

Treasure

Another most important development since 1994 has been the inclusion of a Creative Course prior to the summer preparations for our BBC Prom appearances. On these courses we learn to extemporise, improvise, study classical-contemporary and world music – both singing and dancing – in different and smaller groupings than is possible when we work in the normal practice of sectional preparation for the main programme.

My colleague and Chief Executive, Michael de Grey and I lead the NYO team as a Du-umvirate. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother is the Patron and Sir Colin Davis the President. Sir Alastair Morton, the Chairman, leads a distinguished Board of experts. I am only the fourth Director of Music and carry the responsibility for choosing the orchestra, the teaching Professors, the conductors, the programme and course projects.

Each year the Director of Development, currently Alisa Avigdor, has to raise £40,000 from corporate sponsorship or trusts and grant giving bodies. The government, student fees and earned income from box office takings provide only one third of the costs. Our principal sponsors at

present are Lexus, The BOC Group, Williams Holdings and ABB (Asea Brown Boveri Ltd), who have sponsored our 50th Birthday Celebrations. The Jerwood Foundation contributes to conductors' fees.

This year the NYO has received huge acclaim from both British and International critics – indeed one declared that "if there is a musical god in heaven then its spirit resides in the NYO of GB" whilst another emphasised that the NYO of GB is "a National Treasure".

The Worshipful Company of Musicians has, for many, many years, supported the NYO of GB. Through the generosity of a past Liveryman, the Director of Music, on behalf of the Company, awards the Bulgin Medal to the best musician in the orchestra. One such player is well known to the Company – the harpist Catrin Finch – for she has played at the Company's dinners. Choosing the Bulgin Medallist is one of the most challenging tasks I have to perform as you may imagine that there is considerable talent within the orchestra's ranks!

Previous Directors of Music: Dame Ruth Railton (Founder); Ivey Dickson MBE; and Dr Derek Bourgeois.



Sir Christopher Ball, Chancellor of the University of Derby confers an Honorary Doctorate of Letters on Liveryman Jeffery Tillet "in recognition of his commitment to the development of the arts over five decades". For forty years, Liveryman Tillet has been Director of Examinations at Victoria College of Music, London, developing it from post-war decline to its present status as one of largest Music, Speech and Drama examination board in the UK. Still active at 70, he now sponsors recitals by young musicians, often giving promising artists their first public performance.

Photo: University of Derby

COMPANY ACCOUNTS

Resulting from recent adjustments to legislation and guidelines, the Company has been able to consolidate its charitable funds. Until recently, we had been burdened with a large number of small charitable trusts each requiring its own separate accounts and audit – a time consuming and expensive situation. The Charity Commissioners have now agreed that we can amalgamate most of them while still carefully maintaining their original different objectives. In his first address to the Court as Treasurer, Assistant Maurice Hart drew attention to the fact that last year the direct charitable expenditure was a record at £119,693. Two main factors had made this possible; firstly an adjustment to our investments now provided higher yields at a time of increasing dividends and secondly the increasing interest and generosity of the Livery in supporting and establishing new awards.

DONATIONS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

The following appeals have been accepted:

GSMD Rameau Collection	£1,000
Royal Orchestral Society	500
St Michaels Cornhill (for three years)	250
The Purcell School	500
The Opera Box	250
Christ's Hospital	1,000
British Federation of Young Choirs	500
Benslow Music Trust	250
Royal School of Church Music	500
City of London Festival for 1999	1,500
Kent Opera	1,000
Sir John Barbirolli Appeal	250
Worshipful Company of Gardeners	250

ALLCARD GRANTS of £1,500 each were made as follows:

Nicola Sweeney - Violin - GSMD
Alexandra Wood - Violin - RCM
Joanna Porter - Piano Accompanist - RNCM
Timothy Mirfin - Baritone - RAM
Marianne Vidal - Soprano - RSAMD
Damian Thanry - Baritone/Bass - RCM