

Dear Senators

Autumn is beginning to nudge into winter. I've been exchanging emails with my opposite numbers in the US and Canadian Senates and reading all about their excursions to see the autumn fall and firewater nights (no not alcoholic firewater but where they light a mile of river with burning wooden tepees. I could almost smell the wood smoke). I've been foraging and collecting sloes and quince. Quince paste is a real labour of love – must be cheaper buying in Harrods!! But there should be plenty of sloe gin this year.

Our AGM went smoothly and I'm pleased to report that Nigel now has a full team for 2014. The weekend in Birmingham was very varied from back-to-back living to the state of the art library. I would encourage anyone who hasn't been to see the new Birmingham library to make a special visit. It's quite a landmark building and a huge social space. There were 7 past presidents of Birmingham at the Saturday dinner to welcome our guests – sadly the current president of JCI Birmingham Kirstie Barnett wasn't able to join us – but we sent her our best wishes for the re-launched chamber.

Thank you to all the Senators who updated their standing orders to £25 – and a gentle nudge to those who haven't yet got round to it. As I mentioned we are looking at various ways to reduce costs and/or to increase income. One way we are considering is to ask any Senator booking for a Senate event who does not make the minimum contribution to pay an additional admin fee. It seems fair that we all share the burden of the costs as well as the enjoyment of events. What do you think? If you have any ideas or views do let me know. The magazine is one of our biggest items of spend - any thoughts on its content or format or frequency would also be helpful.

What else has been happening?

### **House of Lords Lunch**

Everything ran like clockwork! The many letters of thanks confirmed that people were absolutely delighted with the whole event – and over 100 Senators enjoyed this truly unique occasion. The weather was fine and we were able to gather for drinks on the terrace. It was amazing to be able to sit in that historic building and watch the Thames flow by - it must be the best club in London! After lunch we shared the humour of Claus Ottrand, Seamus O'Neil, Robert Ferris, Bill Preece and John Eaton. We are so fortunate to have such a good friend in Lady Margaret. Many thanks to Margaret and John for hosting the event and Barbara and John Hemy for their impeccable planning.

PS Bill Preece and Phil Spring were the first to arrive at The Westminster Arms and the Irish delegation was the last to leave!

### **JCI UK National Convention, Oulton Hall Leeds November**

The dinner season is upon us. I am delighted to share the news that Kate Senter incoming JCI UK National President 2014 was awarded a Senatorship at the Sheffield Annual Dinner. Many congratulations and good luck to Kate for her new job with GSK plc.

On Saturday I popped down to Oulton Hall to look at the venue for this year's JCI UK National Convention. Oulton Hall (just outside Leeds) is a splendid venue and there is a really excellent business and senate programme. The conference organisers hope that Senators will join in the Saturday afternoon session on 'The Future of Business' – this should stimulate a good discussion and allow ideas to flow about its impact on JCI. <http://britishsenate.org.uk/event/leeds-senate-weekend-and-jci-uk-convention/>

### **Drumming out 17-19 January 2014**

The year is going so quickly and it will soon be January before we know it. Bill Preece and his team are creating a weekend with a difference for my Drumming Out in Sheffield! We will have several international guests - the 2014 European Senate team will be joining us as well as the new President of the American Senate. Get practicing your pastry making for the Bakewell tart bake-off; polish your technique for the international senate ice curling championship. We plan to give the drumming out dinner a 1930/40's theme so please dress up if you wish (The 30's was a varied decade – so chose your theme - Cab Calloway, Gone with the Wind, Mickey Mouse, Wizard of Oz etc etc. I've not looked up 40's yet).

'You want more??!!', then join us on Thursday evening for a performance of Oliver at the Crucible Theatre. There is an updated booking form on the web site <http://britishsenate.org.uk/event/drumming-out-2014/>. Bookings are coming in well but please book early (or speak to Bill) so we can plan. There are still various hotel offers available.

### **Golden Threads**

There was such a happy atmosphere at the House of Lords lunch last week. Lady Margaret's welcome and all of the speeches reminded us of just how much BJC and the British Senate have enriched our friendships.

And so I add my toast .....to Senate friendship! See you after Rio!

All the best

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