

## History

Records of the City of London dated 8th September 1284 contain the earliest written evidence referring to the Guild of Horners, placing it among the earliest foundations. By 1376 it was entitled to send two members to the Court of Common Council, the ruling body of the City of London. In 1476, the Bottle Makers amalgamated with the Horners', whose Coat of Arms contains three leather bottles along with the three bugle horns representing the union. In 1638, King Charles I granted the Horners' a Royal Charter and this is the authority by which the Company operates today. In 1943, the Company became associated with the plastics industry and encouraged members in that business into its livery. The plastics industry had by then largely replaced horn. Today, the Company's ancient links to the City of London are combined with support for both the modern plastics and polymer industry and the traditional craft of the horner.

## Mission Statement

The Worshipful Company of Horners will maintain the constitution, traditions and customs of the City of London and will support the Lord Mayor and Corporation in promoting the status and image of the City. The Company will seek to maintain and support the ancient craft of the horner and of the leather bottle maker and will promote the interests and development of plastics, the plastics industry and scientific education. It will do so while promoting the good fellowship and welfare of its Liverymen, Freemen and guests.

## Composition of the Company

The governing body of the Company is the Court, consisting of the Master, Upper Warden, Renter

Warden, Deputy Master, Past Masters and a number of Ordinary Assistants. The Master and Wardens are elected annually and installed in office in February. The Company has a total membership of over 250. The Clerk, a permanent officer of the Company, is responsible for the administration. The Beadle assists the Master and Wardens on ceremonial occasions.

## Methods of Admission

There are three stages to being admitted to the Company.

The first stage is to apply for and be granted the Freedom of the Company. Successful candidates are admitted to the Freedom in a short ceremony at a Court meeting.

The second is to obtain the Freedom of the City of London. Possession of the Freedom of a Livery Company facilitates this process. Applicants are admitted at the Chamberlain's Court at Guildhall.

The final stage is to be admitted to the Livery, which normally takes place after two years as a Freeman. The Freeman is "Clothed in the Livery" at another short ceremony before the Court.

## Responsibilities of Liverymen

The duties of those admitted to the Freedom and the Livery of the Company are set out in a formal declaration made to the Court during the admission ceremonies and are the duties expected of a good citizen of the City.

It is considered an honour to be admitted a Freeman of the Company and the decision to apply should not be taken lightly. As with other Companies, it is normal for a person, having joined the Livery, to remain a Horner for life. The obligations that accompany the privileges of

membership are not burdensome. However, in common with any other voluntary organisation, the individual reaps benefit from his or her membership in proportion to the effort put in. The well-being of the Company is in the hands of its members who can demonstrate their commitment by joining in the Company's life and its activities.

## Charitable Activities

The Company has established Charity Funds to which members are expected to contribute. The emphasis is on the support of educational initiatives related to plastics, their applications and scientific principles.

The Education Charitable Fund is the principal sponsor of the Polymer Study Tours, courses designed to assist science and technology teachers to develop their knowledge of plastics. The Fund is also a major sponsor of the Salters/Horners 'A' Level Physics Course, a modern approach to the teaching of Physics developed by York University and support is given to other educative projects. The General Charitable Fund gives support each year to a range of deserving causes.



## Awards

In conjunction with the British Plastics Federation, the Company sponsors the annual Horners Award for Plastics. The Award is given for innovation, good design and commercial success in the plastics field. The Horners Bottlemaking Award recognizes the Company's historic links with that trade. A third annual award is the Student Design Award made in conjunction with the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining.

## Other Livery Activities

The Company holds a wide variety of functions each year, including Visits, Luncheons, Receptions and Dinners. The Annual Banquet takes place at the Mansion House in October. The Company, uniquely, has its own choir, which sings at the annual Carol Service at the church of St James Garlickhythe and also at the Election Service held at Candlemas in early February to celebrate the installation of the new Master. Spouses and guests are welcome at most functions.

The Company is also active in Inter-Livery events such as the Bridge and Tennis Competitions and the annual Charity Clay Pigeon Shoot.

Liverymen of one year's standing are encouraged to exercise their right to vote for a Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs each year in ceremonies at Guildhall.

## Affiliation - No 27 Squadron RAF

Many livery companies 'adopt', or form an affiliation, with units of the Armed Services. The Horners' Company is entering 2004 with a fresh association with No 27 Squadron Royal Air Force, based at RAF Station Odiham in

Hampshire. The Squadron is equipped with Chinook helicopters and is an active front line unit.

## Benefits of Membership

By becoming a member of the Worshipful Company of Horners you will find yourself in the company of like-minded people supporting an ancient guild and livery company that is also a modern City institution. The combination of safeguarding ancient traditions while promoting and supporting a vibrant modern industry is as personally rewarding as it is useful to the recipients. You will have unrivalled opportunities to visit places that are prestigious and unique, and also the knowledge that the Company activities are designed to benefit others while allowing members to enjoy their participation. Membership is by no means exclusive to those connected with the plastics industry. Our members hail from many varied walks of life.

## Financial Obligations

Charges levied for membership of the Company are as follows:

Admission to the Freedom (known as a Fine)

£500.00

Annual Fee (known as Quarterage)

£105.00

Admission to the Livery (a further Fine)

£500.00

*April 2004*

## Further Information

For further information and to arrange an informal discussion if required, please contact the Clerk by letter, telephone or email thus:-

The Clerk, The Worshipful Company of Horners  
c/o The Clergy House, Hide Place, London SW1P 4NJ

Tel: 020 7834 1575

e-mail: [horners.clerk@btinternet.com](mailto:horners.clerk@btinternet.com)

# THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF HORNERS



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