



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2004

Summer Reunion

Sunday 18 July

Programme for the day

- 12.00 Drinks with The Thurlows at 2 St. Richard's Walk after Sung Eucharist
- 1.00 Lunch in the Bell Rooms
- 3.30 Evensong
- 4.45 Tea in the Bell Rooms with a talk by The Precentor, Canon John Ford on the forthcoming choir trip to South Africa, followed by the AGM.

MENU

Lunch:

Cold meats and Quiches (including a vegetarian choice)
served with a mixture of salads

Strawberries and cream

Fruit juice and coffee

Tea:

Tea, coffee and fruit juice served with
Home-made cakes

Those members with young children who would not eat the lunch may bring a picnic for their children.

Chichester Cathedral Choir Tour to South Africa, Spring 2005

Chichester Cathedral Choir is planning a 10-day tour to South Africa after Easter in 2005. They plan to visit Cape Town, Simon's Town, Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Umlazi (one of the largest townships in South Africa). During their visit the choir will sing Evensong in Cape Town Cathedral, give concerts in Cape Town and Durban, and worship with Christians in Pietermaritzburg, as well as to raise money for South African charities involved with caring for abandoned children and those living with Aids.

This tour will give an opportunity for Chichester Cathedral to share the excellence of its own distinctive liturgical and musical traditions in the country with a rich and diverse culture.

They hope to be ambassadors for the unique choral heritage of this land, as well as representing the Cathedral city and Diocesan communities. They in turn will gain a valuable and authentic insight into the different expressions of worship, which are alive and flourishing in the Christian Church in South Africa.

To make this tour a reality in 2005, they need to raise in the region of £45,000. The Cathedral Choir launched their fundraising with an "*At Home*" concert on 7 February 2004.

A series of further fund raising events are being planned:

Saturday 24 April 2004	Sponsored Organ-o-thon	9am-9pm
Saturday 23 October 2004	Choir by Candlelight	7.30pm
Saturday 12 February 2005	Organ Extravaganza	7.30pm

You will find blue flyers about all these events enclosed as well as an envelope marked "CHOIR TOUR" should you wish to make a donation.

Calling all players!

Mark Wardle, Assistant Organist, is organising the "*Organ-o-thon*". He hopes to include past choristers, young and old, to take part in the last hour i.e. 8-9pm. He requires organists to play during the day as well as instrumentalists to help perform a mass Hallelujah Chorus. He would also be happy to include solo instrumentalists to play with the organ. If you think you can help in any way, please return the form in the Newsletter to me Mark at the Prebendal School.

Southern Cathedrals Festival

It is Chichester's turn to host the SCF. In past years the CCCA have raised funds to pay for the Organ Recital that opens the Festival on Thursday 15 July 2004. The recital is to be given by Martin Baker, Organist of Westminster Cathedral.

I hope you will feel able to contribute towards this event. Please complete the enclosed form and send a cheque made payable to CCCA and return to Dily Ruffer at the address shown on the form.

You will find a brochure about the SCF with this newsletter

Music Scholarships

Congratulations to the three choristers who have gained the following music scholarships and are leaving the school in July.

John Paul Washer	Scholarship to Charterhouse
Joshua Paddon	St. John's College, Southsea
Henry Dalgleish	Exhibition to Winchester College

Interesting B & B with Cathedral connections!

Bob Howes has news of a cottage built from the remains of the Cathedral Spire that collapsed on 1861. If you want to check it out and maybe even book it for a B & B then here is the web address. www.spirecottage.co.uk.so

Beer and Skittles at the White Swan, Bosham

Just over 30 members of the Association assembled after Evensong on Saturday 28 February for a keenly fought contest over the odd pint and after a goodly repast. We had three teams; one representing the Close, one the chorister parents and the finally the CCCA committee. Mr. Thurlow was, as usual, in good form, and undertook his usual role of master of the skittles. The lead changed hands over the three rounds. In the end the Committee were a smidgen ahead of the chorister parents who were a whisker ahead of the Close.

Biannual Flower Festival

A reminder that the biannual Flower Festival takes place in the Cathedral on the 3, 4 and 5 June. It is always wonderful to see and smell the cathedral bedecked with blooms.

Birth Announcement

At 9.07 on Monday 1 Match, 2004 Alex and Annie Villiers became the proud parents of Charles Adam (Charlie) who weighed in at 7lb. 9ozs. All three are doing very well. Alex was in the choir from 1959 – 1964.

Missing Choristers

You will have received a revived address list of members. It may contain errors as people move and we do not always get to hear of this. If you are in touch with any of *contemporises* and note that we have an incorrect address please let us know.

The Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations

You can obtain a membership card for only £1, which entitles you to free entry to cathedrals and in many cases 10% off in their gift shops, though not at Christ Church, Oxford it has been discovered! If you want one of these cards, please send me a cheque for £1 made payable to FCOCA and I will obtain one for you. A SAE would also be appreciated.

News from Tom Sutcliffe (probationer and chorister May 1952 to July 1956)

Ten of us who started singing in the choir at Chichester between 1949 and 1952 intended to get together for a very agreeable reunion last June. We were prompted initially by

Stewart Kershaw, who is chief conductor of Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle (which was featured at the Edinburgh Festival a few years back and extremely well received). Stewart was one of the most musical boys during the final years of Hawkey's regime, and also had one of the prettiest solo voices. He's been a professional musician ever since he left the Royal Academy, and for a time in the 1960s he was often to be found conducting the Royal Ballet touring section. He's been living in the USA for decades. Stewart comes over to visit his mother in East Anglia at least every year, and he has promoted other reunions of contemporary former choristers - with the help previously of Peter Watts doing the organising. But as I had had a meal with Stewart in Edinburgh when he was there, and was in touch with him, I did the communication side this time. Sadly Peter was unable to be with us - having already made holiday arrangements that couldn't be changed.

The whole thing had started when Stewart wrote a reply to my 2001 Christmas round-robin: "I just arrived home after a hedonistic holiday in the Caribbean which was richly deserved after a month of innumerable Nutcrackers here in Seattle. Richard Buckle once said 'I am one more Nutcracker nearer to death', and I totally agree with him having reached 457 in *this* PNB production since I premiered it in 1983." It had been about a decade since the last get-together of our batch, which I didn't attend. This had been held at West Lodge Park, a very grand country house hotel near Cockfosters where Grevile Bridge was working (in fact since then he had become chairman of the family hotel group that owned the place, and was on the point of retiring from the post when I contacted him). Others who had attended the lunch then were Richard Codd, Mark Dyer and Roger Gooding. I contacted all of them of course - Mark Dyer, who was a contemporary of mine at Oxford and at whose wedding in York I sang, has now retired from many years' arduous work for solicitors Clifford Chance. We live very near each other in the London suburbs but seldom get together. I remember apologising for not singing well enough at his wedding (in 1965) and burbling on idiotically (without realising what I was saying till it was too late) about how I'd try to do better next time: fortunately there hasn't been any next time! I also went out to the hotel with my wife Meredith and had a very nice supper with Grevile and his wife.

I managed with some difficulty to track down a number of others who we had not any of us heard of for many years - including Peter Spence who was a probationer with me from May 1952 and who was the author of the television hit series *To the Manor Born* starring Penelope Keith, Anthony Plumridge who was head boy and head of Cantoris when I was head chorister from 1955 to 1956, Roger Manser and Nigel Bedggood. I also discovered Tony's brother Michael Plumridge, when I finally dug up Tony - as well as an American serviceman who had been trying to get in touch with both of them through the Friends Reunited website, having been a lodger at their parents' Kingston house in the early 1950s. This reunion thing can be catching. Mike Plumridge has been in Canada for years, but if we do a repeat performance next year perhaps for our lot, we'll try and give him course.

Nigel Bedggood - I finally caught up with him through the Harrow old boys' association: my neighbour in London is an OH, but I hadn't immediately got round to looking in obvious places like that. Nigel had been running the electrical engineering firm which his father had built up for many years, and it was interesting to learn a bit more about what we each of us had or hadn't been doing. We are all getting towards the stage of retirement, or at least pensionable (if we are lucky enough). Roger Gooding was in the end unable to be with us, as his daughter Julia, the well known soprano who specialises in early and baroque music, had decided - as he put it - to choose that Saturday June 29 which we had plumped for to, as he put it to me, "get married to her bass trombone and did not advise me until after you got in touch. They could have done it any time in the last five years, but there is nothing I can do about that! It will be a huge disappointment to me to miss seeing all those old

choristers you have rounded up." And, finally, Roger Manser had to go to the funeral of a schoolfriend's mother the other side of London, where he had been asked to read a lesson - though he did turn up and have a pre-lunch drink with us all first before setting out to Oxted in Surrey (fortunately he lives near Grevile's hotel). I myself had to leave earlier than the rest after lunch, which was a disappointment, in order to fly to Munich to see some operas I was going to be writing about. But our final tally of eight round the table was very gratifying and the lunch (thanks to Grevile) was superb. We were myself, Stewart Kershaw, Richard Codd, Mark Dyer, Tony Plumridge, Nigel Bedggood, Peter Spence, and of course Grevile Bridge. I am sure we shall do it again soon, but not too soon.

This kind of thing gets more popular and more rewarding as one gets on. It's interesting what a high regard we survivors in the choir had for Hawkey. (I say "survivors" because Peter Spence for example stopped being a probationer after a few terms: Hawkey once told my parents, "I haven't the time to teach the boys; they either pick it up or they're out" - a kind of "nature red in tooth and claw" approach that would not doubt shock today's educationists, though of course it worked very well back then). I especially valued his rough and unpretentious kind of encouragement - not least because he retired to his cottage near Hurstpierpoint College while I was still at the school, and I called in on him often. John Birch, who I like personally, and whose refined musicianship I do not doubt, represents the much more conventional cathedral tradition of the post-war period, whereas Hawkey harked back to a far earlier era. After all he had founded an English choirschool in Paris at St George's rue Vaquerie, before the First World War, and his heart was in the tradition of the French organists like his beloved Widor. In fact in English terms Hawkey as an outsider, and I think that had quite a lot of influence on us all - our batch have had perhaps more than their fair share of individualist critics, awkward bastards, though of course we are really all as charming as anything.

As a note, I thought you might like to include what the Pacific Northwest Ballet's website has to say about Stewart:

Stewart Kershaw has been Music Director and Conductor for Pacific Northwest Ballet since 1983. Born in Oxford, England, Mr. Kershaw was a chorister at Chichester Cathedral, studied at London's Royal Academy of Music (of which he was made a Fellow in 1989), and at the Conservatoire Nationale de Paris. He has worked with numerous ballet companies, including the Stuttgart Ballet, for which he was the Music Director from 1973 to 1980, the Royal Ballet in London and American Ballet Theatre. Mr. Kershaw worked with the Paris Opera from 1977 to 1980, and from 1978 to 1980 he was chief conductor of the Kyoto Symphony Orchestra in Japan. From 1980 to 1989, he held the post of Music Director of the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1997, Mr. Kershaw was invited to create the Auburn Symphony Orchestra, which now gives concerts at Auburn's Performing Arts Center in South King County. In a long and extensive career, Mr. Kershaw has conducted more than 70 orchestras in 15 different countries around the world.

Thank you Tom for such sending us the account of your reunion. Are there any others being planned from other years? Please let us know – Chairman.

CCCA AGM

If you would like to stand for the committee of the CCCA please return this form to me by Sunday 18 July. We are looking for one or two representatives from past choristers who were in the choir in the 70s and 80s in particular.

Posts available: please indicate for which post you would like to stand or feel free to nominate someone who you think would be suitable.

Chairman _____

Secretary _____

Treasurer _____

Committee member(s) _____

ORDER FORM FOR THE REUNION - SUNDAY 18 JULY

Lunch and Tea @ £12 per person _____

Lunch only @ £11 _____

Tea only @ £2.50 _____

Family Lunch and Tea ticket (4 persons) @ £42 _____

Total enclosed: £ _____

Cheques payable to CCCA and please send a SAE for tickets to be sent

DONATION TOWARD THE SCF ORGAN RECITAL

I enclose a donation towards the CCCA sponsored organ recital at the SCF.

Amount: £ _____ Cheques made payable to CCCA

Please return this form by Monday 12 July 2004 to:

Dily Ruffer, CCCA, c/o 40 Beaufort Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH6 5AN