



New Musical Director

At the end of April, Paul Judson decided, after much consideration and with regret, to stand down as Musical Director and Principal Conductor of the orchestra. Following four years in the post, Paul unexpectedly developed problems with his hearing.

We express our gratitude to Paul for his sterling work in this position. Paul was presented with an engraved vase at the close of the July concert. Paul has accepted the post of Deputy Conductor, and has been made an honorary member of the orchestra. He will continue to play bassoon with the orchestra on a regular basis.

David Milner, from Whitley Bay, accepted our invitation to take on the responsibility for the musical side of the orchestra on 12th July. David has a long association with the orchestra, playing French horn as a guest musician on numerous occasions. We give him a warm welcome.



Tall Ships Celebrations

The orchestra had a busy time in the summer providing entertainment for hundreds of people at the start of the week-long celebrations for the Tall Ships Race, being hosted by the city.

Seventeen members of the strings section of the orchestra played in the bandstand at Barnes Park, Sunderland, on Saturday 30th June, in the afternoon. This was a family fun day entitled '**Ships Ahoy**', which was organised by the West Area of the City.

Following this, our Summer concert, entitled '**Music of the Sea**', was held on Saturday 7th July in West Park Church. Most of the music had a nautical connection.

On the following Wednesday, 11th July, the orchestra played in a specially built arena on the Town Moor at Hendon, Sunderland, a concert entitled '**Music for the Tall Ships**'. This evening concert had an appreciative audience seated outdoors, again in beautiful summer weather. For this performance, the orchestra was enhanced by ten members of the Royal Northern Sinfonia.

18th Birthday Concert Saturday 13th October, in West Park Church

This was very well attended, and the Mayor of Sunderland, Councillor Lynda Scanlan was present with her consort, Micky Horswill.

This was the first concert to be devised and presided over by our new Musical Director, David Milner, who was very well received by the audience.

A letter of invitation had been sent to all previous members (all those for whom we had contact details) and previous players were invited to come back and play at this special event. Five previous members accepted the invitation to play. (David McCourt, Jane Boyd, Caitlin Williams, Laura Payne and Stephanie Brown).

Specially written for the event was a version of 'Happy Birthday'. Phil Jackson (Trumpet) composed this medley using themes and rhythms from a number of well-known pieces.

A celebratory birthday cake was provided by Alderman Mark Greenfield (Vice-President). The cake was cut by the Mayor, ably assisted by the leader of the orchestra, Judith Thompson. The audience sang 'Happy Birthday' during the ceremony, accompanied by David Mills (Chairman) on the organ. Pieces of cake were distributed throughout the audience.

