



**The Worshipful Company of World Traders
Master Edwina Moreton Installation Dinner
18 October 2018**

**Professor Heather McLaughlin, Past Master
Toast to the Guests**

Master, Wardens, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Our company dinners always provide a wonderful opportunity to meet interesting people in beautiful settings and we are indeed privileged to be dining in the magnificent new stationers' hall - built following the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Today we seem to go in for much more creative destruction – but perhaps not quite of the type that Schumpeter had in mind.

News reports sound like they have been scripted by John Le Carre, the Prime Minister seems to have lost all sense...

.. of rhythm, and we are seeing a worrying shift towards nationalist politics and puerile rhetoric, usually articulated in no more than 280 characters...#crazyworld

It was the 18th century German philosopher Immanuel Kant who said that 'The possession of power unavoidably spoils the free use of reason'. In other words the more powerful people become, the more stupid their decisions and (*it would seem*) the more ridiculous their hair styles!

Not true of our dazzling array of guests this evening , some of whom have travelled from far and wide to be here – United States, Canada, France, Belgium, Ireland, and even Wales and Scotland.

As guests of the Company, we welcome the Master Constructor, Michael Parrett and his Clerk. Michael is a world-renowned expert in building pathology. He became something of TV celebrity as an expert on the BBC2 series 'Raising the Roof', which exposed the misdiagnosis of rising damp. Mike now investigates failures in ancient and modern buildings such as the Basilica San Marco in Venice, and the Helena May building in Hong Kong.

We also welcome Master Insurer, Terry Masters and his Clerk. Terry has enjoyed a distinguished career in reinsurance and underwriting which culminated in his appointment as CEO of Aon ReSolutions before retiring last year.

Master Fruiterer, John Warner and his wife Mavis are here as guests of Past Master Robert Alston. John is a Chartered Civil Engineer who has worked on projects all over the world and wife Mavis was one of the first women to become eligible for Membership of the London Stock Exchange.

We are pleased to host our Honorary Chaplain, the Reverend Sophia Acland, and to welcome our former Chaplain and Honorary Liveryman Bertrand Olivier, now Dean of Montreal.

The Immediate Past Master led a successful delegation of World Traders to Dublin earlier this year and we are pleased to welcome Justin Sullivan from IDA Ireland as his guest this evening.

Guests of the Master include Sue Balsom, former High Sheriff of Dyfed (and husband Denis). It's notable that her year as High Sheriff (2017-18) saw a historic hat-trick, when, for the first time, three women simultaneously occupied the offices of Lord Lieutenant, Lord Bishop and High Sheriff in the old county of Dyfed.

Also guests of the Master are Rose Gottemoeller (Deputy Secretary General of Nato) and husband Ray Arnaudo. Rose took up her position in 2016, after serving nearly five years as the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security at the U.S. Department of State. She has also served on the National Security Council staff as Director for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia Affairs and has taught Soviet military policy and Russian security at Georgetown University.

Our speaker and guest of honour is the Rt Hon Lord (George) Robertson of Port Ellen.

There's so much material to work with, it's difficult to do his CV justice in a couple of minutes – and so here are the highlights of the highlights.

Lord Robertson is Special Advisor to BP, Chairman of BP Russian Investments Ltd and Senior Counselor at the Washington DC based Cohen Group.

He was born in Port Ellen on the Isle of Islay, the son of a policeman and a French teacher but did not share his father's political views or his mother's language ability. He once said that he could make a declaration of war in French but ordering fish in a restaurant was a bit more difficult. He was educated at Dunoon Grammar School and the University of Dundee where he studied for an MA in Economics as well as leading a number of protests.

He began his career as a trade unionist and became senior negotiator in the Scotch Whisky Industry. He was elected MP for Hamilton in 1978 and from 1979-1993 held senior parliamentary Opposition roles including 11 years on Foreign Affairs. In 1993 he was elected to the Shadow Cabinet and served as Principal Opposition Spokesman on Scotland.

He was appointed Secretary of State for Defence in 1997 and then in 1999 became the 10th Secretary General of NATO and was elevated to the House of Lords.

In 2004 he was personally appointed by the Queen as one of the sixteen Knights of the Thistle (KT), and awarded the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George. He was awarded the US Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's top civilian honour in 2003. He has fourteen Honorary Doctorates (*I do think that's excessive*) and he is an Honorary Professor of Politics at the University of Stirling.

He has held a number of Non-Executive and Charity roles including Trustee of the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust and the British Forces Foundation. He is passionate about road safety following a serious accident where his Ford Cortina was hit 'head on' by a Royal Navy Land Rover carrying 100lbs of gelignite and a box of detonators.

He now lives in Dunblane, Scotland, plays golf, and takes good pictures. He has published two books of photographs, and has earned distinction of the Royal Photographic Society.

He is reported to have said that he would happily abolish his own title – being in favour of an elected second chamber. He wouldn't miss being called Lord – he much prefers George. So, tonight George Robertson will be “Defending the defensible: the value of rules for a volatile world”

But before his address, I would ask Liverymen, Freeman and Journeymen of the World Traders to be upstanding and toast all our guests.