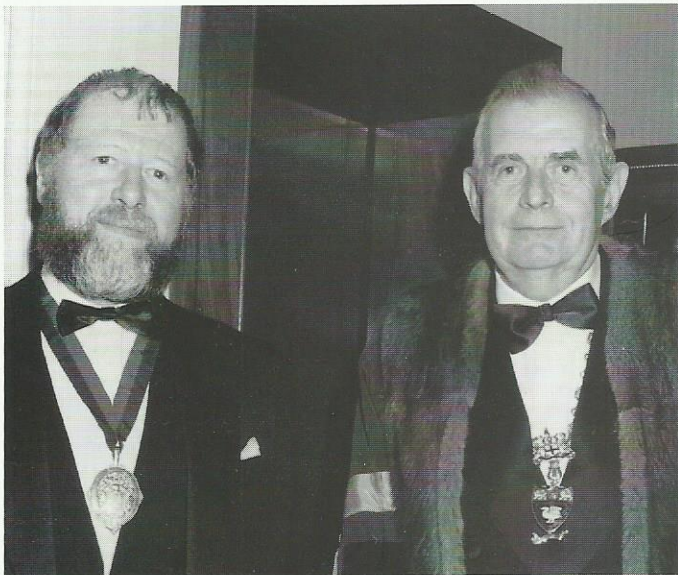


# THE MASTER'S YEAR 1999

My year as Master has seen considerable consolidation within the Company administration. A number of items needed tying up and these all seemed to come together during my year so that with the help and co-operation of my Wardens and fellow Court Members, the Company took some significant steps forward.



*As one of the Brethren of the Parish Clerks' Company, it was a particular pleasure to entertain their Master.*

One of the most important financial issues was the conclusion of re-organisation of charitable funds in a way that makes them far easier to administer and audit, these changes being agreed and accepted by the Charity Commissioners. Amendments and revisions were made concerning the John Christie Award applicants qualifications.

A major scheme for the future well-being of the Company was the setting up of a practice to ensure that we will have at least one new Court Member every year.

There have also been drastic changes to the computer system and these should now bring things into line with modern office procedure.

After 498 years we have made history by the appointment of women to Company Office. Margaret Alford has been appointed as our Assistant Clerk and Jan Lowy became the first lady to be elected to the Court of the Musicians' Company.

There are several on-going programmes such as the compiling of the 'Musicians of the Millennium' publication, the production of the Musicians' Company CD, the establishing of our Musicians' Company

Foundation for young Musicians to say nothing of the Millennium Celebration functions.

We are also working on a procedure to appoint four Stewards each year to assist and support the Master, Wardens and Court.

These and numerous Committee meetings are the allegedly boring duties that the Master has to be involved with during his year.

To some, the Master's year appears as one long round of dinners and glittering social events. There is only so much one can do and I found that it was necessary to impose some self discipline regarding these if the Company business and commitments were to take first place. Nevertheless, I still had a wonderfully

active social year, and where protocol allowed, my wife was

able to accompany me.

At the Company functions I tried to engage our liverymen or artists recently connected with the Company for our musical entertainment. These included the Harpist and former Company Medal winner, Catrin Finch at my installation, the Ivor Mairants prize winning guitarist, Amanda Cook and violinist Petronella Dittmer with Richard Coulson for the Court Dinners and

Alison Pearce to sing for us at the Midsummer Banquet, Petronella and Alison both being Liverymen.

For the Livery Club Social events, we had the annual Carol Service at St. Michael's Cornhill and the annual Bach Cantata performance at St. Mary at Hill, both these events being directed by Liveryman Jonathan Rennert. For the Club event organised by the Master we went to the Musical Museum, Brentford. Here Liveryman Richard Cole conducted us around and assisted me in recalling some great names of the Cinema organ world with the help of the museum's Wurlitzer Organ.

There were several services to attend, the first being the Musicians Benevolent Fund at St. Paul's Cathedral. The Company had a high profile with the gowned Musicians and our banner leading the Livery procession. There can not be many occasions when we take precedence over the Great Twelve Companies but here and at the Company's own Evensong, which is rapidly growing in stature and importance, we do.

We were invited to attend the annual service for The Sons of the Clergy at St. Paul's. With three Cathedral Choirs, the Cathedral full and with brass and organ, the singing of the National Anthem at the conclusion must go down as one of our great memories.

Education and prize-giving events are all par for the course, but for my year, representing the Company in the Masterprize event, and the presentation of our own Company Prize to the outright winner, Andrew March, in the Barbican in a programme that was broadcast all over the world is



*Chatting with Andrew March winner of Masterprize as well as our prize for £10,000 to write a symphonic composition to celebrate the Company's Quincentenary.*

*Photo: Brian Garfield*