

PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION

The 21st Century has already witnessed many watershed events in our great City of London but I am convinced that our celebration of the 75th birthday of Queenhithe Ward Club will be amongst the most memorable of the decade.

When the Editor invited Sir Alexander Graham to pen a preface to celebrate the Ward Club's Diamond Jubilee back in 1992 he and Lady Carolyn Graham had just completed a tremendously successful year as Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. His theme was a warm congratulation to the Ward Club for the outstanding support given to them during their Mayoralty year.

For Caroline and myself it has been a wonderful experience to take over from Michael and Carolyn as the Aldermanic 'team' for Queenhithe and to experience first-hand this tremendous support from such a vibrant and energetic group of members. After my admission to the Court of Aldermen in 2004 the Ward Club gave us a tremendous welcome and have continued to be very active in support of us both.

Consecutive Chairmen and their committees have organised a widely differing array of trips and activities. The Carol Service in St James Garlickhythe has become a regular feature and Christmas cards have advertised the Ward far afield. The Ward landscape has been vastly improved through a tree planting scheme, speed controls limit traffic noise and the Ward mace has been restored to its former glory with a new covering of gold!!

The Millennium Bridge is, perhaps, the most obvious and evocative symbol of the link between our ancient Ward, the wider City Financial and the modern multicultural world beyond the estuary of Old Father Thames. The River Thames remains the lifeblood of our City and it is especially fitting that the dock, which became a gift from King Ethelred to his Queen, Eleanor, over 1000 years ago, should be the focus of our 75th birthday celebrations. As Chairman of one of the first financial services companies to be established in Docklands, I have used the River for many years to go backwards and forwards to work, witnessing pivotal events and national celebrations.

Congratulations to all those who have added vibrancy and colour to our first 75 years. We raise our glasses to the next three-quarter century, whatever it may bring.

May the Queenhithe Ward Club prosper 'root and branch'!!

Gordon Haines