

Leonard John Weaver CBE DUniv CEng FIEE FIMMM FIMechE Master 2000/2001

Len Weaver died on 24th June 2006 just weeks after his 70th birthday. His funeral was held in Leatherhead Parish Church on Friday 14th July conducted by the Company Chaplain, The Reverend Michael West. Len was born and brought up in East Africa and served with the Kenya Regiment from 1955 to 1957 before coming to England to study at Battersea College of Technology, which later became the University of Surrey. He was particularly proud of the Honorary Doctorate, which he received from Surrey University in 1991, and he subsequently endowed a prize, which bears his name. While at College and working hard on his studies he enjoyed, with much enthusiasm and no little skill, time on the Rugby field, the cricket pitch and the amateur dramatic stage.



Len's career started at AEI Ltd and continued as Works Manager at PYE-TMC before joining PE Consulting Group in 1966 of which he became a

Director in 1975 and Chairman from 1979 – 82. He then became Chairman of a number of companies including Polymark International plc, Pearson Engineering Ltd, Jones & Shipman plc, Manifold Industries Ltd, Eutech Engineering Solutions Ltd and The Engineering Link Ltd all of which benefited from his management. He was awarded a CBE in 1990 for services to industry.

He was also very active with various Institutions being President of the Institute of Management Consultants 1983-84, Vice Chairman of the British Institute of Management from 1993-97 and President of The Institution of Manufacturing Engineers 1990-91. He was one of the driving forces behind the merger of The Institution of Manufacturing Engineers with The Institution of Electrical Engineers and subsequently served on the Council of the IEE from 1991 to 1996. He was one of the few Englishmen to be elected to Fellowship of the American Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

Len was one of the earliest members of the Engineers Company becoming a Freeman in February 1984 and a Liveryman in July 1984. He joined the Court in April 1991 becoming Junior Warden in 1997, Middle Warden 1998, Senior Warden 1999 and was installed as Master in April 2000. He took a particular interest in the recruitment of new members and was instrumental in the formation of a separate Membership Committee; membership matters having previously been the responsibility of the Finance and General Policy Committee. During his year as Master he opened discussions with the Clerk to the Privy Council on the likelihood of a Royal Charter and, when in 2003, this seemed a real possibility, the then Master Sir David Davies asked Len and me to enter into formal negotiations with the Privy Council. His drafting of the Petition to Her Majesty The Queen was masterful and ensured we were the first Livery Company in 47 years to be granted a Charter. In preparing the petition he built on his second life long love of the written word and his passion for literature.

He had a most successful year as Master although his habit of always arriving at functions “just in time” gave his Clerk many anxious moments! A member of the MCC he always regretted not being able to arrange a visit to the Long Room at Lord’s. For all of us the highlight of his year must be the Out-of-



Town Meeting to York, which allowed Len to indulge his passion for railways. Who could forget his delight at being able to ride on the footplate of the Sir Nigel Gresley on the North Yorks Railway or our evening function at the National Railway Museum?

However Len’s lasting legacy to the Company is the magnificent “Millennium Centrepiece” which he presented at the end of his year. Len funded a prize at the Guildhall University for the design of a centrepiece to represent engineering over the centuries and he and I had great fun judging the entries. We finally had to choose between two quite different but superb designs and Len was so impressed he funded an additional runner-up prize. We then had many meetings with the chosen

designer as the work progressed and I know Len was delighted with the final result. All of us who knew



Len will always be reminded of him when the centrepiece is displayed at our functions.

Bryan Gibson