

## **Master's Speech**

### **Welcome**

Chief of Air Staff, Fellow Masters, Ladies and Gentlemen and importantly our Guests – it is a delight to welcome you this evening.

Master Coachmaker – Richard Charlesworth.

Master Mariner - Captain James Barclay (or Jim) and the Master of the only other Honourable Company.

And Master Fan Maker Dr Jeffrey Bines.

Thank you for being with us with your partners.

And let me add a specific welcome to those of our young members of Air Pilots' joining us this evening. They represent our future in this industry of aviation.

“Inspire to Fly” were my words when I was installed as Master. I stand by that tonight.

To quote Louis Armstrong, albeit out of context– “I see skies of blue, And clouds of white. The bright blessed day the dark sacred night. "what a wonderful world". As Air Pilots this is our world, and we are privileged to enjoy it.

And to those of you joining us from Hong Kong – The Cathay Mafia - please behave. Mistress Vanessa and I look forward to being with you next month and what happens on tour, will remain on tour.

### **Thoughts**

It has taken until my early time as Master to begin to appreciate what we and others do together for the City of London and The Livery.

We are part of that movement which protects and respects Tradition, yet Represents our respective Company's, their industry and trade in the modern world.

We are a modern company and to be here together in The Historic Guildhall is special.

So please join me in thanking all involved from Guildhall in making tonight happen.

### **The Trophy and Awards Banquet**

The Company, then Guild, first awarded a Trophy in 1931, 3 years after the Guild was founded 90 years ago. In 1956 we gained Livery status, and in 2014, became an Honourable Company.

So, Tonight's banquet is a prestigious event and one to be cherished.

## **In Historic Terms this Week Marks:**

The anniversary of the world's first parachute jump in 1797.

In 1911 - the longest glider flight by Orville Wright lasting 9m and 45 secs.

After this Orville wrote: "The exhilaration of flying is too keen, the pleasure too great, for it to be neglected as a sport.

And in 2003 - The last Commercial flight of Concorde – so a fitting commemoration with the award tonight.

## **So Why Do We do This?**

To celebrate the joy of flight and the relevance of aviation to our nation's future.

To recognise excellence in our worldwide industry – and in every capacity.

To reflect on what some in the military have referred to as “acts of gross stupidity” – but acts which embrace bravery, courage and profound skill.

And most importantly to congratulate and recognise the Award winners on what they have achieved.

As I have learned, the scrutiny of the selection for these awards is severe.

And it is only right that we should come together to celebrate the commendable achievements of all our Award Winners.

Which, as we've heard, include:

### Examples of Teamwork

Representatives of a magnificent supersonic commercial aircraft.

The peace keeping and war winning capability of the backbone of the RAF for the last 37 years.

And to those who have helped to introduce the next generation combat aircraft to the RAF and the Royal Navy Fleet line.

### To Share Examples of Individual Performance and Skill which have Made a Difference.

Those who train.

Those who rescue.

Those who keep us safe.

Those who display aircraft and bring our story to the public at large.

And of course, commercial and business aviation.

And Never to be Lost: A Long-Term Commitment to our Company and Our Industry.

Individuals who give and do so much. But can often be lost under the radar.

These are Men and Women who come from around the world and from every sphere of aviation.

Their support is compelling.

They deserve our thanks and appreciation.

Finally, our Guest of Honour:

Air Chief Marshal (Sir) Mike Wigston. Himself a Tornado Pilot and Force Commander and known in the trade as either Sir, or CAS, and occasionally as Whiggy.

CAS Commands and leads our Royal Air Force and that he and Kate should be with us just 3 months after he took appointment is special, indeed a privilege.

Having worked for two of his predecessors (admittedly a long time ago) I know how busy life can be in the early months. And it can only have got worse.

Mike Joined the Royal Air force though a University Cadetship.

His career is too rich to go into in any detail.

But has included Operations in Iraq / Command at every level / Cyprus / The RAF's Assistant Chief of Staff, and before his appointment as CAS the Officer responsible for the Operational Capability of his service: equipment and infrastructure, yes.

But fundamentally, it is about people.

In this respect to celebrate and mark the exceptional service of the RAF Tornado Force will have been a poignant moment. Yet to be joined by the next generation – there is a reason to be cheerful.

Sir – on every count to have you with us tonight is particularly special and a delight to welcome you here amongst the brother and sisterhood of those who fly.

**On that note** – would all members of the Company please Stand and join me in a toast:

“The Award Winners and our Guests”.