



500  
years of music

# 500 YEARS YOUNG

The Master-Elect, Sir Alan Trail, introduces the quincentenary

Thanks to modern technology, I am dictating these words straight into my computer while gazing out over the beauty of the Surrey countryside and listening to Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*, one of the tracks on our 500th anniversary CD.

I hardly lack inspiration! What more could one ask for? You will be reading this some weeks after receiving a letter from me in which I extol the virtues of the CD as a Christmas present – please give thought to that, if you haven't done so already. It's certainly not too late to place your orders with the Company office.

This issue of *Preserve Harmony* reports the launch of our new appeal-fund – Funding A Future – with which we are opening the next 500 years of the Musicians' Company. Of equal significance, and rightly sharing page 1 of our new-look newsletter, is the historic clothing of the first-ever American citizen. Witnessed by our Lady Mayoress, this singular honour fell to Dr Andreas Prindl, who, as Chairman of the Musicians' Foundation Fund, deserved it over all others.

You cannot have reached this page without becoming fully aware of the Company's 500th anniversary. And I hope that you are asking yourself:

"How will it involve me?"

The short and simple answer is: "If it is your wish – *fully*." The celebrations have been arranged with YOU in mind, and the events that lead into and are spread through our anniversary year provide a golden opportunity to renew the oath that you made on becoming a liveryman. Namely, to further the aims and objects of the Company.

By attending as many of our special events as you possibly can, and bringing members of your family and your friends along too, you will do just that ... and at no great expense, for uppermost in the minds of the organisers of our anniversary year has been the determination not to impose an unacceptable financial burden on members of the livery.



To that end, it has been decided that, in 2000, there will be no formal Company dinners; only the musical events that I urge you to support.

The principal events are pictured and described on these pages, and are so attractive that they need no additional sales talk from me. But please allow me to add just a few thoughts of my own, starting with the Lord Mayor's Show on 13 November ... which is, of course, one of the world's greatest and most spectacular FREE shows.

As you will have read elsewhere, the Musicians are participating in association with Austin Reed. By happy chance, its chairman, Colin Evans, is Master of the Worshipful Company of Cutlers, so he and I shall be walking the course together. Indeed, we have been in training for weeks!

Do come with your family and cheer us on. Or if it's really too far on an autumnal Saturday morning, be sure to switch on BBC1.

Our carol concert in Guildhall Yard comes next. It's a unique setting, and I invite as many of you as possible to attend, and to sing your hearts out, for you *will* know all the carols. Again, it's absolutely FREE.

Next year, the "piano event" with Melvyn Tan, John Tusa and the Broadwood Collection in the unique surroundings of the Lloyd's Building, with its excellent acoustics and flexibility (there's room for a seated audience, plus two galleries for members, students and the general public), promises a memorable evening's entertainment – and for as little as £10 a head.

The Company was granted its Charter on 4 June 1500, and I should like to suggest that, health and family commitments permitting, it is incumbent on all liverymen to be together on the anniversary day – Sunday 4 June 2000.

We shall be holding our service of commemoration at Greenwich, the Bishop of London will be preaching, and the day will close with coffee in the VIP lounge under the Millennium Dome.

A word of warning about Jazz at The

Globe on 3 July, and it is "Be sure to order your tickets early!". For our "Jazz Fest" will in fact be part of the City of London Festival, and there's no doubt that the public will make it a sell-out evening.

Finally, please may I ask for your support for two events that have significance for me.

Firstly, my Installation Evening at Guildhall in just a few weeks' time, on Tuesday 9 November: a very special venue for the Company, and just a few days after HM The Queen has officially opened the new Art Gallery wing.

I promise you an excellent dinner – and only two speeches. And with a recital in keeping with our commitment to young artists, it will, I feel sure, be a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Do come, and bring a friend.

Secondly, there's my Birthday Concert, at home at Thursley, Surrey, on 7 May.

Sarah and I thought long and hard about how to make a truly personal contribution to the anniversary year, and to say thank you to all those who have worked hard, throughout 1999, to make it successful and meaningful. This Sunday-afternoon concert is the outcome, and we do hope that you will want to be there.

There will be 350 seats, plus promenade facilities, and the Company's new appeal-fund will be one of the day's beneficiaries.

An afternoon in the Surrey countryside, with great music! What more could one ask for?

Which is where I came in ... and I hope that I have said enough to encourage you to want to support as many of our Year 2000 events as you possibly can.

I end with thanks for allowing me to be so much involved in this part of the history of our Company. I very much hope that I shall meet you all during the year, and that the celebration of 500 years of music will live up to your expectations.

Yours very sincerely  
Alan Trail

FOUR PAGES TO PULL OUT AND KEEP