

Leith Hill Musical Festival is sorry to report the death on 24th February 2017 of one of its Vice-Presidents, Renée Stewart.

A musician by training, Renée joined LHMF in 1956 when she was appointed Conductor of Merrow and Shere Choral Society. When that choir left the Festival in 1967 she became Conductor of Dorking Oriana. After leaving that choir she became firstly Assistant Secretary and then, in 1980, Festival Secretary. She held that post for 15 years, responsible for all aspects of running the Festival, a job she did with great charm and efficiency. She retired from that role in 1995 but did not give up as she was asked to join the Music Committee (a rare privilege not often accorded to Festival administrators) and also became the Festival Archivist! Although that role is now held by Jon Pullinger she continued her studies of Ralph Vaughan Williams' papers held at the Performing Arts Library in Dorking, cataloguing and assisting the Librarians, Graham Muncy and Peter Baxter, until shortly before her death.

Unfailingly generous with her knowledge and her time, Renée has contributed hugely to the development of the Festival for more than 60 years. For many people she was the Festival. We shall all miss her.