

# Touch Mark Ceremony

Earlier last year, the Worshipful Company of Pewterers decided that it was time to reintroduce the ceremony of the Touch Mark. The last one had been held in 2003.

In earlier times, the ceremony had a very practical purpose; it provided a record of the Master Pewterers and their Marks. This record, a touch plate, was kept at the Hall. The pre-1666 ones were lost in the great Fire, but the Company still has all those created since then.

Various ceremonies have been held in 'recent' times, the last, as mentioned above, in 2003. The Company has decided that rather than one great ceremony every decade, there should be regular ceremonies at a Company Court. The first one under the new regime was held at the Company's November Court. The first of these new ceremonies went very well.



Three 'Touchers', (above, from the left) Sam Williams, Fleur Grenier and Gordon Robertson, were presented to the full Pewterers' Court, in the presence of family members. There was an introduction made and each pewterer touched his or her mark on a pewter tablet - with a loud bang. On the left, Gordon Robertson strikes his touch.

Congratulations were offered, and Certificates were then presented, by the Master to each 'Toucher' and all the assembled company progressed to a Reception in the Livery Room and then Luncheon.

Sam Williams said: "I was glad to be part of yet another prestigious event laid out by the Pewterers' Company, I hope the tradition continues".

Fleur Grenier added: "I was very honoured to take part in the touchmark ceremony and to become part of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers' history, I have photos and a written piece by my work about the ceremony and all my customers have been

impressed! I feel it is important to be able to do this, as it is a official recognition, both of pewtersmiths as a trade and of quality of work. I am very proud to have been part of this very prestigious group of craftspeople."

Gordon Robertson summed up: “It was an honour to be invited to strike my mark at the touch-mark ceremony and it gives me a great sense of pride and achievement knowing that my mark will be historically recorded, in the vaults of the Hall, alongside some of the finest pewter craftsmen both past and present. The sound of the hammer blows echoing round the Court Room will remain a cherished memory”.

The recording of Touch Marks is of great historical significance and is of practical importance in being able to identify pewter makers in the future. It is the aim of the Worshipful Company to continue the recording of Touch Marks with ceremonies in the form mentioned above.

## **Alan Williams**

See also the companion article: [What are Touch Marks?](#) which looks at what touch marks were, and are.

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