

Ian Locks steps up to lead a “future-minded” Stationers’ Company

Next week Ian Locks will succeed Tom Hempenstall as Master of The Stationers’ Company and he welcomes the chance to lead the Livery in what he describes as its “Golden Age”.

“The Company is currently 880 strong (including 523 Liverymen, 328 Freemen and 20 corporate members), way up on a few years ago,” says Mr Locks. “There are more young people involved with a very active Young Stationers’ group and an increasing number of Bursary students whose awards include three years free membership. The social side and dinners, the chance to network and enjoy conversations with others in the sectors represented by the Company, remain popular and increasing attendance for industry-relevant seminars and events speaks for itself. Our charities are now strongly focused on the education of young people for the future of our industries through Saturday schools, the Shine School Media Awards, support for industry relevant postgraduate students and work to bring to fruition a Stationers’ Academy which will specialise in skills relevant to communications and content-based industries. I am taking on the role of Master, fully aware of the responsibility to uphold the 611 year heritage, but committed to continue the forward-thinking that has transformed the Stationers’ Company into a modern organisation.”

Mr Locks praises Tom Hempenstall for the sound judgement, patience, inclusiveness and good humour he has brought to the role of Master over the past 12 months and says his will be a very tough act to follow.

Ian Locks is from a publishing background, starting as a journalist with the Marylebone Mercury and Paddington Mercury, two of 26 titles in a family newspaper business. He still remembers fondly his teacher Mrs Bishop who taught him to read and his childhood ambition to be “an organiser”, a dream he realised through his work for trade organisations, initially the Association of Free Newspapers and then for 20 years as chief executive of the Periodical Publishers Association. He became a Stationers’ Company Liveryman in 1990.

His work for the Stationers' Company was recognised with a Silver Medal, awarded only 14 times since its inception in 1922. This recognised his contribution to the process of revitalising the appeal of The Stationers' Company by extending its role into a wider range of content and communications trades (today these include: paper; print; newspaper, book and magazine publishing; packaging; office products; broadcasting; and digital media industries). This was achieved by broadening its appeal, not least with the launch the Digital Media Group, establishment of the Shine School Media Awards and re-engaging with the Company's historic links to the copyright agenda with Trevor Fenwick. He co-ordinated the Vision 2020 Seminar yesterday which included the launch of the European Digital Media Landscape to 2020 report. Afterwards there was a presentation of the first Stationers' Innovation Excellence Awards to 24 companies from across the sector, hosted by broadcaster Peter Day.

"We have seen some of the biggest changes to our industry since the introduction of printing to England in the late 1400s. We can make a real contribution to the essential process of adapting in the digital world," says Mr Locks. "As Master, my focus will be on three areas: industry relevance with a focus on innovation; furthering the Company's educational agenda with the successful adoption of a flagship Academy school; and encouraging a culture of charitable giving – hopefully all in a spirit of fun."

A late convert to golf, Mr Locks plays regularly off a handicap of 24 at Theydon Bois Golf Club. He also crews on sailing boats and enjoys long boats, too, having recently returned from a trip through the East Midlands canals. A family man, he is married to Valerie and has three daughters (Katharine, Ginnie and Charlotte) and six grand-daughters. He jokes that even the pets they have had have been female!

July 2014

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