and sadly my glass now empty. In that time I have attended almost ninety events and have often been asked which has been the most outstanding. In truth I have found that it is the whole rather than the individual event which has been so rewarding.

I have attended St. Paul's on seven occasions to date with each being very different. The last being the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy with the three choirs of St. Paul's, Salisbury and Exeter Cathedrals. There are so many churches in amongst the streets of London, which probably go unnoticed by many, each with their own remarkable characters. The heavily incense laden air of St. Magnus the Martyr to the atmospheric Priory Church of St. Bartholomew - a popular filming location. In September the Company actively supports Open House Weekend which opens up many of these churches, and if you have an opportunity to spend some time in the City it is well worth seeking out some of these gems or, better, helping us to steward them over the weekend..

One event which I will remember as the most difficult moment in my year was the Company Banquet on 1st April - the G20 Banquet! The decision to hold or not to hold? That we went ahead following considerable consultation with the City, was happily vindicated and I would wish to thank all those who attended and who contributed to a very successful evening. The Beadle of Drapers' Hall and his staff could not have done more to make the event happen and to run smoothly.

In July this year the City is celebrating the 800th anniversary of London Bridge and to raise our Livery profile for the event the Company, in conjunction with the RIBA, is to run a simple architectural ideas competition for a 21st century interpretation of a living London Bridge. (An idea which Boris Johnson appears to have followed.) A medieval street fair will be held on London Bridge on Saturday 11th July which should be a fun day, and is to be recommended.

The first year in which the Company has joined with the RIBA to present our Travel Award has been very successful. There were eight applicants from whom we were able to find a worthy winner, out of some very ambitious project proposals.

As referred to in the last newsletter, the Master of Students has been very active. The number of students interested in joining this Company is growing exponentially- and these are the future life blood of the Livery. However, the more students we have, the more members of the Company we need to act as mentors bound to these students. The role is not onerous, nor does it require being in Practice, but only to be available to give guidance, if and when required. If you would like to know more, with a view to possibly becoming a mentor, then please contact the Company, your involvement will be most welcome..

Still to look forward to is the Judging at the RA Summer exhibition and the subsequent prize giving for the best architectural drawing in show and, in July, the Summer Banquet at the Vintners' Hall; a first time for the Company. Hopefully there will be no riots or other disturbances to detract from the evening, which, will be white tie, in compensation for the dress down at the Banquet, (I was in a lot of trouble from the ladies for that decision). My guest for the evening will be John Makepeace who has extended his considerable knowledge of wood in terms of furniture, to its informed use in building structure. I hope that many of you will be able to join us on this occasion.



News from the Court

While the Banquet went ahead in spite of the G20 problems it was felt that it would be prudent to defer the meeting of the Court until a later date - it was finally held on 12 May after a number of members had returned from the study trip to the west Coast USA. It is at this meeting that the annual accounts are presented for approval and it was satisfying to note that, despite the absence of sponsorship for the New City Architecture Awards, the books balanced - there was even a slight surplus but not a sufficient one to suggest that we would be able to hold the level of quarterage at its current figure.

Richard Brindley and **Guy Booth** were installed as Assistants, **Graham Applin** was admitted as a Freeman and **James Patterson-Waterston** was bound as a student of the Company to Mentor Patricia Stefanowicz. The Court agreed that the Company should participate in helping the Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal by arranging, in conjunction with the RIBA Competitions Office, an architectural ideas competition for the design of an inhabited bridge built off the existing deck (presumed to be adequate to support the necessary loads). The Competition conditions are available now through the RIBA and members are invited to have a go at winning the prize money!

Recent Events

For those who worry about the relative merits of the red wines of the Old and New Worlds an attempt was made to throw some light on the matter when a selection of members of the Chartered Architects' Company met with their opposite numbers from the Constructors' Company to carry out a blind tasting at the Naval Club in Mayfair. There was a competitive edge to the event with a prize of a bottle of bubbly for the outright winner.

Ten wines - 5 from each of the old and new worlds - were cunningly disguised in plain wrappers. Disconcertingly two port style wines were included. Comprehensive tasting notes were provided for all ten plus a couple of others not on test. Some of the descriptions and names, contestants were advised, may have been fictitious. The challenge was to match the wines with the descriptions. Easy, you might think. Not so. There was a great deal of convivial chatting to offer

distract-ion from the job in hand and the organizers had thoughtfully provided nibbles to help soak up any potential harmful effects of the alcohol. Some had sufficient salt or spice content to dull even the most discriminating palate.

When the results were announced it emerged that the Architects' team was triumphant with Past Master Nigel Thomson and a colleague of the Master Architect identifying the most correct matches.

Then followed a drink off featuring a mystery wine. Sadly neither succeeded in identifying its parentage though both managed to notice that it was both sweet and white. The tie breaker came down to a guess about the age of the wine. This produced the winner and the Runner Up and there were two mentions in despatches - one going to the Master Architect, the other, to a member of the Constructors' team.

The Company was well represented at the **United Guilds Service** and the excellent lunch which followed at Plaisterers' Hall.

As previously mentioned the **Annual Livery Banquet** held at Drapers' Hall on Wednesday 1 April was not entirely without drama. The event was well attended, there were a number of Company guests with the City being represented by Sherif George Gillon. All were treated to an interesting talk by artist Ben Johnson who gave a fascinating insight into the production of his very individual work. Much of this revolves around the representation of architecture on a grand scale. He is best known for his City Scapes. He has put together monumental works on Hong Kong, Jerusalem, Geneva and, most recently, Liverpool. The latter work was commissioned to mark Liverpool's European Year of Culture status in 2008 - the painting, measuring 16 feet x 8 feet now hangs in the Hunter Gallery in that City. Interestingly, the painting was paid for by subscription. Ben is keen to tackle a similar work of the City of London to be complete in 2012.

Also on the evening, the winner of the New City Architecture Award for 2008 was announced and certificates were presented by Sherif George Gillon to the owners, architects and main contractor of the New Street Square Development. Certificates were also presented for two commended schemes - St Paul's Churchyard (south-west), landscaping and Grade I railing replacement and One Wood Street. Details of the winning teams appear later in this newsletter.



above from left: Junior Warden Michael Wilkey, Susan Wilkey, Upper Warden Roger France, Ms Delva Patman, Sheriff George Gillon, Ann Head, The Master, Ben Johnson, Sheila Johnson, Renter Warden Edward King, Valerie King, The Clerk. The smiles may well reflect the positioning of the group below the painting of an early architect admiring her creation!

Below: Assistants Ronnie Murning and Jackie Howes and Steward Richard Biggins



There is a photographic record of the **Study Trip to the West Coast USA** elsewhere and for those who seek further and better detail, please look at the Trip Diary which is being added in installments to the blog.

There was a flurry of activity in early May with a visit by a number of members to the **Studios of Royal Academician Norman Ackroyd CBE** on 5 May. He

kindly showed members many examples of his work including some work in progress and we were also treated to a demonstration of print making on his antique and very splendid press. A real treat.

On 8 May members had an opportunity to visit the Tower RNLI Lifeboat Station and were given an interesting talk on the work of the Station by Wayne Bellamy standing in for Station Manager Janet Kelly. Wayne is her opposite number at the Chiswick Station. He had many tales to tell and, now that the boats are equipped with cameras, there should be wonderful TV footage for the future. Few will forget the image of the brand new Range Rover stranded in the mud at Chiswick as the tide came in with the owner and the young lady he was seeking to impress refusing to jump ship. They had to do so eventually with her white fox coat becoming somewhat soiled in the process. The driver's reluctance apparently sprung from a different cause for concern- he clearly hoped that the RNLI would be able to reverse the tide and rescue his vehicle so he could arrange the insurance before further problems arose!

It was good to gain an insight into the way that largely volunteer crews cope with numbers of call outs considerably in excess of those for any other RNLI Station in the UK.



Coming Events



The long awaited function on the SB Ardwin - once again made available to the Company thanks to the generosity of Rolfe Judd - is to take place on **Wednesday 3 June** when Deputy Christine Cohen OBE will give a talk on **'The Land-**

scaping of Public Open Spaces in the City'. Christine Cohen is the Current Chairwoman of the City Planning and Transportation Committee and she is also Master of the Gardeners' Company - she is well qualified to talk on the subject. A fish and chip lunch will be served with wines procured by Patricia Stefanowicz. All surplus funds generated will be given as a donation to the RNLi.

We could be forgiven for thinking that the current Master has a passing interest in wines. There is to be a **tasting of Swiss Wines and Cheeses** at the Swiss Embassy on Thursday 4 June. This event is being shared with members of the Constructors' Company and representatives from the Swiss Banking Community. Those tempted to believe that Swiss wines might be dismissed in much the same way as the Swiss navy will be in for a surprise. The event is, happily, booked out.

The last newsletter contained details about **Common Hall for the Election of the Sheriffs** for the coming year. This is to take place on **Wednesday 24 June** and will be followed by a lunch at Farmers' and Fletchers' Hall. A calling notice is attached which invites you to apply for passes to allow you to attend Common Hall and also to record your interest in partaking of lunch at Plaisterers' Hall following Common Hall .

As noted, the election is to be contested and, as such, a secret ballot will be called for - this will be held at Guildhall on Wednesday 8 July - if you wish to vote for your two preferred candidates this is the occasion on which your vote will count. If anyone wishes to have further information about the candidates or the process, please contact the Clerk.

The **Annual Service and Election Court Dinner** are to be held at St James Garlickhythe and Vintners' Hall on **Tuesday 7 July**. A calling notice is attached. The preacher at the service is to be Reverend Canon David

Parrott who is shortly to be installed as the Guild Vicar at St Lawrence Jewry in succession to Reverend David Burgess who served as our Chaplain for many years. The Master's principal guest at the dinner is to be furniture maker John Makepeace OBE FCSD FRSA - probably the best known furniture maker and designer in the country.

Because of the disappointment felt by many deprived of wearing their finery to the Banquet, the Master has decided this this event should be the white tie occasion for the year. A calling notice accompanies this newsletter - please book for yourselves and your guests for an enjoyable evening.

There are other events in the planning stage - principally the **Installation Court Lunch** at **Watermen's Hall** on **Monday 14 September**.

There is to be a **Fair on London Bridge** on **Saturday 11 July** to mark the 800th Anniversary of the first stone bridge over the Thames - the results of the architectural ideas competition will be announced at the Fair by the Lord Mayor. There will be lots of things to see and do on the day with many traditional crafts being demonstrated - fun for all the family.

Open House Weekend will run over the weekend of **19-20 September**. If you feel able to support the Company in its role of stewarding the various City churches which will be open on the day please contact either the Clerk or Stephen Wagstaffe.

News of Members

Past Masters John Owen-Ward and **Michael Welbank** have recently been re-elected as Common Councilors for the Wards of Bridge and Bridge Without and Billingsgate respectively. Both have also been reappointed as Deputies in the wards.

Michael leads an increasingly busy life with the Corporation having been recently elected as Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Keats House, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Management Committee for the next three years. He is also a Deputy Chairman of the Markets Committee,, a Governor of the Museum of London, Governor of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He is also a member of the Planning, Port Health and Libraries and Art Galleries Committees and Assistant to the Governor of the Honourable Irish Society. He was amused to find among his early duties

on the Hampstead Heath Committee the need to start a race on the Heath of a large number of lycra clad young ladies. Someone's got to do it!

Past Master John Penton was, with effect from 4 June, appointed as 'Advisor on Older and Vulnerable People' to the Board of the newly constituted Homes and Communities Agency - the successor body to the Housing Corporation. John notes, 'with the relentless passage of time you could justifiably consider the appointment to be naked self interest!'

Awards

The New City Architecture Award for 2008 was won by **New Street Square**, an office and retail development comprising five buildings and a new public space for Land Securities. The architects for the scheme were Bennetts Associates and the main Contractor was Sir Robert McAlpine - the winning team are pictured below after receiving their certificates at the Banquet in April.



The judges' assessment noted:

'This is a very significant development (over 100,000sq m in five buildings) on a formerly obscure backlands site off New Fetter Lane. The mixture of office, retail and public space is contained in a 'family' of buildings, each of which has an architectural identity of its own, but which contribute to a successful group, bearing no resemblance to the dull 1960s complex it replaces.

As one would hope for in a development of this complexity, the whole is more than the sum of its many parts, which include a low-rise management block, complete with vegetation walls, as well as large commercial blocks. The retail element feels a natural part of the development rather than an imposed addition. Similarly, sculpture, lighting and artwork has been incorporated into the development to provide a sense of place, which is as evident at night as during the day.

The decision to produce a cluster of buildings surrounding public

space, with typical City short routes leading in and out, has also allowed the architect the possibility of responding to different site conditions in different ways, for example by animating the Fetter Lane facade with an impressive layering of louvres.

Overall, the development provides huge added value to its area, and is a welcome addition to the City of London, prompting comparison with Broadgate and Paternoster Square. A very worthy winner.'

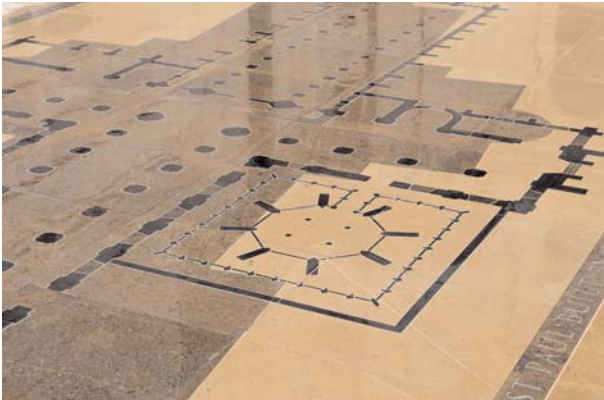


Two Commendations were awarded:

1, Wood Street - an office and retail development for Land Securities. The architects were Fletcher Priest Architects.

In their comments, the judges noted that, *'the architects had worked very hard to make what might have seemed a monolithic building a welcome addition to its area. They admired the way in which the composition had improved the ambience of Wood Street in particular.*





St Paul's Churchyard (south-west), landscaping and Grade I railing replacement (pictured above). The architect was the Surveyor to the fabric of St Paul's - Martin Stancliffe of Purcell Miller Tritton and his client, the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral.

'At first sight a modest piece of cleaning up around the cathedral (the site was formerly a masons' yard), this project is a real delight. It reveals an immense amount, in a subtle way, about the original building, through a combination of excellent design and first-class workmanship..... The quality of work here is a real homage to the 14th century master mason of the original cathedral, William Ramsey.'

The full judges report can be read and other photographs seen on the Company's blog site.

Each year the Charitable Trust funds the award of a **drawing prize at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition**. This is judged by members of the Company assisted by a Royal Academician. The prize was, in the early stages, for a measured drawing (remember measured drawings?) but, as the supply of these dwindled so the rules have been relaxed and the award now goes for *'a drawing or set of drawings of a work of architecture. This may be of any age or style and any medium can be used'*.

This year's prize went to **Peter Hull** of Richard MacCormac's office for a drawing entitled 'Oxford Quadrangle'. A commendation went to a drawing found nestling in the Print Room (rather than the Architecture Gallery) by **Elizabeth Collini** entitled 'Untitled (It Really Doesn't Matter at All)'

The hanging of this year's Architecture Room by RA Will Alsop represents a departure from previous years and has proved to be quite controversial. More, perhaps like a gallery in a museum of Modern Art.

In addition to the drawing prize the following charitable disbursements have been made for the year:

The Stuart Murphy Student Travel Award	£2,000.00
Art Prizes at the City Schools	£140.00
Team Build Competition	£1,200.00
Summer Exhibition Deawing Prize	£1,300.00
The Lord Mayor's Appeal	£750.00
Master's Charitable Donation	£500.00
Architects Benevolent Society	£500.00
Sheriffs' & Recorder's Fund	£150.00
RNLI Donation to Tower Lifeboat Station	£110.00
Almoner's Expenses	£125.00
Master of Students' Expenses	£125.00
Clerk to Charitable Trust Expenses	£100.00

As noted previously the amount available to disburse is determined by the interest and return on savings and investments: the more members are able to contribute to the fund, the more the Company is able to achieve.

In her role as Master of Students Jaki Howes spends considerable time keeping in touch with the existing students and in encouraging others to join the Company - there are a number in the queue at the moment and Mentors are being sought.

Our students and a number of their colleagues joined members of the Company at a presentation by **Steve Neumann** at Westminster University of the results of his travels to Japan. He was the beneficiary of the 2007-07 Travel Award. The selection of this year's Travel Award recipient is still to be finalized and details will appear in the next newsletter.

Thanks to the contacts of Ronnie Murning, an excellent visit to the office of Nick Grimshaw took place on 25 March and was hosted by Jolyon Brewis who gave a talk about the practice work and philosophy and led a conducted tour of the office. There was a good opportunity for further questions and socializing over wine and nibbles. The group below included a number of potential members and, centre rear, Jolyon Brewis.





Travels

The Company's recent study trip to the West Coast USA was regarded by many as the best yet. This is largely thanks to Karen Bergenthal who put the finishing touches to the itinerary and made all the arrangements for transport and access to a fabulous collection of public buildings and private houses. There is an abbreviated and illustrated trip diary being added (on an occasional basis) to the Blog by the Clerk and, in the fullness of time, Mervyn Miller's more erudite version will join his Dresden Diary on the website. For those not given to blog visiting, a few photographs from a very large collection are shown below.



left: Reception Area at Paolo Soleri's Cosanti

above: Taliesin West, Scottsdale

Below: Will Bruder's Phoenix Library



below: Antoine Predock's Phoenix Nelson Fine Arts Centre



left: FLW's Boomer House
below left: Eddie Jones rammed earth walls
below right: detail of Willard Price House



above: Louis Khan - Salk Institute

right: Eames House

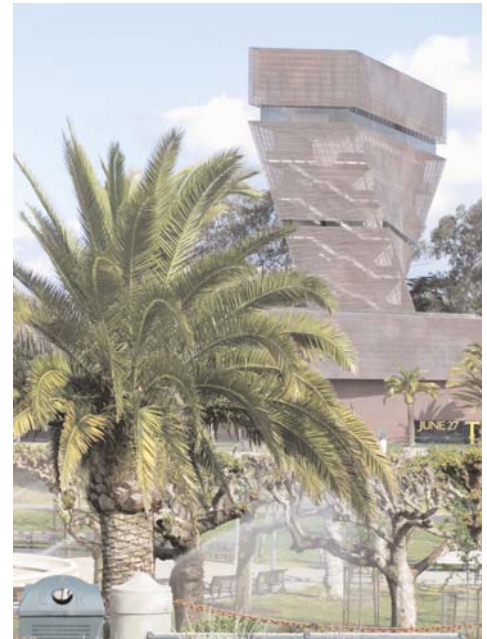
below: Gehry's Disney Hall & Meier's Guggenheim



left: Greene & Greene - Gamble House

below: - Neutra - Kun House





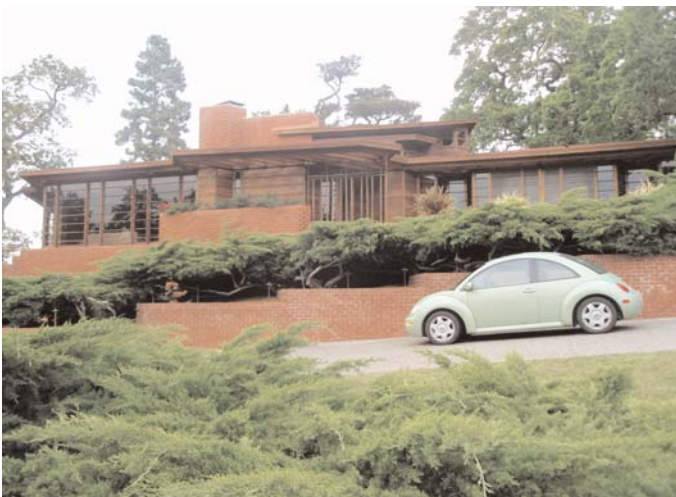
San Francisco

above: Renzo Piano - California Academy of Sciences

top right: De Young Museum - Herzog de Meuron

right: Herzog de Meuron again - Dominus Winery, Napa Valley

below : Frank Lloyd Wright's Hanna House on Stanford Campus



right: Jaki Howes tinkling the ivories in a Bernard Maybeck house



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