



Summer Newsletter August 2005

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GALA CONCERT - SATURDAY 1 OCTOBER 2005 (see poster on last page)

As you will know, the first CCCA sponsored chorister joined the choir in September 2004. Our long term aim is not only to make sure that we have a capital base to meet the cost of ensuring one free chorister place but building on this to be in a position to offer another scholarship or part scholarship at a later date. The CCCA is the only old choristers organisation so far to have achieved this level of support for their choir.

Tickets for the event are available through Bob Howse (01243 855206) or the Cathedral Gift Shop in the Bell Tower, price £10 for front nave or £5 back nave and side aisles.

Better still, why don't you take part as a performer? You will find a form to complete with this newsletter if you can. There are still places available in the group events, the Brass Ensemble, Mr. Nason's Bitz n' Pieces and the finale.

Dr ALAN THURLOW

Many of you would have heard that Alan was granted a Lambeth D. Mus degree that was conferred on him on 6 June at Lambeth Palace. By happy chance Dr. John Birch was organising the music for the occasion in which the choir from Chichester sang. JB said to Dr. Thurlow that he didn't think he could do much damage in one afternoon!

The Lambeth D.Mus. is awarded by the Archbishop of Canterbury in recognition for outstanding contribution to church music. September marks twenty-five years for Alan as Organist and Choirmaster, and the award may not be unconnected to this fact. The last holder of a Lambeth D.Mus. whilst still Organist and Choirmaster at Chichester was Dr. Harvey Grace in the 1930s.

The Doctoral gown and hood were formally presented to Alan during Eucharist on Sunday 19 June; the gown was paid for by the congregation and the hood by us, the CCCA. *(You have a chance to make a contribution to this please see the flyer enclosed! Chairman)*

Alan has written to us to thank us for the Doctoral hood a letter I quote in full.

Dear David,

I can't begin to tell you how thrilled I am at the presentation to me by the members of the CCCA of the Doctoral hood for my recently awarded Lambeth D.Mus. This was a very generous, and much appreciated, gesture and one that I deeply appreciate. Please convey my sincere thanks to the Committee and members. I now wear the hood daily, and with pride, and see it very much as an award for Chichester as well as myself.

Yours ever,

Alan

PAST CHORISTER NEWS

Adam Hyslop (1993 – 1998) and **Matthew Chinery** (1995 – 1999) share a corridor in St Catherine's, Oxford where Adam is reading Economics and Management and Matthew, Law.

Andrew Porter (1962 – 1965) was awarded a M.Sc. from Imperial College this year.

Nick Robson (1995 – 2000) is set to go to read Theology at St. John's College, Durham while his brother **Tim** (1995 – 2000) will be going to Magdalen College, Oxford to read medicine.

Benjamin Ruffer (1993 – 1998) is now a musician with the Band of The Life Guards and is stationed at Windsor. He finished his horse training in time to take part in Trooping the Colour and Beating Retreat in which he played the trumpet while riding a horse. He played with The Life Guards Orchestra when Patricia Routledge collected her C.B.E. at Buckingham Palace.

William Tagoe (1991 – 1995) competed a Masters at Cambridge and is now working for Ernest and Young, training to be an accountant.

Ben Woodgates (1995 – 2000), played the McMillan Percussion Concerto at Winchester College. He even was able to borrow and use a gamelan instrument in addition to his more usual vast array of instruments. He is off to Oxford complete with organ scholarship.

Joshua Wynter (1995 – 2000) is off to read music at Bristol University. He has a thriving band that is starting to play gigs, so if you are after a Gothic band you know whom to ask.

FUTURE EVENTS

Advent Reunion - Saturday 26 November 2005

The Procession is now held at 6.00pm and we have our Reunion directly afterwards. This year as the Bell Rooms are being refurbished and extended it will be in Vicars Hall. The Service you will recall is always a memorable one and members of the CCCA will have seats reserved in the Choir. If you have not been recently, do come, it makes a wonderful start to the Christmas season. Booking form to follow.

Carol Services

There are three carol services this year on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 December at 6.00pm and Thursday 23 December at 3.00pm. For tickets, you need to apply directly to Paul Lagrave through the Cathedral Offices.

Beer and Skittles

We are also planning Beer and Skittles evening at the end of the February half term. We had a very successful outing last time at the Four Chesnuts in The Hornet in Chichester where the food was good, beer excellent, skittles keenly contested and company most convivial! More details to follow when they are finalised.

2006 Summer Reunion and Annual General Meeting

It is likely that next year, Summer Reunion and the AGM will be in early July.

**REPORT ON
THE CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR
TOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA 2005**

15 Choristers, plus 13 parents and siblings, 6 Lay Vicars, 3 Organists, 3 Clergy, with 8 partners and friends, one Matron and a Patron left a cold and wet Chichester for what became a wonderfully stimulating and challenging trip of a lifetime. Although the weather was cold, the send-off was unexpected and very cheery when dozens of well-wishers assembled in West Street with their brollies to send us on our way. After the only to be expected rigours and frustrations of airport check-in and departure lounges and the inevitable discomfort of cattle-class flying, we arrived the next day in cold and wet South Africa! No cheery welcome, rain just like here, but to be fair, a few degrees warmer.

For the first five days of the tour we were based in Cape Town at the Breakwater Lodge on the Waterfront - a hectic time of concerts and services with as much sightseeing as we could possibly fit in. As soon as we arrived in Cape Town, our guide for the five days Margrit, met us and began the all-important narrative of local history and features of importance. We headed straight for Signal Hill, our first taste of Africa coming when we met a group of young black Christians who had had their weekly lunchtime prayer meeting with drums and bananas! Their colourful characters and enthusiasm bode well for the rest of the tour. Lunch was at Camps Bay – one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, sadly not on the day we were there when the sun was absent – but we had the first of many excellent lunches and the chance to let off some steam on the beach before heading back to the Waterfront and check-in at the hotel. With the weather not improving, we were beginning to wonder whether we had packed the right clothing!

The next morning things couldn't have been more different. Bright blue sky and sunshine all the way – actually for the rest of the tour. Day 2 we toured the Cape Peninsular though without our Assistant Organist who was already hard at work preparing for and giving a very warmly received organ recital at St George's Cathedral Cape Town. The rest of us posed for the very important 'group' photo at Cape Point having climbed to view the oceans beneath, the choristers preferring to point to the South Pole rather than back to London! We avoided having bags pinched by the baboons and left there for a more gentle encounter with animal life at Boulders which has recently become a home for a colony of jackass penguins. Yet another amazing lunch (fish and chips like you've never tasted!) before the rest of the musicians departed for rehearsals for the evening concert at St Francis Church in Simon's Town. The concert was sold out thanks to the hard work of many in the parish and we helped to raise funds for the recently established Music Academy for Disadvantaged Children.

A gentle start to Friday with a trip to the Spier Wine Estate where the boys, young and old, had the chance in a life time of holding birds of prey and stroking cheetahs. The wine was quite good too for those who were able to

imbibe! Afternoon rehearsals for the concert in St George's Cathedral followed the most enormous picnic lunch you've ever seen, all individually bagged up – we really don't know how to do picnics in England!! The concert was a wonderful occasion with a very appreciative audience. Our only sadness was that they were predominantly white but we later discovered that generally speaking the black population don't live in the centre of Cape Town but live on the edge of the city and there is very little public transport and what there is is probably too expensive for them. A great discovery for some of the adults later that evening was the Africa Café, an amazing eatery where 18 dishes from different African countries are brought to your table, after the ceremonial hand washing, with the option of choosing to repeat all or any which particularly took your fancy!

The first poignant and immensely challenging experience of the tour was our trip to Robben Island. A gloriously hot, sunny day with a wonderful trip by hydrofoil away from the Waterfront took us to the island where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned. Our guide round the prison was himself a former prisoner who led us carefully and thoughtfully explaining how the prisoners were treated and how the treatment varied according to their racial origin. The tour party couldn't help but be moved by this whole experience and the silence that accompanied the tour was in no small part due to the humility and amazing dignity with which we were guided. A leisurely lunch on the Waterfront and a fond farewell to Margrit who had also been deeply moved by the amazing singing of the choir, gave us an afternoon to relax before rehearsals for the Vigil Mass at St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral. To hear the Vierge Messe Solennelle ring out from the west end gallery at what for the Roman Catholic Church was a time of sadness with the imminent death of Pope John Paul II, was wonderful. The short recital which followed the mass allowed the choir to display its versatility once again.

An extremely early start on a beautiful morning saw us heading back to Simon's Town for the Sung Eucharist. A warm welcome from the large congregation awaited us and the choir led the service with their glorious singing. We felt very privileged to be sharing our choral tradition with our brethren in South Africa and sharing in their worship. What we didn't expect was the great hospitality that was to come. A trip round the naval museum for the choristers and adults who wished followed by our first South African *braai* – a barbecue! The Admiral hosted this party in his grounds and we were able to show our appreciation for their generosity by presenting them with a further R5000 (£500) towards instruments for the Music Academy for which we had helped to raise funds at our concert a few days previously. To us this was the least we could do, and to our new friends, it was a huge offering. We left with promises of searching in cupboards for old musical instruments, particularly brass ones, to send out to them to enable more children to have the joy of learning to play music. The Admiral's grounds soon turned into an ideal location for a game of imaginary football for the Choristers while the adults soaked up the sunshine before heading back to Cape Town for an evening Evensong in St George's Cathedral with a sermon preached by our own Precentor in dimmed light. The Cathedral was full; an expected 70 in the congregation became 400+ to the delight of the whole party.

The one sadness about leaving Cape Town was that we had not been able to go up Table Mountain. But that geographical wonder will still be there if we chose to return. For we had been offered the chance to meet Archbishop emeritus Desmond Tutu before we flew to Durban; an opportunity none of us may ever have again. As we waited with great anticipation for the esteemed father to finish his interview with the BBC no less about the passing of Pope John Paul II, our thoughts turned to all that we had experienced so far. Nothing could have prepared us for the next twenty minutes in the presence of surely one of the godliest men alive. Never ones to miss an opportunity to sing, the choir delighted our host with both sacred and secular. The jumps of joy at the Lay Vicars' rendition of the Beach Boys number 'Get Around' will remain with us all. The shaking of hands, the hi-fives with the choristers, and the blessing of us all in Xhosa must surely have become one of the most memorable and moving times of the whole tour. A thoughtful party of 37, touched by the generosity of all those we had met so far, moved back to the airport for departure to Durban.

The heat, humidity and a sense of finding the real Africa met us as we drove north to Pietermaritzburg to an amazing hotel where we were based for the second part of the tour. A week after leaving the coolness of England, we ventured to the Tala Game Reserve for an incredible time of seeing game in close proximity, taking in the wonderful scenery and colours of Africa and of course consuming the vast quantities of food laid on for us at lunchtime! The choristers found the local film crew so an impromptu sing was called for! Satisfied and now running short of camera film after the chance to capture giraffe, hippo, rhino, zebra, impala and the like, we returned to our hotel to rest before rehearsals for the concert at the Cathedral that evening. An amazingly simple Cathedral but with all the now expected warmth of welcome, this was the concert to remember. Patricia Routledge, as our Tour Patron, had accompanied us all the way and had read in the services as well as in the concerts and tonight her readings came alive coupled with the added sparkle from the choir and organists. Cockroaches didn't even manage to put the organists off their flow, thanks to the aid of a local lady in the interval! An immediate standing ovation by the audience made us all feel very proud to have been part of this very special tour. The money we helped to raise on this evening has been used to build a church in one of the districts of Pietermaritzburg – Sweetwaters. Sadly we weren't all able to go to see the church as we need vehicles for rough terrain, but some of the party were taken the next day for a visit they will never forget.

Our penultimate full day in South Africa was a free day – no singing! Instead we were treated to a real Zulu day in the Valley of 1000 Hills. Combine snakes, crocodiles and a bush drive with more wonderful wildlife and flora with Zulu dancing and an insight into their culture and it was a perfect day for more memories.

As the heat increased (39 degrees) so we headed for fun in the uShaka water park in Durban – a chance for all ages to cool off, enjoy the pools and slides! An unbelievable lunch (are you beginning to get the feeling that food was a

very significant part of this tour yet?!) on the Upper Deck and a trip to see the dolphins preceded our visit to the second largest township – Umlazi. The excitement of a police escort into Umlazi and the anticipation of what our time there would be like meant there was a frisson in the atmosphere on the coach. We weren't disappointed. The welcome we received was quite overwhelming. The singing, the dancing, the smiles and the laughter of our hosts, soon to become friends, was yet another memory to be stored for sharing on our return home. The next few hours cannot be fully communicated in words. Impromptu singing, dancing, clapping and the freedom to express our faith with our African friends, soaking up their dignity and immense spirituality and warmth will be hard to encounter again; unless we return there. And as for the party after a two and a half hour Eucharist...once again the food was delicious and the generosity of the people extraordinary! We were enchanted by the children who thanked us for coming to them; it was our privilege and a very humbling experience. We have been able to donate money to help them build much needed toilets at one of the churches - £150 to us is so small and yet to them is everything they needed. We left with the hope of helping further our new friends. Many lessons were learnt that day.

Our final day began at leisure with a shopping trip (for those who hadn't spent their pocket money!) and then the coach took us to Durban for our flight to Johannesburg and then on to Heathrow. This time there was a different sense of anticipation – that of seeing families again and sharing all our experiences – and of returning to the extreme cold of England.

Without the hugely generous support of so many of you, this tour would not have been possible; the Choir would not have been able to share their talents; the whole party would not have been able to experience so many challenging and thought provoking situations; and hopefully we left something of an impression on all those who had heard us and met us.

Rachel Wardell

The photographs reproduced on a separate sheet for this newsletter have been with the kind permission of Rachel. Thank you Rachel for this wonderful account of the South African trip. Chairman



GALA CONCERT

at Chichester Cathedral

including

The Cathedral Choir
and *Close Company*

in aid of the

CCCA Scholarship Trust Fund

SATURDAY 1 OCTOBER 2005

7.30pm

Tickets: £10 (Front Nave) and £5 (Rear Nave and Side Aisles)
All tickets are unreserved

Available in advance from:
Cathedral Gift Shop or 01243 855206

By kind permission of the Dean and Chapter