

WSA visit to Vintners Hall, Upper Thames Street, London, and luncheon - Thursday 4 June 2020



The precise origins of the Vintners' Company, like most Livery Companies, are obscure. There are twelfth century references to 'lawful merchants of London' fixing the price of wine, one of the earliest indications of an official group governing the trade.

The Vintners' first charter was granted on 15th July 1363 and gave far-reaching powers, including duties of search throughout England and the right to buy herrings and cloths to sell to the Gascons in return for wine.

The Vintners' Company was placed eleventh out of the Twelve Great Livery Companies in the order of precedence of 1515. The twentieth century was marked by a steady progress towards the Company's renewed support for its trade, culminating in the granting of a new Charter on the 20th August 1973.

The Company's right to own swans is generally said to be "by prescription". This legal expression indicates that the right has been exercised for so long that it has never been challenged. The Vintners have owned swans "since time immemorial" in the correct legal sense of that common phrase.

The annual event of Swan Upping takes place in the third week of July. Nowadays, Swan Upping is about checking and counting of the swans to make sure they are healthy, and educating people about the importance of Swan Upping.

The Vintners' Hall has been on the same site since 1357. Their first hall was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666, and was rebuilt to designs of Christopher Wren. The present hall was completed in 1823, with its entrance on the south side of Upper Thames Street. All the land between the hall and the river Thames, as well as land on the west side of the hall, is owned by the Company.

Programme:

11.00 am – we meet in the Vintners Hall Main Entrance, Upper Thames Street for a conducted tour of the Hall

12.30 pm – we enjoy a light sandwich and fruit luncheon by in-house caterers Searcy's, with wine as well as soft drinks

2.00 pm – we depart from the Hall

Cost (inclusive of a light luncheon with wine) - £50 per person

CLOSING DATE 7th MAY 2020

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I wish to attend the visit and luncheon at the Vintner's Hall on Thursday 4 June 2020

Name.....

Guest's name.....

Telephone.....

Email address.....

Either I shall pay by bank transfer:

WSA Livery Committee Sort Code. 40-46-08. Account no. 92018829

Please reference with your surname and date of event

Or I enclose my cheque for £ Please make payable to WSA Livery Committee. Send to Prof John Schofield, 2, Heathfield House, Eliot Place, London, SE3 0QW

All applications and receipts of money will be acknowledged

Thank you. I look forward to hearing from you