

The Flame



DEAR FIREBIRDS

We have had a wonderful start to our social activities with the visit to the Wallace Collection and this newsletter will be an additional way to keep in touch and up-to-date with all the news.

The Flame should land in your inboxes three times a year - in March, June and November. It will report on past and future events, there will be articles of interest and trivia, and hopefully many of your contributions. Please, be involved and send your contributions to the Editor, Erika Gloyn, at news@firebirds.city.

This first issue will go to all Past Mistresses and Consorts who were in office during 2015/16. Subsequent issues will go to Firebirds members only.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

PHOENIX DINNER AT
SKINNERS HALL
13th March 2017

THE LORD MAYOR'S
ASCOT RACE DAY
3rd May 2017

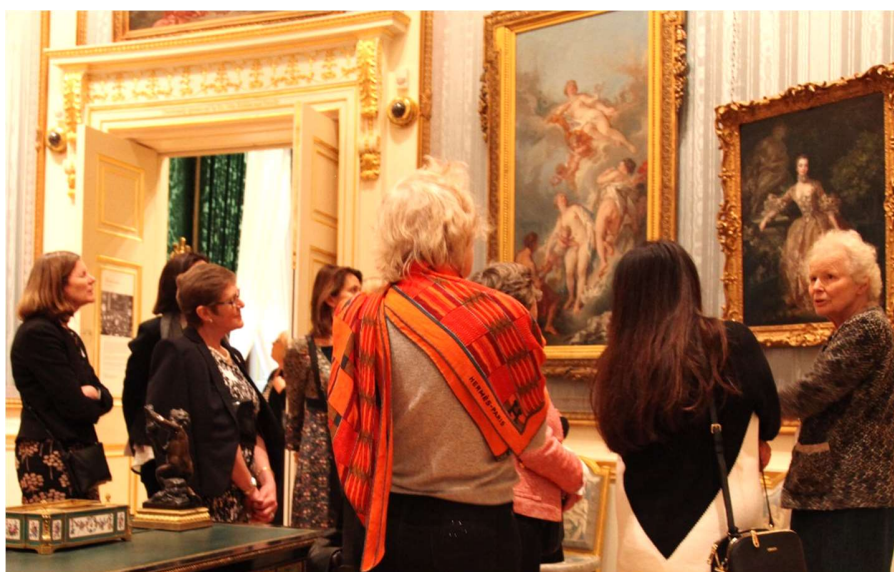
VISIT TO FAN MUSEUM
5th June 2017

VISIT TO FAN MUSEUM
12th June 2017

CALLING ALL MEMBERS

We are keen that all Firebirds have the opportunity to join us on the various events, social and otherwise. Membership is open to all Mistresses and Consorts who were in office whilst Lord Mountevans was Lord Mayor of London (November 2015 to November 2016). Clearly Ironbridge is the primary link for the year groups, and we have tried to contact all of those at Ironbridge 2016. But if you know of anyone who has not yet been contacted, is eligible and would like to join, please ask them to get in contact via our Membership Secretary, Vicky Nugee.

membership@firebirds.city



VISIT TO THE WALLACE COLLECTION 9TH FEBRUARY 2017



DISPATCH FROM VICE-PRESIDENT BOWMAN

When our Madam Chairman of the Firebirds asked if I would like to write a short piece for the first edition of 'The Flame', I jumped at the chance. It's been five months since Charles and I moved out of the Old Bailey and seeing so many of you at the Wallace Collection was a timely reminder of just what enormous fun 2016 had been.

Despite all the uncertainty around the referendum in June and the USA elections and then the death of practically every rock star in the northern hemisphere, 2016, for me, will be forever associated with the joy of meeting a fantastic group of women and men - all coming together through their link with the Livery movement and the City of London. I dined in the most magnificent Halls, visited the most inspiring schools and colleges, listened to the most glorious music in the most splendid churches. From sitting in St Paul's at the Queen's 90th birthday service of thanksgiving to singing 'I Will Survive' to the Chance Band on the dance floor at the Sheriff's Ball - there was never a dull moment.

The enthusiasm of the consorts for their associated livery companies and the huge amount of work they do supporting the efforts of the Masters in furthering their company's trade, apprenticeship and educational schemes and charitable endeavours is extraordinary. So much good can be achieved and in such an entertaining way.

I would like to thank you for the immense hospitality that was extended to me at your various halls and other venues around London and in particular for the tremendous support you gave to the Old Bailey Fashion Show. This event raised over £13,000 for the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund and Blue Sky. Two charities dedicated to reducing recidivism by assisting ex-offenders get their lives back on track through training and employment. It was a spectacular evening and enormous fun.

It's good to know that the party hasn't ended. Through the Firebirds and Phoenix Masters we will all be able to continue to explore everything the City has to offer and enjoy one another's company. We are so lucky to have such an enthusiastic and imaginative Firebirds committee – the splendid logo and this newsletter demonstration enough of their creative flair and professionalism, the future is very warm and very bright.

Charles and I are looking forward to seeing you on the 13th March at the Phoenix Masters' dinner and I also understand that the Sheriffs' Ball, in aid of the Lord Mayor's Appeal is taking place in Guildhall on September 15th this year. Roland – I'll see you on the dance floor!



THE SPLENDID FIRE BIRDS LOGO

needs no explanation, but some of you may be intrigued by the Latin motto - *Surgere in Lumine*. The concept of a firebird is relatively common in religions and mythology, representing the sun, creation, and rebirth. The most well-known example is the Phoenix, the name adopted by the 2016 Ironbridge Past Masters' Association. A lesser known example is the Bennu bird which, according to Egyptian mythology, was a self-created being said to have played a role in the creation of the world. And it is believed that the Bennu provided the inspiration for the Phoenix within Greek mythology.

The first mentions of Bennu date from the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom: the bird was associated with the creator god Atum, which in turn was an aspect of the sun god Re (Atum was the evening sun, Khepri the morning sun and the nominal Re the midday sun). Later, during the Middle Kingdom, Bennu was considered the ba of the sun god Re, which originated Atum. The ba is one of the souls that make up things in Egyptian beliefs; it is roughly equivalent to our notion of personality.

Bennu is said to have flown over Nun, the primordial ocean, right before creation. He finally perched on a rock and let out a loud cry which broke the primeval silence. This first cry was said to have determined what was and what was not to be in the creation by the hands of Atum.

The name of Bennu is derived from the Egyptian verb *wbn*, meaning "to rise in brilliance". And those of you who, unlike me, paid attention during their Latin lessons will recognise that this translates to "*Surgere in Lumine*" - our motto.

So what better motto for the Firebirds? As consorts we provided inspiration for 'our Masters', are full of personality, and continually rose with brilliance in support of their year 'on the perch'. Well, that's what I tell my Master.

Peter Green

Footnote: Whilst collating this newsletter, our eagle-eyed editor noted an inconsistency in the spelling of the motto on our logo versus the text above. Knowing our readers demand linguistic accuracy, the matter was referred to a higher authority, Dr. Liz Gloyn, Lecturer in Classics at Royal Holloway, University of London (who by coincidence is also the daughter of our editor). Although the difference was minor – Lumina rather than Lumine – it prompted a fascinating and detailed insight on the subtleties of the Latin language, summarised below:

"There are various options for saying 'rise'. 'Surgere' means 'to rise'. If you want to issue an order ('rise!'), then the motto needs to use 'surge' for ordering one person, or 'surgite' for ordering more than one person. If you want to say 'we rise', then you need to use 'surgimus'. 'Lumina' can mean lights, plural, but Latin often uses the word in the plural to mean eyeballs! It's better to use the singular to avoid ambiguity. Again, there are two options here, depending on what you want to say. If you want to say 'rise into the light' meaning that your direction is towards and into the light, then you need 'in lumen'. To say 'rise in the light', meaning that you are in the light as you rise, you would use 'in lumine'."

So there you have it. *Surgere in Lumine* is quite precise – To rise (with any amount of people) heading upwards whilst bathed in light. And not, thanks to our editor's daughter, into the eyeballs!

THE FIREBIRDS' FIRST OUTING

by Angela Chambers

It was some time coming, but in the end it was worth it! The Firebirds' inaugural event at the **Wallace Collection** was well attended by a lively and enthusiastic crowd, who were clearly pleased to get together and keen to catch up on everyone's news.

We started with lunch in the Wallace Restaurant, which is situated in a covered courtyard dotted with trees and sculptures. After a light and delicious two course meal, the party was split into two groups and taken by guides Midori and Cynthia to view some of the highlights of the collection. The expert guide lecturers were both passionate about their subject and exceedingly generous with their time.



Highlights of the day included paintings of Madame de Pompadour by Boucher, The Swing and The Souvenir by Fragonard, Mrs Mary Robinson by Gainsborough, Miss Nelly O'Brien by Reynolds and, of course, The Laughing Cavalier by Frans Hals. We saw pieces of exquisite furniture, including stunning examples of work by Andre-Charles Boulle, who is generally considered to be the pre-eminent artist in the field of marquetry. The collection also includes pieces of Sevres porcelain, the finest being the inkstand by Jean-Claude Duplessis. A favourite was an adorable gold and enamel scallop-shaped Snuffbox made by Jean Ducrollay in 1744, with radiating peacock's feathers.

The lunch and the guided tours were a great success and many of the Firebirds may well return to explore the collection in their own time.



Visit to the Wallace Collection 9th February 2017

PHOTOS FROM THE WALLACE COLLECTION

Our web-site is currently under construction, and we plan to include a photo gallery from Firebirds' events. In the meantime, if you want to see further photos from our trip to the Wallace Collection, use the following DropBox link to view or download:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/1w00ba6ubjfx8d/AADKUinBTI0uEjRLs5qH67u_a?dl=0

FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE FAN MUSEUM

The Firebirds' next outing will be to the Fan Museum located in historic Greenwich. The Museum is home to a diverse collection of fans from around the world, dating from the 12th century to the present day. It is the only museum in the UK devoted to the history of fans and the art of fan making.

The Fan Museum is able to offer Firebirds two dates for a special afternoon visit, Monday, 5th and Monday, 12th June, with groups of up to 32 people on each day. The visit will start at 1 pm in the main reception, where guests will be offered a glass of prosecco and then move into the Orangery for a workshop on fan making. At 2 pm there will be a tour of the Museum. Tea will be served in the Orangery at 3.30 pm and finish at 4.30 pm. The cost is £30.00 per head and places will be given on a first come first served basis.

A formal invitation will be sent out to everyone in due course, but meanwhile please keep a note of these dates in your diary.

CITY TRIVIA



We thought all Firebirds may be interested in 'little known facts' about the City of London and the livery companies. Your contributions are welcome for future editions!

How many Roads are there in the Square Mile?

It may surprise you to learn, that until 1994 there were precisely zero Roads. Those of you with a good attention to detail may have noted the capitalisation of 'Road', which was a small clue. There are no Roads, but many Lanes, Streets, Ways, Alleys, Courts, Yards, some very narrow Avenues and other unusual names. Public rights of way were not generally referred to as roads until the 16th century, by which time all the current thoroughfares in the Square Mile were in existence and had been named. Due to boundary changes in 1994 there is now part of one road, Goswell Road but that is the only current exception – trust the boundary planners to ruin a good story! Have a look as you walk round the Square Mile and see how many other examples of thoroughfare names you can find.

Peter G

NOTICE

Sandy Rowell, Past Mistress Lightmongers, would be interested in setting up a Firebirds' golfing group and would be happy for people to contact her.

Sandys details: Home: 01279 876611, Email: johsan54@keme.co.uk

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