

Preserve Harmony



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NEWSLETTER OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF MUSICIANS

EDITORIAL

Blowing our own trumpet...?

While we pondered on our theme for this editorial, we reflected on the latest issue of our Livery List and the happy thought that the Company now enjoys the highest membership than probably at any time in its history.

We are fortunate that our ranks include an eminent cross section of Professional Musicians, Instrument Makers, Administrators and Publishers whose contribution to the Art and Science of Music is not in question. That there are some seeming omissions is arguably inevitable but one has only to review the membership throughout this century alone to become starkly aware that this situation is in musical terms "Da capo".

Our strength also includes some equally able Commercial Professionals, no less dedicated to the advancement of our Company, who would wish our profile and involvement to enjoy a wider appreciation than at present. Your editors can personally vouch for the innumerable occasions when their declared membership of the Livery has been greeted with a total lack of understanding of what we are all about. Likewise, the article on page seven in some respects might be taken to suggest that our prize winners are similar to a pyrotechnics display, seen once and no more!

Like Handel's Fireworks Music for the Royal Display, don't we need to try to ensure that our rising musicians continue to be "heard" – and to demonstrate that we care?



The Master, John Iles and his wife, Renate.

FROM THE MASTER

LAST OCTOBER the Company was faced with a tragedy. Allen Percival, Senior Warden, had passed away. He had spent much time in preparation for his year of office, which, undoubtedly, would have been one of major importance. Fortunately, many of his working papers remain and are proving invaluable assistance in the deliberations of his successor.

The installation of John Iles as Master last November bore witness to an event which is unique in the annals of our Company this century – if not for all time. He is the fourth member of his family to hold this office.

The Iles family musical associations are to be found mostly with the Brass Band Movement and Leisure industry. They were also formerly proprietors of the British Bandsman newspaper, R. Smith & Co., music publishers and Artona, the manufacturers of player piano music rolls.

The new Master has already expressed his desire to broaden the profile and increase the influence of our Ancient Guild. With the steady approach of the millennium and our own Quincentenary celebrations, such thoughts are not before time. Already it is becoming apparent that our

Company will be competing with many other events being planned for that year.

But this is only one reason for taking such action. With the tremendous growth in music generally, many basic aspects have become clouded and overlooked. It is easy to forget that to practice our art, originally, it was necessary to undergo an apprenticeship and attain certain levels of ability before being permitted to perform. Our control over such matters has long since passed.

Thus it is your Master's desire to improve our profile and influence. As a result, the reputation and standing of our awards will be further raised and our work and achievements will be more apparent to those who would like to help us support our aims – the recognition and pursuit of excellence.