

MAISIE LEWIS YOUNG ARTISTS

Resulting from the initiative of some Members of the Company, Liverymen might be interested to know the result of the concert given by Jamie Walton and Andrew Grimwood, Wigmore performers in July 1996, at St James' Piccadilly. They attracted a record audience which included the noted critics Felix Aprahamian and Bernard Levin. The Vicar was so delighted that he has asked the artists to make a return appearance. Thanks are especially due to Liveryman Elizabeth Lloyd-Davies of English Heritage Concerts Management.

Here was an action outside the normal routine of the Company carried out in the spirit of our Quincentenary aims to help Young Musicians. Liverymen may know of other outstanding young artists who they believe would benefit from a platform.

As well as those distinguished members who have given their time to assist at the recent Wigmore Hall auditions, we have been very grateful for the expertise of Malcolm Binns, Bela Dekany, Thomas Hemsley and Robert Ponsonby from outside the Company.

LADIES IN WAITING

It is believed that the introduction of Ladies to the Livery was no new idea. It was, in fact, a return, associated with a reduction in chauvinism and recognition that these days sopranos were more readily accepted for the higher registers than the castrati. And so Priaulx Rainier became the first lady liveryman for ages.

In order to respect the wishes of the late Alan Percival, John Iles at his Installation Dinner in 1992 requested the attendance of the Master, Wardens' and Immediate Pastmaster's wives. This became accepted as the duties and responsibilities of the partners increased with that of their husbands.

The Court, after much debate, has now agreed that wives of all the Pastmasters may attend the Installation Dinner in recognition of the work that so many of them have done, not only during, but in some cases after their year.

M.C.C. members please note!

The Chief

by Liveryman Michael Bramwell

On the second Wednesday of each January the Corporation of London Committee system emerges from the Christmas recess, when the City Lands and Bridge House Estates Committee, the longest establishment and therefore senior Committee of the Corporation, meet for the purpose of electing a Chairman from their members. Full Members of the Committee represent each of the 25 electoral wards in the City and, other than newly appointed members, all are entitled to bid for the chair. If there is more than one aspirant there is a ballot with the winner carrying the majority of votes cast. The successful candidate is Chairman of the Committee for 12 months, and as such carries the courtesy title of Chief Commoner.

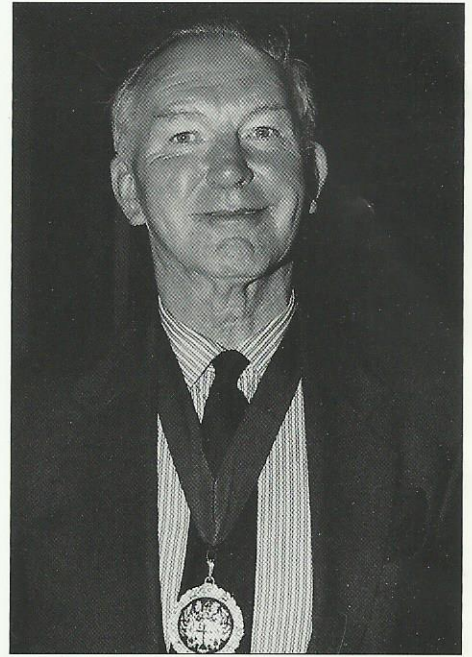
It follows that the new elected "Chief", although a willing supplicant, can not be certain of attaining his office until the ballot is complete, unlike a Lord Mayor who carries reasonable expectation of High Office for this term as an Alderman, or even the Sheriffs who are elected at the Common Hall in June, some three months before taking up the reins of the shrievalty.

The "Chief" has a dual role. First he chairs the Committee charged with the responsibility of managing the Corporation's three large property portfolios, namely the City Fund, City's Cash and the Bridge House Estates Fund, which between them own the title to approximately 30% of the property in the City, together with significant historical sites in the West End and south of the River. Additionally, the Committee are responsible for the City's operational properties, including the Guildhall, Mansion House and the Old Bailey, together with all hospitality offered on behalf of the Corporation.

Secondly, as Chief Commoner, he is procedural Leader of the City Corporation for the year, and as such, responsible for the conduct of the Court of Common Council, the non-party political governing body of the City, which meets in Guildhall every fourth Thursday in public session. All welcome to attend!

As with all elected positions in the governance of the City, the role is totally voluntary, with no subsistence allowance or expenses, but the duties demand almost daily attendance at the Guildhall and regular participation at evening functions.

The main routine involves regular interface with the Corporation's salaried officers and contact with all the elected Members and Aldermen, not least the Lord Mayor, with whom there is very regular and close contact on matters of civic importance. The "Chief" is an ex-officio member of all the main Corporation Committees, so that there is a feeling of "having one's hands on all



The Author

the levers" across the whole breadth of the Corporation's activities, to include not only Policy, Finance and Planning but the three wholesale markets at Smithfield, New Spitalfields and Billingsgate, the three City Schools, the Barbican Centre, Epping Forest, Burnham Beeches, the Kent and Surrey Commons, Housing and Health, amongst others.

These responsibilities get one out on location to see the Markets, the Schools, the Barbican Concert Hall and Theatre, and walking the several Open Spaces, owned by the Corporation often on Sunday morning visits or being present when the Lord Mayor makes ceremonial visits.

The "Chief's" duties as Chairman of the City Lands and Bridge House Estates Committee involves chairing the grants committee, together with focused sub-committees dealing with complex property issues, hospitality, budgeting, and management of the Corporation's Anglican benefices. Income from the property portfolios contributes substantially to the City's cash funds, and the Bridge House Estates Fund. City's cash is used for the capital requirements of the wholesale markets and the Schools, the upkeep of the Guildhall, Mansion House and Old Bailey, the expenses of the mayoralty, together with the costs of the Corporation's entertaining including banquets for Heads of State and guests of Government.

The Bridge House Estates Fund has historically provided the cash for the upkeep of the City's bridges (Tower, London, Southwark and Blackfriars) together with funds for major refurbishment and eventual replacement. In recent years, the portfolio, together with income from