

ALL HANDS TO THE PUMP...

I am writing this two days after the postponed Annual General Meeting – at which, among other things, Peter Syrus was re-elected to the Committee, and the continued service of all Officers and remaining Committee members was confirmed. How grateful we must be to all these people, who serve NWEMF's interests so loyally and enthusiastically, and in a variety of ways.

Two specific matters arise from this. First, David reminded the meeting that he would not be seeking re-election as Chairman at next year's AGM (on 14 March, by the way). There will be the need to find a replacement then. David notified members of his intention to stand down at least a year ago, if I recall correctly, and, to the best of my knowledge, nobody has yet indicated that they would be prepared to step into his shoes. For various reasons, it would be useful for somebody to be in prospect for election some time before next year.

David - through his exemplary and dedicated, as well as highly imaginative, leadership of the Society – has demonstrated perfectly that the Chairman of NWEMF need not be a professional musician; in fact, in a number of ways it is desirable that our Chairman should *not* be a professional musician! I make this point, though, because no member of NWEMF, who might otherwise be quite willing in principle to step forward for election, should feel that their amateur status – or, for that matter, limited 'knowledge' (academic or

otherwise) of early music – should debar them from occupying the position. NWEMF is fortunate indeed to have a Committee which is not only very dedicated but is also mutually supportive of, and friendly towards, colleagues; the new Chairman, therefore, could be assured of wholehearted support.

It was unfortunate that, since the AGM had to be postponed from its original date, both our Secretary nor Treasurer were perforce absent due to prior engagements. This fact highlighted a point which I would have raised in this article anyway, even had both persons been present at the meeting. For such important positions we could now definitely benefit from having assistants, or deputies. I needn't elaborate on the reasons for this, beyond pointing out that, during the past eight years or so, NWEMF's financial turnover has increased significantly, in fact by somewhere between 200% and 250%, and, taking this fact together with the increasingly strict demands by the Charity Commissioners for our financial accountability, the Treasurer's job is now far more onerous than ever in the past.

So any offers of help, either specific or general, will be appreciated; and, at this point, I should record my deep gratitude to the member who, after the meeting, came forward and offered her services to the Committee, in a general capacity. This involvement is bound to be invaluable, and, as I have already indicated, co-option to the Committee in a general, rather than a specific, capacity is perhaps the best way for any member to become involved with the running of NWEMF.

A final word of thanks, from me writing as President, to all Officers and Committee members for all that they do for NWEMF, and further thanks to others to organise or tutor workshops, and, not least, to those of you who attend them.

Roger Wilkes