



## The Worshipful Company of Tobacco Pipe Makers and Tobacco Blenders



Charles Miller, Master 2016-17

Born and educated in Canterbury (making him a Man of Kent), Charles is an alumni of the University of Wales where he graduated with an honours degree in History; Charles's career and interests have been drawn to a similar but parallel path ever since.

Joining the auctioneers Christie's soon after graduating, he was soon running a small department specialising in marine models and artefacts. He left in 2007 and founded his own independent House, Charles Miller Ltd, based in London and specialising in antique marine and scientific art and artefacts. The firm soon had a clutch of World Record results under its belt notably the sale of a union flag flown at the Battle of Trafalgar for £380,000 and a four-meter long builder's model of the blue ribbon liner *Mauretania* for £162,000 both making headlines around the world. Several other records followed and the firm is now firmly established as the principal rooms for this niche area and one which the other main Houses now consult when specialist input is required. He supports several charities and institutions operating in this area.

In 2003 he met a Past Master of the Tobacco Pipe Makers and immediately saw that their sociable and charitable interests coincided very closely with his. Joining as a freeman of the Company, he rapidly took up the Livery and began serving on the Court of Assistants in 2006, taking on the role of 4<sup>th</sup> Warden in 2013. Charles was installed as Master on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016. In addition, he Captains the Company's Shooting Team both for target events against the London Regiment, and the Inter Livery Clay Shoot. A long standing member of the Membership Committee in which several key initiatives were introduced to raise the Company's profile including the popular Smoking Club where members and prospective guests meet for a fraternal smoke in civilised surroundings.

Charles's private interests reflect his love of history and he is Chairman of the Covent Garden Minuet Company – a small troupe of sociable baroque dancers who practice in Covent Garden but perform for charity and private functions in full eighteenth century costumes around the country and occasionally abroad. He was particularly delighted to run an event for the WC of Fan Makers where, having taken the members and guests through their paces, several proved to be Old Bailey Judges – they behaved impeccably, honestly! He has also served on the Council of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London whom he represented in the role of Watson in the fully-costumed 2005 pilgrimage and is apparently still featured in local guide books!

In addition to enjoying pipes, cigars and snuff, his hobbies include mechanical music and he has a fine collection of early gramophones maintained in perfect working order with his earliest recordings dating back to 1898 but concentrating on pre-1923 acoustic opera by select artistes; A resting second bass, Charles has performed in many concerts of baroque music and hopes to resume this hobby when time allows; He also collects 18<sup>th</sup> Century social caricature prints, which, combined with the many other artefacts has led to a "one in one out" policy at the home he shares in Fulham with his long-suffering partner, Camilla.