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*Pictures courtesy  
of Gerald Sharp  
Photography*



## The Company's Banquet at the Mansion House on Monday 18 March 2013

Our Company originates from a dining club of a small group of solicitors over a century ago. The founding members held the inaugural dinner at Mansion House in 1909; and the Annual Banquet has been held there every year, with a few exceptions since the Company was granted livery in 1944.

This year we were honoured to be welcomed again to the 1758 Palladian styled Mansion House, by our Master, Martin Roberts. Summoned to the beautifully columned Egyptian Hall, the main reception room, named after its Egyptian arrangement of columns, we awaited the arrival of Alderman Sir David Lewis, the Mayor's representative, the Wardens, and the principal guests.

Amongst those principal guests we were honoured to have the Masters of the Cutlers', Butchers', Builders' Merchants' and Woolmen's Companies. This year's Banquet also saw the Company's new Cadet Unit, the South East London 71st AFC Detachment of the Irish Rifles, providing a splendid Guard of Honour for the first time.

"Lex Libertatis Origo" "Freedom's foundation is the law". Our Company's motto was represented by the Chief Executive of the Law Society, the



Chairman of the Bar, Chairman of the City of London Law Society and Chairman of the Solicitors' Regulation Authority. Our guests from HM Tower of London, the Governor and Chief Yeoman Warder; the Commissioner for the City of London Police, and Sir Mark Potter, the former President of the Family Division will have been pleased knowing that the Mansion House was once the Lord Mayor's Court, and the storage space in the cellars today, once held prisoner's cells.

Our thanks go to the Wine Committee for choosing delightful wines to accompany our delicious meal and music by the London Banqueting ensemble: a tangy white Sauvignon de Touraine, L'Ambrouse 2010; and a Canon-Fronsac Bordeaux Chateau Moulin Pey Labrie. The latter of which had been laid down for 10 years since its purchase in 2003.

The toast, proposed by the Master, to the Queen, Prince Philip, the Duchess of Cornwall, and the Royal Family, was responded to by Sir David Lewis, as representative of the Lord Mayor. David McIntosh QC our Senior Warden, then proposed a toast to the guests, which was responded to by John Cridland, CBE, Director General of the CBI, who also proposed a toast to the Company.

Mr Cridland is the voice of the business community and leads the CBI in the UK and internationally. He is the business community's key spokesman to the media, as well as on public platforms and we were all struck by his eloquence.

To round off the evening, the City Grace was sung, and the ancient and honoured livery tradition of passing



the Loving Cup: a tradition dating back to Saxon times inspired from the assassination of King Edward whilst drinking. With our solicitors having guarded each other's backs from a similar fate, they retired to the Salon, for a final drink before departing for the night.

## Could solicitors be regulated as easily as cars?

(Cont. from back page)

What happens if a professional indemnity insurer becomes insolvent? Tough, says the Law Society: a law firm covered by an insurer which subsequently becomes insolvent risks SRA sanctions. The Law Society unhelpfully goes on to suggest that law firms take responsibility for checking the financial strength of their insurers notwithstanding the fact that it is the Law Society which decides which insurers are allowed to provide professional indemnity insurance. The fact is that individual firms of solicitors are simply not equipped to assess the solvency of a PI insurer.

Contrast the position in relation to motor insurance. When motor insurance became compulsory by virtue of the Road Traffic Act 1930, concern was immediately

expressed about the position of those injured by uninsured drivers. More than 65 years ago the Motor Insurers' Bureau was formed and entered into the first Uninsured Drivers' Agreement with the Government. Because compulsory motor insurance benefits insurance companies, they have accepted that they must cover victims of motor accidents where the driver turns out for whatever reason to be uninsured (or untraceable).

Securing insurance and authorisation for a law firm was once as simple and painless as insuring and taxing a car. Neither solicitors nor their clients have benefitted from developments since then.