

THE MASTER'S Y

OVER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS I was able to spend an enjoyable day sorting my papers and reflecting on my year as Master of the Musicians' Company. This was just as well, as I had been reminded – as if it was necessary! – that I would be required to submit a full report, and the copy date for the next issue of "Preserve Harmony" was fast approaching.

I can look back, I think, on a satisfactory year for the Company, and a most enjoyable one for myself and my wife Julie. During it, I have found myself, at one extreme, sitting in the dock of Number 1 Criminal Court at the Old Bailey on a visit to the Sheriffs' and Recorders' Fair; at the other, attending the re-dedication, jointly by the Lord Mayor and Alderman Sir Alan Traill, of the new gates, to which the Musicians' Company had contributed, of St. Columb's Cathedral in Londonderry, in the presence of representatives of both Northern Ireland communities as well as the Secretary of State. This before the cease-fire was announced.

The City this year seems to have been dominated by celebrations of centenaries, with two of which – the City of London Girls School, for whom we provide a music scholarship, and the City University – the Musicians' Company has close connections. It was appropriate, therefore, that the Vice-Chancellor of the City University, Professor R.N. Franklin, was able to accept the Company's invitation to speak at the Installation Dinner of Adrian Davis, my successor. The Masters of the majority of the Livery Companies were also present at a Commemorative Service in St. Paul's Cathedral in July, which was attended by the Queen and Prince Philip, to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Bank of England.

For me, however, there have been, apart from my first visit to Northern Ireland, two special highlights. The first was the Livery Day at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, where we were able to get to know our fellow Masters and their Ladies in a more relaxed atmosphere than is generally the case; it was unfortunate that this year the weather was extremely unkind so that the traditional group photograph had to be abandoned. The second was the Livery Exhibition held in Guildhall early in July. It was fascinating to learn of the current activities of our sister Livery Companies and, in particular, the important role they continue to play in prompting and supporting the well-being of the crafts and trades with which historically they have been involved. Our Company owes a special debt of gratitude to Pastmaster Henry Willis 4, Assistant David Hill and Assistant Frank Fowler for everything they did to prepare the exhibition and for the time they devoted to manning the Company's stand. I was delighted that



The Master, Tony Pool, following the Clerk of the Blacksmith's Company to the new gates of St. Columb's Cathedral, Northern Ireland. Photo: Philip Willoughby

we were able to publish the pamphlet detailing the Company's awards and prize funds in time for the Exhibition.

As far as the Company itself is concerned, 1994 saw significant changes. We have a new Clerk in Simon Waley, new offices in the heart of the City, (of which the new Lord Mayor, in particular, should approve), and a new Treasurer in Francis Carnwath, Walter Ficker having decided that the time had come to retire. I was delighted to be able to pay tribute to the wisdom and far-sightedness that he had shown over so many years by presenting him with the Company's Silver Medal at the Midsummer Banquet, as a token of our respect and affection. The fact that the transitions from Michael Fletcher to Simon Waley and from Walter Ficker to Francis Carnwath went so smoothly reflects the greatest credit on all four of them. I, and indeed the Musicians' Company as a whole, owe a great debt of gratitude to both Michael and Walter for everything they have achieved during their periods in office. We will all need to rely on their experience in the future

and hope and expect that we will continue to see them both as regular attenders at future Company functions. We wish Simon and Francis all success and enjoyment in their new offices.

During my year I have attended a number of excellent concerts, particularly of the City of London Schools and the London Schools Symphony Orchestra, and listened to much music that, in my line of professional duties, I do not often manage to hear. I have received splendid hospitality from many of our sister Livery Companies, with some of which we have forged closer links, and have made several good friends. It has been a pleasure to repay at least some of this hospitality at our own Masters' and Clerks' Dinner and at the October Maisie Lewis Recital, which this year was held in Drapers' Hall.

To compile a full list of the events that I attended would be tedious to read. But, in addition to those I have mentioned above, very many stand out in my mind. My first function as Master was to be present at the St. Cecilia Service at Westminster Cathedral, followed by