

Butcher, Baker, Candlestick maker.

Surviving the Great Fire of London
By Hazel Forsyth

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Hazel Forsyth is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Companies of Pewterers and Goldsmiths.

She is also Senior Curator of the Medieval and Post-Medieval Collections at the Museum of London; and amongst other things, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

She has written a companion book (*Butcher, Baker, Candlestick maker - Surviving the Great Fire of London*) to the Museum of London's Great Fire Exhibition - *Fire, Fire*. Sumptuously illustrated, it looks at the Fire from the perspective of the trades represented by 31 of the City's Livery Companies. The Worshipful Company of Pewterers is one of those Companies.

The Pewterers appear on pp 62 and 162-6

Page 62: Hazel writes:

"The fire certainly did force people to reconsider, to question their ideas, aspirations and beliefs: even to ponder the very meaning of charity. When the Pewterers' Company wardens met in temporary accommodation in the Blackamoors' Head on Pye Corner a few months after the fire, they concluded that because the Company had suffered such great losses and the '*generalitie of ye poor sort of people hath been in some measure gainers*' nothing should be given to the poor at that time. It was harsh pragmatism. And the Pewterers were not alone. Many of the City institutions felt that they simply did not have enough resources to help everyone as they would have liked, and there was so much need that it was difficult to know who to help and how to do it."

Pages 162-6:

The main reference to the Company's trade comes at pages 162-6 with examples of how the trade tried to cope and what effect the Fire had on some individual, working pewterers. Hazel includes an extract from the Brewers Company records, dated 2 May 1667:

This day the Court took into Consideracon that they had bought some pewter before the fire, And by reason of the destruction & unsettledness of the tymes, they had not yet fully satisfied the pewterer, And therefore have this day ordered yt what shalbe due to him, shall forthwith be paid him.

Hiring pewter for dinners and special events was big business. The livery companies hired in plate even though members sometimes grumbled about the cost for feasts

Fire, Fire - the exhibition, at the Museum of London on London Wall, is on until 17th April. It is a fascinating stroll through the City as the Fire blazed out of control.

<http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london/whats-on/exhibitions/fire-fire>

And once you have been to the Exhibition, buy the book; or just buy the book!

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