



BULLETIN FROM THE RT HON THE LORD MAYOR

30 July 2021

Fellow Liverymen

Over the last few weeks I am pleased that the patterns of normality, to which we have looked forward for so long, have begun to return to the Mansion House and the City. The lifting of social distancing restrictions on 19 July has ushered in a new period in this pandemic in which we are able once more to meet together in greater numbers for the fellowship and face-to-face interaction which is a hallmark of the Livery. By acting prudently and with care I hope that we will be able to navigate through the no doubt challenging period ahead without a further lockdown.

I am delighted that over the last few weeks, as restrictions were eased during the early summer, I have been able to attend events in person with many in the Livery. I am also pleased and proud that representatives of the Livery, together with other City communities, were able to gather at St Paul's Cathedral to look back on all that has happened since the pandemic began, and to look forward with confidence to the future. The **Service of Reflection and Hope** on 22 June was an opportunity to reflect on the loss and sadness of the past year and to give thanks for the inspirational efforts of so many in battling the pandemic. Livery Masters took their seats alongside key workers, volunteers, elected Members, residents and City workers in a moving service full of beauty and colour. I am grateful for all who took part and who supported the event. The Lady Mayoress and I will remember it as one of the highlights of our extended term of office and a moment of real optimism and solidarity. It was great to be among the Livery family once again.

It seemed especially appropriate that on 19 July, as remaining restrictions were lifted, I hosted a presentation ceremony at Mansion House for my **Lord Mayor's COVID19 Livery Awards**. The awards recognised the contribution made by Liverymen and members of staff, who have deployed their skills, their time, their knowledge and their resources to help others during the pandemic. The ceremony was my opportunity to congratulate in person the 26 individual winners, each nominated by their Companies, who between them have made an invaluable difference during the last eighteen months, by

- distributing food parcels and baking bread for vulnerable communities;
- contributing, making, and indeed in one instance inventing, PPE and ventilators for hospitals in the UK and beyond;
- providing IT equipment for schoolchildren studying from home;
- raising funds, making grants and supporting countless charities struggling to help those most in need;
- while also sustaining their Companies, fellow liverymen and colleagues.

It was very touching to see the way that Companies have chosen to express their admiration for a fellow liveryman or colleague in this way and I hope that recognition by their peers will mean as much to the recipients as the Awards I presented. Congratulations to everyone.

In addition to the individuals recognised, I also wanted to express my own gratitude and respect for several organisations where it would be invidious to single out one person alone for a prize. I am sure all of us have been truly amazed at the spirit, resilience, dedication and humanity of our NHS since March 2020. As a means of acknowledging the doctors, surgeons, nurses, healthcare workers and everyone who has been on the NHS frontline during the pandemic, I also awarded collective Special Commendations to the entire Worshipful Society of **Apothecaries**, the Worshipful Company of **Barbers** and the Company of **Nurses**, with grateful thanks for everything that their members have done over the last year and a half.

A further collective award was made to the **NHS Livery Kitchen Initiative**, which has so impressed me with its imagination, ambition and sheer chutzpah – and through the way it has brought so many Livery Companies together with a common purpose. The whole team, from the chefs and kitchen staff, to the delivery drivers, the volunteers and the donors, were the winners of the fourth Special Commendation.

Many of us will soon be entering a period of summer leave. There is much to anticipate and prepare for in the autumn, including **City Giving Day** on Tuesday 21 September, which I hope will be another occasion to celebrate the City's support for charities and good causes. Also scheduled for Wednesday 6 October is the **Pan Livery Autumn Conference** at Mercers Hall, which will bring together representatives of the Livery to explore the extent and range of our philanthropic work, to discuss ways of collaborating further on philanthropy and to encourage improved communication about the Livery's good work. The event, which will run throughout the morning of 6 October and will conclude with lunch, is coordinated by the Pan Livery Steering Group, who will invite all Livery Companies to nominate attendees.

My last commitment before I myself go on my summer break is to participate in the **City of London Festival of Bells** on Saturday 31 July. Starting with the tolling of Great Paul at St Paul's Cathedral, the bells of the City churches will be rung in sequence for the rest of day, to acknowledge the reopening of the churches and all that we have to be thankful for. As the peals ring out across the Square Mile I will be thinking of all those who have lost their lives or loved ones during the pandemic, giving thanks for the inspirational service which this great collective challenge has highlighted, and looking forward with hope and optimism to the future.

The Lady Mayoress and I continue to be deeply grateful for your support, assistance and friendship and send you our very best wishes for a safe and happy summer. See you in September!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Russell', written in a cursive style.

Alderman William Russell
The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor



*The Lord Mayor's Service of Reflection and Hope
at St Paul's Cathedral on 22 June 2021*