

MUSICIANS BENEVOLENT FUND

THE WELFARE of the professional musician is a major concern of both the Musicians Benevolent Fund and The Worshipful Company of Musicians. Therefore, it is not surprising that they have a lot in common, including some leading members and the patron saint of music, St Cecilia.

This year they are planning a joint event for the Festival of St Cecilia, which will combine the Company's annual service with the Fund's unique tripartite celebration. This consists of a church service, a luncheon, and a public concert: an event which harks back to the music festivals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The combined service will take place at St Paul's Cathedral at 11.00am on Wednesday 20th November. John Scott will be conducting a choir drawn from the choirs of St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral and HM Chapel Royal. They will sing a specially commissioned anthem by John Gardner and the address will be given by the Rt Revd. Richard Eyre, Dean of Exeter. The Festival Luncheon will be held in Merchant Taylors' Hall, with Lord Goodman and Sir Neville Marriner as the speakers.

In the evening, the Royal Concert will be given in Barbican Hall by the Halle Orchestra under Stanslaw Skrowaczewski, with Barry Tuckwell. The concert is unique because all the participating artists and musicians donate their services and broadcasting fees. The concert is organised by the Fund on behalf of the principal musical charities: the Musicians' Union Benevolent Fund, the Royal Society of Musicians, the Incorporated Society of Musicians, the benevolent fund of the participating orchestra, and, of course, itself.

Participation is a pleasure, not least because you will be helping a very good cause.

When the music fled

Founded in 1921, in memory of the famous English tenor, Gervase Elwes, the Musicians Benevolent Fund exists to help needy individuals in every branch of the music profession. It helps composers, instrumentalists, singers and teachers - and their families - regardless of their age or style of music making, provided they have earned their living by music for the greater part of their working life. When the applause dies down and the music



Her Majesty The Queen with the Master and Mrs Lockett at the Royal Concert in November

Photo: Sidney Harris

stops, the Fund steps in to help in many different ways.

Musicians in adversity

In 1990, about 900 beneficiaries were helped and the MBF made 5,200 grants, totalling £604,000. It helped beneficiaries with telephone bills and TV licences, made regular contributions to their income, or gave one-off grants to help them in times of financial difficulty. The Fund also made loans for home improvements, and last year provided holidays to the tune of £48,000.

Experienced visitors, Patricia Elsmore and Pamela Jacobs, visit all beneficiaries, assessing their needs and situation; and two residential homes, in Kent and Herefordshire, provide a gracious old age for musicians and their spouses.

The Fund has an educational role too. It

manages nearly 20 funds and trusts, including the Fleming Music Education Awards, one of the premier schemes in this country. Last year, over £70,000 was awarded to musicians of all ages, studying and composing in jazz and popular music, as well as classical music.

A new Handlist of Music Awards and Scholarships sets out numerous sources of funding for music students at all levels.

In other words, for musicians of all types and ages, the Musicians Benevolent Fund is a real friend in need.

Details of the Festival, or leaflets describing the Fund's work, can be obtained from Jan Lowy, Administrator, 16 Ogle Street, London W1P7LG, Telephone: 071 636 9106.

Editors' Note: *The Junior Warden, Dr Allen Percival is Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee. Jan Lowy is a Liveryman.*

Her Majesty The Queen and Sir Ian Hunter, Chairman The Royal Concert & Musicians Benevolent Fund, Liveryman and formerly a Member of the Court of Assistants

Photo: Sidney Harris

