



# The Grasshopper

## The Organ of The Gresham Society

MICHAEL FOR MAYOR! SPECIAL SOUVENIR SUPPLEMENT

Issue No. 18

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### **College Notes**

We welcome Richard Smith OBE as the new Executive Director. He comes from the Bovington Tank Museum and has a background in the shipping industry, so we look forward to an interesting interview with him in a later edition. Dr Sophie Scott-Brown also joins the College as the new Programme Manager and Sophie Gamarra is the Content Curator. Plus, we say farewell to Lucia Graves who left the College in August after six years' service.

The Lord Mayor's Show was quite an event, with Mesdames Alison Gowman, Wendy Mead and Carolyn Roberts in the procession (along with Sheriff Chris Hayward and assorted aldermen), plus the likes of Messrs Ayliffe, Connell, and McDowell applauding frantically from the balcony of the Mansion House.

### *Society Regulations*

A note to remind that, according to the Society's regulations, the surviving spouse or partner of a deceased member automatically takes on membership of the Society. This is in the Regulations (Rule 23a subsection 5 note 2). Mind you, we mislaid the rulebook a few years ago, but I remember this one quite vividly. We trust of course that this rule will be invoked as rarely as possible...

### **Ave Atque Value**

A warm welcome to new members Professor Melissa Lane and Juergen Behrends.

### **Members' Corner**

#### *Tennis balls my liege*

A full house of Society members visited Hampton Court Palace in September to view the Real Tennis Court, led by Ian Harris. Apart

from viewing the thrills and spills of an actual match (in which Ian played a leading role) members had the chance to go on Court and take a serve or two (with varying results). We were regaled with a superb high tea, partaken of in a beautiful walled garden in bright sunshine, which strengthened us for Ian's presentation on Real Tennis in Tudor Times. There were extracts from *Henry V* (aided by Oneself) and we were serenaded by Jack Carter and Reuben Ard, with Pilar Connell playing a cameo role. And afterward a few stalwarts repaired to the Mute Swan opposite. All very pleasant, though getting out of a palace car park after hours was quite something.

#### *The Queen's Anniversary Prizes*

As Samuel Pepys has it (and he certainly did – often enough) Up Betimes and off to St James's Palace on 16 November for the results of the Queen's Anniversary Prize. This is a biennial part of the Honours system, with awards going to FE and HE institutions for outstanding efforts. The Society was well represented among the readers and judges, with Sir Tim O'Shea, Clare Loughlin Chow, Wendy Piatt and Carolyn Roberts among the crowd, along with Yours Truly as your stern chronicler.

#### *Society Centurion*

Congratulations are in order for Sir Bryan Thwaites who has just celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. An eminent philanthropist and mathematician (and much else besides) he was also Principal of Westfield College in the University of London and indeed Gresham Professor of Geometry in 1969.

#### *Mayor's Ale Welcome*

Society member John Innes is Chairman of the Titsey Brewing Company (Titsey Place having its Gresham connection as members will know).



Not only do they do a pale ale by the name of Gresham Hopper, but they also have Lord Mayor as their seasonal ale. This is a porter so does not come in a bottle. See [Titsey Brewing Co. & Taproom - Crafting Refreshing Ales & Lagers!](#) The House and Gardens are also well worth a visit. See [Home Titsey Place](#)

#### *More on Snake Oil*

Following on from our earlier discussions of Friar's Balsam and the like, our very own Gyles Brandreth reminds me that his eminent ancestor Benjamin Brandreth was something in the history of patent medicines. Born in 1809, he emigrated to the USA where he patented his Vegetable Universal Pill (which had actually been invented by his grandfather). While his medicine may have drawn on the finer points of snake oil, he was a pioneer in the field of mass marketing and was one of the first to realise the value of creating brand awareness, so much so that his pill became widely popular and made him rich. He did draw opprobrium from some sources, such as Dan King's *Quackery Unmasked* of 1858, yet the pills get a favourable mention in *Moby Dick*, although Edgar Allen Poe pillories the man by name in *The Broadway Journal* of 1845. Brandreth himself went on to become something of a philanthropist. Brandreth Park is still to be found in the Adirondacks.

#### *On the map*

Congratulations to Professor Adrian Seville for his part in the publication of *Playing with Maps: Cartographic Games in Western Culture* (BRP 2023). One might say that it is a hitherto unstudied part of the map... Adrian is of course the *doyen* of the history of board games (The Game of Goose refers.)

#### *Gresham and Gresham's*

Veteran member Robert Stripe tells me that Sir James Dyson has donated £35 million to Gresham's School in Holt. He was a pupil at the primary school when his father died in 1956, and James and his brother stayed on with a full bursary. There's gratitude for you.

It should be noted incidentally that Gresham and Gresham's are quite distinct. The latter was

founded by Sir T's Uncle Richard – and the School is maintained by the Fishmongers and not the Mercers as you might have expected.

#### *Whole volumes in folio*

Emeritus Professor Keith Kendrick (Physic 2002-2006) has found himself a new career as a poet. Yes indeedy - [Songs of a Word Weaver](#) is out on Amazon in Kindle format. We are told that these are "Words woven from half a century's songs of wonder, love, heartache, change, aging, illness and the endless quest for this journey's purpose" - so there should be something there for everyone.

#### *The Knights Templar in Suffolk*

Colonel Howard Stephens tells me that he has been working on Knights Templar graves. He writes: "In recording a church in Santon Downham, near Thetford, I have discovered some previously unrecorded coffin lids of two knights. The symbolism is all correct but a cross check with a Templar Church in Brittany will help verify this. This could be quite a coup for our little church recording group, following shortly on my translation of a Greek inscription at Bardwell, Suffolk, which enabled us to ascribe, for the first time, the epitaph and ledger stone to its author. Bless you Mercers' School!" A report on Howard's trip to Brittany will appear in a later edition.

### **Reflections**

#### *Saints Crispin and Crispian*

Now, someone was asking me about the inclusion of Saints Crispin and Crispian on Picasso's birth certificate (See G17). They are supposed to have been brothers and early Christian martyrs in Gaul in around 286AD, and they made shoes while in hiding. There is also a tradition that they were apprentices in the Cinque Port of Faversham, which seems a little odd, not least because they were demoted from the canonical list of saints as part of Vatican II in 1968. They do appear as a Black Letter Saints' Day in the 1662 Anglican prayer book, possibly because of the immortality they have achieved thanks to the Bard and his famous Band of Brothers speech.



Red letters in the calendar go back to Caxton of course, though it seems that the practice did not start with him. In 1490 he says, “We wryte yet in oure kalenders the hyghe festes wyth rede lettres of coloure of purple,” (and who am I to disagree?) It appears in the Boke of Eneydos and was certainly the case in Cranmer’s 1549 Book of Common Prayer, and has been custom and practice in most calendars ever since.

### *Serving two masters*

Following on from the Amuse-Bouche that came round in the Autumn, it is worth noting a couple episodes from more recent times. Few people can have been promoted by their own side for torpedoing a Royal Navy battleship, and subsequently been decorated by the British – in this case for his services in North Africa. Captain Pierre Lancelot was present at Dakar in 1940 when the British sent a naval force to negotiate unsuccessfully with the new Vichy authorities, and he did indeed put a torpedo into the battleship *Resolution* for which he was duly promoted (though his Légion d’Honneur was only awarded posthumously after the War). He had an active naval war, particularly in the Aegean, but he also did sterling work on behalf of the Allies in the occupation of Corsica and in the Salerno landings, hence the decoration.

But perhaps more valuable to the Allies were the antics of “Garbo”, one Juan Pujol García, who worked as a double agent, originally out of Lisbon. His false reports to the Germans led to the award of the Iron Cross, and his success in persuading them that the Allies would invade through the Pas de Calais and not Normandy led to an MBE. In overtones of *Our Man in Havana* he invented twenty-six fictitious agents but covered them up scrupulously. When one “died” an obituary was placed in the *Liverpool Echo* and the Germans kindly paid a pension to his “widow”.

Then I think I read somewhere of a Polish soldier who marched into Paris in 1940 with the Germans – and back into Paris in 1944 with the US Army, only I can’t remember his name (let alone spell it). But it does go to show that the fortunes of war can take some unusual twists and turns.

### *What’s in a name*

And, following on from the multi-named Picasso in G17, I see that a Spanish aristocrat has been told by the local registry office to tone down the plan he has for his newborn daughter. Duke Fernando Fitz-James Stuart (for it is he – and yes, a descendant of King James II) has planned to christen the wee mite Sofía Fernanda Dolores Cayetana Teresa Angela de la Cruz Micaela del Santísimo Sacramento del Perpetuo Socorro de la Santísima Trinidad y Todos Los Santos. The poor little sprog will need a passport that opens up like a fan in order to include all the names. How very Spanish – and quite useful in hot weather.

### *Plague of serpents*

I was pondering recently in the National Gallery on *The Brazen Serpent* by Rubens. Members will recall that it refers to the episode in the Book of Numbers when the Children of Israel complain to Moses about wandering around in the desert. The Lord then punishes them by sending a plague of fiery serpents, which made them all repent pretty quickly (as well they might). The Lord then commanded Moses, “Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, he shall live.” Moses then made a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole, and indeed anyone who was bitten “when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” (Numbers 21:4-9 as members will recall.)

This then brought to mind an episode in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* when T E Lawrence recounts on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1917 that they encountered a plague of snakes when they entered Wadi Sirhan in modern day Jordan: “The valley seemed creeping with horned vipers and puff-adders, cobras and black snakes” so that it was dangerous to walk about the camp at night – and even then the pesky creatures would settle down on or even in the men’s blankets for warmth. Oddly enough, I experienced something like that once when I woke up in a bivouac tent, to find a snake wrapped round the tent pole just inches from my head. But that’s another story.



## **Editorial**

### *The Lord Mayor's Lecture*

The Lord Mayor's Lectures have got off to a flying start, with hits in the hundreds, though one lecture (you can imagine Whose) has scored over 3000 already. An important part of the Mayoral Year (see below), the Lectures have attracted some key speakers from a wide variety of City- and London-based organisations. They are available on the [Gresham Society](#) website (don't forget to book here by clicking on your chosen webinar) and it will also go up on YouTube. The programme is pretty full up to Easter already, but there is still space for more speakers. So do get in touch if you would like to contribute or you know of an organisation that might. We would particularly like to hear from more livery companies.

### *Proofs and Puddings*

Some Doubting Thomas has cast aspersions on the veracity of some of my anecdotes. Perish the thought! All non-fiction is covered by a reference which I keep with regard to the source; anything going beyond that might simply prove that fact can indeed be stranger than fiction. To suggest that I am embroidering a story is like saying that the Bayeux Tapestry is a nice piece of needlework...

### **Envoi**

Following on from the Great Fire of London in G17 last September, Bell Harry in Canterbury once sounded the curfew at 9pm every night when fires had to be put out so as to avoid a repetition of the disastrous fire of 1174 (though some say that it was the monks themselves who started it. This might be an early example of an insurance scam...) During Covid it was tolling at 8pm to commemorate the victims of Coronavirus. And (in contrast to medieval times) it is operated remotely today. Some members of course will remember Tom Tower in Oxford and the 9 o'clock curfew for students to return to College. It still chimes 101 times but that is hardly likely to recall students from The Bear, The Chequers, the Turf, the Turl or the Mitre. (The bell might not be audible from the Lamb and Flag and certainly not the Eagle and Child as this is currently closed for

refurbishment.) And could it be true that the Cathedral bell in Chester sounds a curfew at 9pm for all Welshmen to go to bed? Perhaps one of our members could enlighten us.

## **STOP PRESS STOP PRESS**

### *Keep the Date*

### **AGM & DINNER**

Keep an eye out for the forthcoming date for the AGM & Dinner. Details should be coming round soon.

### **NAILOR LECTURE**

The biennial Nailor Defence Lecture is due in 2024 and we are honoured to be invited to Mercers' Hall on Monday October 7<sup>th</sup>. The speaker has yet to be confirmed, but will be a senior figure, either military or civilian, following in the footsteps of such speakers as Lord Peter Ricketts (2022), Lord George Robertson (2015) or Sir Richard Dearlove (2009).

### *And Finally...*

New Year's Greetings – with hopes for a happy and prosperous year.

If you have any news items for *The Grasshopper* do let Tim ([t.j.connell@city.ac.uk](mailto:t.j.connell@city.ac.uk)) or Basil ([greshamsociety@gmail.com](mailto:greshamsociety@gmail.com)) know. Anything on awards, recent publications or odd curiosities will doubtless suit

#### Editorial Team

Professor Tim Connell Editor-in-Chief	Basil Bezuidenhout Sub-Editor-at-Work
Barbara Anderson Senior-Revisions-Editor	Jack Wigglesworth Editor-at-Lunch



## MAINELLI FOR MAYOR!

### SPECIAL SOUVENIR SUPPLEMENT

With all the insouciance of the draughts player who finally gets his piece onto the back row, our very own Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli has been installed as the 695<sup>th</sup> Lord Mayor of London. This took place appropriately enough on September 29<sup>th</sup>, this being Michaelmas in the Church Calendar, so Someone is evidently looking out for him...

### *Michael the Man*



Via: David-Vintiner-2016.03

Michael is nothing if not well-travelled, travel doubtless being facilitated by the fact that he has four passports. Born in Seattle, a graduate of Harvard, Trinity Dublin and LSE, Michael is nothing if not a citizen of the world. That and (I have to say) his range of languages will be of enormous benefit to his role as mayor. He will be ably supported by Elisabeth, who will be active in her own right with her Stop Violence Against Women and Girls Initiative.

### *Michael the Mayor*

Strictly speaking, this all began when Michael became an Alderman, and thus eligible for the position, with his roots in the Broad Street Ward, appropriately enough the original home for Sir Richard Whittington. Then his two-year stint as Sheriff, this being only the second time in history that (along with Society member Chris Hayward) he held the fort at the Old Bailey because of Covid. But then his credentials with the City range far and wide:

apart from his links with over a dozen livery companies, he has held responsibilities with Goodenough College, Gresham College and Morden College, plus links with King's London and UCL (and will shortly be installed as Rector of City, University of London). His commercial credentials are impeccable, though (as you might expect) these range from his time working on aerospace to the array of topics covered by Z/Yen, the think tank he founded with fellow Society member Ian Harris.



### *Michael's Year*

First there was the Silent Ceremony and Presentation of Addresses and then the Lord Mayor's Show and Lord Mayor's Banquet. After that, the life of a Lord Mayor becomes something of a dizzy whirl. Michael has already clocked up a State Banquet for the President of South Korea, and an ongoing range of events, literally from breakfast to events that go long into the night. His travels abroad have already begun with COP28 – the Lord Mayor expects to travel for about one day in three of his tenure.

### *Connect to Prosper*

Yet amid all this Michael is firmly fixed on his own plan for the year. Connect to Prosper: Celebrating the Knowledge Miles of our Square Mile, the World's Coffee House. During his extensive research last year, Michael identified the 40 learned societies, 70 higher education institutions, 130 research institutes that go to make up London – and over 24000 businesses just in the Square Mile. He plans to draw on at least some of those via the [Lord Mayor's Lectures](#), covering an eclectic range of topics that aim to demonstrate the sheer range and variety of the work being done across the City,



drawing in particular on the 111 livery companies. Gresham is well represented already, as the Lord Mayor's Lectures are being hosted on the Gresham Society website with Yours Truly as Convenor, ably assisted by a range of experts including Professor Richard Harvey. Gresham professors past and present are also represented. Apart from Professor Victoria Baines and Professor Carolyn Roberts, members may well be familiar with Avinash and Raj Persaud – and others are welcome to join us. The format is a 20-minute webinar followed by 20 minutes of questions, on different days of the week, typically at 11am or 3pm. See the [Gresham Society](#) website and click on [Knowledge Miles](#). Webinars are already scoring hits of 900 and more, and will also be available on YouTube.

### *The Coffee Colloquies*

A series of early morning sessions will take place at the Mansion House during the year, based around the UN Sustainable Development Goals. There are 17 of these, but we have brought them down to the 6 P's – Posterity & Planet, People & Possibility and Prosperity and Productivity. (Michael being Michael of course, he has identified at least 3 more: Space Protection Insurance, Ethical Artificial Intelligence and Philanthropy & Investment).

### *The Lord Mayor's Charity*

As Lord Mayor, Michael will be supporting a range of worthwhile causes, some of which he has chosen for his year such as the Sea-Change Sailing Trust, MQ Mental Initiative and the Ethical AI Initiative.

He has been connected with some for a long time, while others are part of the ongoing charitable activities that are supported across the City: [The Lord Mayor's Appeal | A Better City for All | The Lord Mayor's Appeal 2022/2023](#)

### *The Lord Mayor's Coat of Arms*

As Sheriff, Michael became entitled to a coat of arms and he clearly put a lot of thought into it, quite probably to the alarm of the College of Heralds, who have doubtless never had to find a heraldic description for a puffin playing a pair of bagpipes... There is a logical explanation for all of it of course, so readers may wish to look

further at [The Mainelli Coat of Arms | Professor Michael Mainelli](#)



Overall, we may be sure that this will be an innovative and exciting year. Few Lord Mayors (if any) have attempted to recreate Einstein's two clock dilation relativity experiment, let alone successfully, and with Michael's nautical interest (he is after all Admiral of the Port of London) we can look forward to the autonomous boat ride from Dagenham to Queenhithe and viewing the Thames boundary stone at Staines. A go kart race, bicycle safety day and a horseback ride round the Square Mile.

All I can say is watch this space and let's all look for ways of supporting Michael who (apart from anything else) will be President of Gresham College this year.