

Record of Events The A

THE TRAGIC PASSING OF ALLEN PERCIVAL, the Senior Warden, had opened up the whole question of the Succession. As a result, no preparations could be made until this matter had been decided at the October Court – five weeks before the Installation!

Fortunately, the St. Cecilia Service had been chosen by Allen himself and previously arranged with St. Paul's. It became, therefore, a rather special tribute to him.

The year had two distinct Aspects. Firstly, there was the business of the Company. Secondly, there were the many engagements at which I was determined that we should be represented, if not by the Master then by the Immediate Pastmaster or Wardens. The result has been that by carrying on the efforts of my predecessors, the Musicians' have continued to take their place in the life of the City of London, further raise their profile and grow in stature. It was these developments that were to precipitate a change of direction which was to begin later in the year.

I had felt that certain matters had been rather overlooked in the past. As a result, one of my first actions was to send formal Greetings to all of our Honorary Freemen. Also, it was a particular pleasure to entertain Richard Lewis at the Installation Dinner. The Maisie Lewis Recitals, established by his father when my uncle was Master, have become an important part of our work. The widening of the guest list to the October Recital was a great success with about twenty five Masters from other Companies attending - many with their wives. It is with much appreciation that we have received from him a further substantial donation to this Fund. Additionally, it was agreed that up to three senior Liverymen, who for various reasons had not become Members of the Court, should be invited as Company Guests to Court Dinners. And at Livery Dinners, Court Members are now being more evenly spread around the tables. This will enable Liverymen to get to know them better and provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and information.

It had been said that we did not do enough to keep in touch with our Award Winners - so well expressed in a recent edition of this journal. The matter has now been helped by the Court's decision that letters should be written to them over the following three years, including a copy of this newsletter, to enquire as to their progress, special performances and whether they require any advice. Information and dates can then be available for general interest.

There were also the letters to the Livery. The matter of Gala Concerts has had to be postponed. It has not been a good time to embark on such ideas, but hopefully the development with Maisie Lewis will help in this direction. Some matters concerning the Administration have been resolved - the Clerkship Selection Committee having completed its work, the Court appointed Liveryman Simon Waley as Clerk-in-waiting.

I draw attention to some other items of business which were conducted

during the year. Only too often we have been confronted by ignorance and confusion as to what we represent and what we actually do. As a result, the Public Relations Working Party comprising Adrian Davis, Anthony Peagam and myself was set up and already we are working on a Pamphlet and update of the List of Company's Awards and Charitable Funds.

With an unusually large number of Court Members retiring, we were faced with electing their successors. New rules have been introduced with the result that a more open and democratic system has been established.

Another change was made following the retirement of Harry Stanley who had been our Toastmaster for so many years. Philip Chancellor, the Beadle, kindly accepted responsibility for this duty. I should add that he has been most helpful during my year. Sadly, we have failed to persuade him (as yet!) to provide this newsletter with an article about himself and his work, although his activities within the City are numerous, including looking after St. Sepulchre's, the Musicians' Church.

Over the years, we have developed a close relationship with the Stationers' and Newspaper Makers' Company. My Grandfather, the first of the family to be Master, was also a Member of that Company. I felt it appropriate to look into the possibility of offering them a special Prize Grace as they had shown interest in ours. The Court have kindly supported this idea. It is hoped that this will soon be commissioned.

Committees and their Chairmanship were also considered. It was decided that the Master should not necessarily act as Chairman in certain cases, unless in his own right. It was agreed that Members should be elected thereto every three years and that the Chairman should hold that position for no more than six years. The composition of the Master and Wardens Committee is also under review.

To comment upon the various Company activities would be to repeat what is already generally known. However, the Installation of HRH The

Duchess of Kent provided an occasion of great pride to the Company. We now look forward to presenting her with a photographic memento of the event and to a long and happy association.

My first engagement was to present the Company Awards at the Prize Giving at City University Music Department, founded by its former Director and present Court Member, Professor Malcolm Troup. Several Prize Days and similar visits followed, including the two City of London Schools for both boys and girls and the City of London Freemen's School at Ashstead.

November was a busy month. In addition to the various activities surrounding the St. Cecilia celebrations, including the Musicians' Benevolent Fund Royal Gala Concert at which my wife, Renate, and I were presented to HRH Princess Margaret, there was the Liszt Society's presentation of some recently discovered music and a 300th Anniversary Concert celebrating Purcell's first performance of 'Hail! Bright Cecilia' by Fiori Musicali at Stationers' Hall. Capt. Peter Hames, their Clerk deserves credit for a splendid evening.

December began with Pastmaster Jeffery Lockett's Clonter Opera performing 'Cosi fan tutte' at the RCM in the presence of HRH the Duchess of Gloucester. This was followed by the first of several visits to St. Michael's, Cornhill. Liveryman Jonathan Rennert is their Director of Music and it was the result of hearing the Choir that they were later invited to perform at the Midsummer Banquet.

The Christmas celebrations were followed by further pleasurable assaults upon the digestive tracts. In particular, there was the first visit to the magnificent Drapers' Hall following another visit to St. Michael's, as well as being dined by the Fletchers' Company whose Master, Maurice Hart, is also a Musician.

Thus had begun the first of numerous splendid and memorable repasts which would take one back to the Drapers' Company where Liveryman Sir Nicholas Jackson is due for election as Master of that Company in July. Then onto HQS Wellington and the Master Mariners' with their Bell and Dolphins presented by our Company. This was followed by the Lord Mayor's Banquet, complete with Trumpeters, Pikemen and all the accoutrements that would be expected of such a grand occasion. As the Mansion House was being refurbished, it was held under the stare of Gog and Magog in Guildhall. I much enjoyed the memorable hospitality of the Tin Plate