



Worshipful Company of World Traders Master Sue Algeo's Valedictory Speech

Good evening and thank you all so much for coming tonight. And a very warm welcome to all our guests including Professor and Mrs Myles Wickstead and Sir Ciaran Devane (both Myles and Ciaran made much appreciated contributions to the programme this year). Also to the very Rev Bernard Olivier our former chaplain and to Paul Keherly all the way from Canada, and our wonderful new beadle Rod Brafield and Mrs Brafield. I'd also like to welcome my daughter Lucy du Preez and son Jonny Algeo – sadly our other son Nick can't be here as he's in The Gambia but he's with us in spirit.

I am absolutely thrilled to be on board the Belfast for this event. She's a ship with a remarkable history, having fired some of the first shots at the D-Day landings, and served in the Arctic Convoys, and in the Korean War.

But she also means a lot to me personally; my father was the Commander in the late 50s and he took on her last trip to the Far East. (We got postcards from every port!) Before she sailed, we had a most memorable family day out in her when we sailed from Plymouth Sound and the sailors put on a Crossing of the Line Ceremony which was all too scarily realistic for young children.

Now the motto of HMS Belfast, is "Pro tanto quid retribuamus", which, as I'm sure you'll know, means "For so much, how shall we repay?" (The sailors, I'm reliably told, translated it as 'We give as good as we get'.)

'For so much, how shall we repay?'

I rather like that, and it has a resonance with what we try to do in the Livery, which is often described as 'giving back'.

Along similar lines, at my installation event, which I can hardly believe was almost a year ago, I quoted Churchill: 'we make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give' – and that, in a sense, is what I would like to think my year has been about as we have examined areas where we can make a contribution, **in Education, in Sustainable Development and, of course, in Trade.** And it's for this reason I am delighted to be a World Trader because I firmly believe that responsible international trade has the power to lift people out of poverty and to improve their quality of life.

As a backdrop to this, we've also thought about **Climate Change** through our Tacitus lecture and the further work we are doing as we look towards Cop 26 and beyond. And, at an even deeper level, at several breakfast meetings, well known figures from the Army, Politics and

Business have spoken about **the way their Christian faith has informed their working lives**, something that those who know me will be aware of, is dear to my heart.

Now, I know you are all looking forward to having your glasses replenished and seeing round the ship, but this is the last time I'll be addressing you as Master, so may I ask you to bear with me now as I indulge in a little reflection on the year that has just gone by.

Because:

Dear friends, it's been good to welcome you here
As we come to the end of my Master's year
And I hope you're enjoying this final trip
As we celebrate on this wonderful ship.

Now – as some of you clever ones may have detected
The year did not turn out quite as expected:
No meetings in person, no drinks at the pub
No dinners, no gatherings at Little Ship Club
No tea at the Palace, nor Ironbridge stay
No trip to Estonia so far away....

But hey - it's been fun, it has made my heart sing
And I wouldn't have missed it for anything
And, as you will all be aware in this room
There's not very much that can't happen on Zoom...

And so the traditional business lunch,
Was a virtual lecture. Though nothing to munch,
A feast of ideas was what each speaker brought
And we dined on much that was food for thought.

Sir Paul Collier told us that African trade
Is a concept of which we should not be afraid
And Professor Myles Wickstead (the one who extolls
The United Nations Development Goals)
Spoke of people and planet and partnership – these
With prosperity and peace are known as 5 Ps

While Professor Mainelli explained the dark art
Of blockchain, and crypto and ledgers so smart
And Alex Jacobs described the disruption
Caused by dirty Money and corruption.

At Christmas our carols were all sung online
And we followed that up with a glass of mulled wine
And a virtual magician won grandchildren's vote
Doing strange things with a twenty-pound note!

Love Cheese of York sent us cheeses and wine
In pairings that really were rather divine
And on a cold evening it wasn't a pity
To view from our armchairs a walk in the City.

At breakfast Lord Dannatt brought to our attention
That leadership has a spiritual dimension
And Alistair Burt made us aware
Of the role of faith in the public square
While Lord Hastings discussed all the reasons why
Honest debate is in short supply.

As Tacitus loomed it became very clear
That the Guildhall would not be our venue this year
But thanks to our team, led by masterful Nick,
The lecture was virtual – and technically slick
And Kirsten Dunlop told us all we should not
Forget that the planet is getting quite hot
And spoke of the challenge we have as a nation
Of what we will leave to the next generation.

On International Women's Day
Oana assembled a team to say
How EdTech has power to change young lives
Ensuring that every young person thrives

And on many a Thursday it gave us good cheer
To sit with our fellow World Traders and hear
How they dealt with the problems, which by now were systemic
Of running a business throughout the pandemic
And our military friends also told, on the screen
How they'd dealt with the fallout from Covid 19.
These all, like the Phoenix had conquered the flame
Thank you, Zoe, for providing the name!

Then, being on-line, our Election Dinner,
Turned out to be really rather a winner
Though some thought the lamb was a little bit tough,
Sir Ciaran came up with some interesting stuff
Reminding us all of the threats to our nation
As he spoke of the end of civilisation
But all is not lost was his final conclusion

If we champion fairness, free speech and inclusion.

Now I also would like to give three cheers
For the people who led the event on Careers
Led by Danny, this wonderful team didn't shirk
As they shared with our students wise words about work.

Then came the summer, and suddenly we
Were out and about - it was good to be free –
Well practically free for we had then to ask
That you come to events with a World Traders mask –
As we met at All Hallows to offer thanksgiving
It was great – for we felt that at last we were living.

And then, as it seemed, we were off in a hurry
To visit a vineyard located in Surrey
There followed a tasting of sparkling white wine
And lunch at pub which was rather divine.

Glass blowing, opera, swans on the river
More wine – perhaps not so good for the liver –
But we hadn't had much of that sort of thing
And the programme had really got into its swing.

Now I'm going on, but 'twould be a pity
Not to thank all the people who've chaired a committee:
Zoe, Peter, Lars, Nick, Robert, Anna, Sarah, Michael Larson and Michael Shapiro
Each one, in your own way, quietly a hero.
And can I thank all those who sit on the Court
For their generous encouragement, help and support.
And all those who helped my programme emerge
Such as Michael Mainelli and Richard Burge
Edwina and Zoe – but please give a shout
If you have been helpful and I've left you out!
And I must thank Charles, he's the one who insisted
I join – without him I might not have enlisted.
And Richard, my husband, who's been such a sport
I couldn't have done it without your support...

And last but not least as I end my remarks
Let me turn now to Gaye, that most Learned of Clerks.
She is wise, she is helpful, supportive and witty
And there's nothing she's ignorant of in the City.
So Gaye, heartfelt thanks come from all of us
And please do keep clear of that 49 bus!

And so, as my Master's year finally ends.

My thanks to you *all* – you most wonderful friends...
And may Commerce and Friendship that's honest and true
Be the mark of our Company all the years through...

Thank you all very much indeed!