

# Preserve Harmony



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Editors: Adrian Davis & John Iles

## NEWSLETTER OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF MUSICIANS

### EDITORIAL

#### "Chorus Ladies and Gentlemen, please"

"How sweet the harmonies of the evening" to misquote Frederick Tennyson about the blackbird. Maybe some contrapuntal connoisseurs were agreeably surprised at the melodic choral attainments of the unrehearsed assembly which gathered for the June banquet, particularly when one recognises that despite the unquestionable beauty of our professionally sung Grace, the acoustics of the Stationers' Hall are not - with due courtesy to the normal users - the most accommodating!

Those who have dined together on the two major occasions of the present Master's year have had the welcome opportunity of listening to a number of able and established musicians from amongst our own Company ranks. In our recollection, this has been an all too rare practice. Could we commend that the principle be considered and expanded under the joint aegis of the Social and Livery Club Committees?

Elsewhere in these columns, you will find reference from the Treasurer as to the increasing administrative load in managing the progressive and happily expanding growth in Trust, Scholarships and Prize Funds. Are medals an anachronism? Are the potential recipients motivated to work for them, particularly the students and aspiring professional young musicians? While, maybe this is not an issue for the senior established performer, to the extent that medals might be perpetuated, is the Company doing enough to either promote or enable the recipients to be heard? Beyond, the Maisie Lewis Concerts and seemingly rare visits to the Military Schools of Music, we have reservations.

Again is this an issue for the above Committees to address? To quote the June banquet refrain, "Give us an answer. Do!"



*The Master Elect and his wife Margaret. A Freeman in her own right*

## THE MASTER ELECT

**THE MASTER ELECT** describes himself as 'the happiest G.P. in the world of music'. He became a professional musician - in other words he was actually paid to perform in public - at the age of 16. Whilst he was still at Bradford Grammar School he ran his own dance band, was a deputy pianist in the Leeds Grand Theatre orchestra, a reluctant 'relief organist' at a cinema with a mighty Wurlitzer and began an Ivor Novello soundalike musical.

In the so-called serious field (which is not a division of music he accepts) he had the great good fortune to be taught at home by a long-forgotten but most inspiring local teacher, John Brayshaw. With him, accompanied on the organ, the young musician learnt and played publicly the 'pop' piano concertos of the day - including the Grieg, the 'Emperor' and Rachmaninov 2 - but also the then 'contemporary' concertos of John Ireland and (because he was a Bradfordian) Delius. Invaluably, they also played most of the classical orchestral repertory in

piano duet for sightreading. With a scholarship, he started the strange war-time mixture at Cambridge of reading music for half a day (and quite a lot of the night) and square-bashing in the Navy for the other half. By the end of 1943, he was a naval rating who, according now to his wife, 'sank the Scharnhorst'. In fact, he slept through the action deep down in the cypher room of the battleship. 'Swinging round the buoy' in Scapa Flow for much of the time, he played concertos with the

Continued on page 3