

# Blackburn Cathedral

## Music & More

£3

October 2008



Welcome, Canon Dr Susan Penfold. See p. 19

# KEITH BOND

**Sub Organist of Blackburn Cathedral 1972-83  
who died, on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2008  
From Anna Stuttard (daughter of OC Alec & Pat Stuttard)**

Dear John,

I was saddened to hear of Keith's death at the weekend - I will write to Ruth, of course, but I was also prompted to send the attached photo, which I've been meaning to send to you for a while. It's of the Young People's Choir (YPC) in 1982, which Keith directed, and I have a note on the back with the following names:



Back row, left to right:

**David Whittle, Peter Anderton, Howard Culshaw, Richard Grimshaw, Craig Horrocks, David Tattersall, Andrew Birchall, Stuart Gibson, Dean Slater, Mike Ryan, Mark Hodson, Stephen Ward, Simon Elliott, Karl Farquhar, Brian Newton, Stephen Anderson, Keith Bond (half hidden!), John Marr, Stephen Rickerby**

Front row, left to right:

**Anna Stuttard, Pam Walker, Alison Whittle, Ruth Beaumont, Heather Starkie, Diane Lewis, Margaret Marr, Veronica Tobin (Keith's daughter), Carol Riding, Ann Wilson, Jackie Oddie, Sue Taylor, Wendy Tracie, Karen Caunter, Debra Farquhar.**

I was privileged to be in the YPC for several years under Keith's direction, and I owe Keith so much. In the choir, I was introduced to a huge range of music and learned everything important I ever learned about singing and about working with other musicians. I can't overstate how important it was to me - music might never have been such a big part of my life had it not been for Keith and the YPC.

The level of musicianship was extremely high and the commitment we all felt to the choir was intense - if attendance got below 95% we were all in trouble. Keith inspired great loyalty. It was also a lot of fun - the choir was the focus of my social life for my teenage years.

So although Keith's death is a time for sadness for his family and friends, I know other people share my happy memories of an inspiring musician, who was able to communicate his love of music and his ferociously high standards to a generation of moody teenagers. I am deeply grateful that I was part of his choir.

I moved away from Blackburn almost 20 years ago, and although I love my life in London I do look with envy at the music at the Cathedral and wish my daughters could be part of it.

With warm best wishes - **Anna Stuttard**  
(YPC c. 1977-1984)

## **From OC DAVID TATTERSALL (former Lt. Commander, RN). Now in NZ**

Hi John,

I know that I am not in contact with you all now, but I consider my early years at Blackburn Cathedral so important in my make-up and helping me to have the successful Naval career that I enjoyed.

I thought that you would be interested in my thoughts on Keith. He was a man before his time in a lot of ways. He ran a fantastically successful Youth Choir with just the right

amount of authority and rules to make it work, yet be a fun youth club at the same time.

I have lots of happy memories from that time in my growing up. It spoke volumes of the man when everyone came back to the choir in their holidays from universities throughout the country. Top bloke. In fact, another way that he was ahead of his time was his support for **Mark Hodson** and me when we tried, unsuccessfully, to get the girls included in the Old Choristers.... I must concede a little wry smile when I found out that they are now.

I wish you all happiness and health for now, and the future,

**David**

*David: How very good it is to hear from you again, for you were one of the outstanding Head Choristers during my time at Blackburn Cathedral. (See p. 18) I greatly appreciate your memories of Keith. He was unique and so very gifted. JB*

*And how very grateful we are to **Anna Stuttard** for her tribute to Keith and for being able to name all her colleagues in the YPC 26 years ago. Thank you!*

## From **OC Stephen Ward**

**former member of Keith's YPC, and in the photo**

John --

Thank you (if those are the right words to use...) for letting me know about Keith....

I have many, many fond memories of Keith -- all positive, all happy: my favourite probably being the intimate extended-family evenings he and Ruth would share with members of the YPC at their home -- when we would muddle our way through madrigals, etc. late into the night, and just generally have a great time. If there was joy to be squeezed from music (or cricket!), Keith would know how to go about doing it! (The "muddling" wouldn't last for long, of course -- Keith was a great choirmaster: and would soon have us all singing perfectly!)

He also gave me the confidence (and allowed me!) to compose various pieces for the choir -- a real privilege -- and encouraged me to take on my own church choir. He was generous in so many ways....

There's so much more I could say. Like you, he made a deep, permanent and positive impact on my life -- one which, had circumstances been different, I suppose I could have repaid with a different career. But life is never always that simple....

[By the way, you've asked, caringly, several times, how my health has been, since my operation, and I'm sorry that I haven't replied. I've always put it off, in the hope that I could give you some positive news: but I have to be frank and say that I'm not actually very well. My life seems to consist of endless rounds of tests and failed treatments, etc.. But I refuse to give up searching for things that will improve my quality of life; and know, therefore, that, one day, I will emerge from all this....]

Anyway, I hope you are keeping well and happy.

Look after yourself - **Steve**.

PS: If I remember correctly, Keith and my dad were born just one day apart: so apologies if this email is a little 'emotional' -- suddenly everyone feels a little more mortal than they were before.

*Steve: Thank you so much for writing to me about Keith. I was very moved -- and also moved to hear of your own problems. Please keep in touch. JB*

## From **OC Mike Ryan** at Lancaster Royal Grammar School, also in the photo

My Cathedral career started with John Bertalot and I gained a lot from my time in the front row of the stalls. I joined the Cathedral choir very late through a fortuitous invitation to audition for my younger brother, Chris, (I was already in the third year!). However, I look back on that short time as a treble and then more years with Keith Bond in the YPC with great affection. When I joined the Youth Choir, Keith built on that initial spark to make music such an important part of my life. For that, I am truly grateful.

I think I first noticed him when the Cathedral Choir were singing the Fauré Requiem and Keith had played the orchestral parts on the organ. Up until then, the organ had always seemed to me to be purely accompaniment or top-and-tailing the service; I hadn't recognised it as a major part of the whole thing. It might have been Fauré again, but I remember him rearranging a big piece so that he could play some of the keyboard via the pedals because of the operation on his hand.

His work with the Youth Choir was immense, especially considering that he was doing that alongside playing at the other services too. He must have been a bit special to get a bunch of young people to practise and then perform church music to his exacting standards. Rehearsal on Friday nights and then Mattins first thing on a Sunday morning just don't fit in with the life of a teenager. Yet we were there almost every week (even if we did nip off for a quick beer after rehearsal as we got a bit older). He set high standards and helped us to achieve them.

There was a wide range of characters among the choir. Some had been in it forever and were the same as ever and others were struggling to come to terms with an adult voice that just wouldn't behave as well as the treble voice from a few months previously.

Some of the girls were there because of friends from school and others because of brothers in the other choir and two of the best were daughters of the choirmaster!

Somehow, Keith made the mix work. He did have a bit of a temper from time to time but looking back with 20:20 hindsight there was always a reason for it, even if at the time we may have wondered what all the fuss was about. He was always fair, though, and that made him all the more respectable.

I remember I borrowed some madrigal books for a school concert and some coffee got spilled all over them. After spending hours trying to clean it off, I confessed expecting a roasting. Keith said simply, "Did you pour the coffee on them on purpose? No. So that is alright then." I think he was more concerned that we had sung the pieces properly than being too worried about the sticky books.

The experience of YPC helped me in singing through university and adult life. A good piece of KB advice when sightreading with a new group (which has served me very well over the years) was to work out who is any good and keep one ear on them, work out who has no idea and ignore them and then believe in what you feel is right, sticking with it until it is obviously wrong and then learning from the mistake. I suppose that is pretty good advice for life too.

He and Ruth looked after us in so many ways. I remember one party at their home in Pleasington when Bishop Martineau came too. The party was in full swing but a small group of the choir were avid followers of a TV show "Soap" which was a spoof of the standard US soap opera. Knowing it was a bit rude to ask to watch TV, someone (it may have been my brother Chris) had a quiet word and we were ushered in to watch it. The Bishop joined in saying that he was quite a fan too but hadn't felt able to ask!

There was one time when Chris and I were back from University and at the end of the service Keith played the Charpentier (Eurovision!) as a voluntary. Chris mentioned that it was one of his favourite pieces and Keith replied that he remembered it was and that was why he had played it.

I seemed to bump into Keith a few times in some unexpected places. He was the A-level examiner for our school for some years where I taught and I was amazed to walk in to see him having a brew in the staff room. Of course there were also some memorable events at S Martin's when his daughter Wonka was singing even though was billed as Veronica.

Perhaps most far-fetched was meeting him at school one week to hear that he was performing in Germany the next. "A small town in Schleswig-Holstein", he said, "Rendsburg". This was exactly the place I was heading with a school trip at the same time. When I got to Germany, my host family were very kind. I had noticed that they had a few posters in the window advertising Keith's concert. They told me that it was a very good organist from England and that they had planned to go but wouldn't because they were entertaining me. Once I explained the link, we all set off to enjoy both the concert and a supper afterwards.

## KEITH BOND — by John Bertalot

I first saw Keith Bond way back in 1955. We had come up to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge for the May Week Concert. He had been organ scholar there two years previously and I was about to take up the scholarship as his successor-but-one. He had done his National Service in the army, learning Russian, and had been commissioned as a captain. I remember his military bearing so well.

Three years later I received a most gracious letter from him when I had been appointed Director of Music of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton – which was at that time one of the most prestigious churches in this country for encouraging arts. **Benjamin Britten** had composed a cantata for it, **Henry Moore** had sculpted a (then) controversial *Madonna and Child*, and **Graham Sutherland** had painted a dramatic *Crucifixion* – which later inspired the *Christ in Majesty* tapestry in the then-being-built Coventry Cathedral.

Keith, who then held a similar appointment in Leamington Spa, expressed his delight that we were relatively close neighbours, and he invited me to meet him and his wife, **Ruth**, when **Fernando Germani** was to give an organ recital in his church. Germani was, at that time, the most sought-after organ recitalist in the world. What a privilege it was to meet him. Later he gave two recitals in Northampton and he stayed with me. What memories!

When I was appointed to Blackburn in 1964 I discovered that Keith was now a Senior Lecturer at the Royal Manchester College of Music, where I joined him – first as a part-time lecturer, and then, in the new Royal Northern College of Music, as a full-time Senior Lecturer in addition to my Cathedral duties. We taught a few doors from each other on the Theory corridor.

I told the story, in our last edition, how Keith succeeded **Ronald Frost** as Sub Organist of Blackburn Cathedral in 1972. His playing was, of course, superb, and his accompanying of the cathedral choirs was so musical. (We had both been taught by the legendary Director of Music of King's College, Cambridge, Dr. **Boris Ord**, for whom perfection was the norm.)

He introduced senior girls into the then all-male YPC – his daughters **Angela** and **Veronica** ('Wonka') being founder members – and under his musical leadership, and **Ruth's** maternal hospitality for parties, the numbers and quality of the YPC's music-making reached an all-time high.

He was also instrumental in enabling the cathedral choir to make two concert tours of Holland and North Germany. (See photo below.) Keith used to give recitals all over Europe during his vacations, and so his continental connections were invaluable.

He and Ruth visited me several times in Princeton USA and Keith gave splendid recitals on the 4-manual tracker organ in my church. What a joy it was to welcome such valued friends to my American home!

On his retirement from the Cathedral and the RNCM he and Ruth moved to a lovely house near Aldeburgh where he became part-time organist at the church where Britten and Pears are buried. He continued giving organ recitals, – I believe he kept a complete list of all the recitals he had ever given! – and he also founded the Blythburgh Singers. Again, what a privilege it was to be invited to conduct Keith's Singers for a concert in that enormous church when he celebrated his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1999!

And when he died, Ruth asked me to play the organ for his Memorial Service at Blythburgh. His Singers sang Weelkes *Nunc Dimittis*, Howells' *Like as the hart*, and Duruflé's *Ubi Caritas*.

The church was packed, and Ruth and her daughters Angela and Veronica were radiant. The sun shone, **Peter** and **Constance Heald** drove me from their home in Ely to be there, and OC **John Marr** and SOC **Heather Starkie** also made a special journey from Blackburn to be there. That was a service we shall ever remember with the greatest thanksgiving.

**PHOTO: Provost Lawrence Jackson presenting to the Mayor of Blackburn a token from one of the Burgermeisters in Holland after our 1975 tour.**



**1975 photo.** Back row L-R: Ivor Bolton, Frank Hare, Derek Crompton, Bob Keen, Bob Anderson, Ted Denham, John Gillett, David Metcalf and Grenville Robinson.  
 Middle row: Jim Smith, Peter Eastham, Mike Ryan, Andrew Anderson, Peter Banks, Dean Slater, Stephen Anderson, David Rothwell and (at the far end) Peter Holroyd.  
 Front row of boys: Iain Hebden, Nigel Chew, Philip Chew, Chris Ryan and Dean Slater.  
 Front: KEITH BOND, the Mayor of Blackburn, Provost Lawrence Jackson and JB

**Gordon Pullin.** a long-time friend & colleague of Keith, and professional tenor soloist, gave the eulogy, at Ruth's request.  
**Shortened version of Gordon Pullin's Appreciation of Keith Bond  
 at his Memorial Service Blythburgh Church, 25 vii 2008**



*Gordon said:* When I was giving recitals with Keith, more often than not there would be no biographies printed on the programme. But when the organisers insisted, Keith's was one of the briefest I have known:

***Musical education at Manchester University, the Royal Manchester College of Music and Organ Scholar at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. A Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, his mentors were Harold Dawber, Boris Ord and Lady Susi Jeans. His career included posts at both Ripon and Blackburn Cathedrals and as Senior Lecturer in Harmony at the Royal Northern College of Music.***

No mention that he had been a church organist since the age of fourteen (at the fashionable Christ Church, Heaton, in Bolton and then at Bramhall Parish Church). No mention also that at Blackburn Cathedral he had turned the Young Men's Choir into the flourishing Young People's Choir which sang regularly at Sunday Matins, to say nothing of organising tours to Holland and Germany for the Cathedral Choir. No, no mention of them because Keith was a very private person and not given at all to self-advertisement. There was no mention either of the organ recitals he had given throughout England as well as in Holland, North Germany, Switzerland and the USA.

He was a pupil at Bolton School. At Cambridge I overlapped with JB, Keith's successor-but-one as Organ Scholar of Corpus, who is playing the organ today. Keith was Assistant Organist at Ripon to Lionel Dakers. He was Sub Organist at Blackburn Cathedral, where I sang for John Bertalot in a concert in which Keith was involved.

As an accompanist Keith was ideal from the conductor's point of view – that is to say, he just got on with it

Because Keith was an organist, it is inevitable that we associate him largely with church music. But one of his other great loves was singing madrigals. No doubt this came from his experience in Cambridge, for not only was Boris Ord turning King's College Choir into the best choir in the country (or the 'world' if you like), but he was also the conductor of the University Madrigal Society in which Keith sang and whose Summer Concert in punts on the Backs is a famous Cambridge tradition.

Keith took his singing quite seriously in his Cambridge days to the extent of having lessons, and singing madrigals remained a great pleasure for him.



***Keith's Blythburgh Singers at his Memorial Service***

But of course the experience of Keith for many of us here was through the Blythburgh Singers. This was Keith doing the thing that he loved most. Here he was in control; he could choose the singers and the music, tell the conductor what to rehearse and when, and put on a real cathedral service in one of England's most magnificent churches.

I have Ruth's permission not to make Keith a saint, and few would deny that working with Keith could occasionally be a little tricky. Boris Ord at King's was his model, and Ord was not one to mince his words. But all of us who sang with him knew that what he wanted were the highest standards of which we were capable.

To me at least it had seemed obvious for some time that Keith had been becoming less enthusiastic. Part of the reason for this was the continuing problem of his hands; even after operations the signs would be there that the problem would eventually come back. But by 2003 Keith had the odd physical ailment and was unable to accompany me in Blackburn Cathedral at the recital he had himself arranged.



***Keith and Ruth Bond last year celebrating Peter Heald's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday with Constance Heald at Aldeburgh.***

Keith never was a great socialiser in my experience. He preferred a quiet lunch with friends to a larger celebration. After services in Blythburgh at one time he would often come

across to the White Hart, but more recently he preferred to go back home and enjoy the second half of the can of lager he had opened at lunch-time

He felt he had lived a good life. He had married Saint Ruth in 1955. And I mean **'Saint Ruth'**; I know of no-one more saintly. Ruth was the perfect 'help-meet'. She saw to Keith's every need. I have never known her to let anything 'get to her'. So whatever else Keith achieved in life, her capture was undoubtedly his greatest success. They had two lovely daughters, now of course with their own families and with their own successful careers.



**Angela, Ruth and 'Wonka' at the Reception after the service.**

When Veronica gave up singing in recitals with her father and before I came along Keith formed a very successful partnership with trumpeter Ian McKechnie; we even found some rather good programmes involving voice, trumpet and organ

But I don't think we ever totally replaced the family recitals of Keith and Wonka, with Ruth there to turn over pages, pull out stops and generally see to everyone's comfort.

We are here today because we know that Keith has died – but we are glad that he lived, and he will have had an effect on the lives of many of us for which we are all grateful. He may have died regretting that Arsenal had again failed to win any silverware, in spite of being the best team in the country, but he did go into his last sleep with a smile on his face after hearing England's first innings total in the First Test against South Africa.

**Rest in Peace**



**L-R: Peter Heald (founder-member of BCOCA), Immediate Past Sr. Old Chorister John Marr, SOC Heather Starkie, & JB (wearing a tie that Ruth has made for him many years ago) at the Reception in the White Hart after Keith's Memorial Service.**

## Outstanding Concerts this Season, (they began in September!)

### November

- 2 Sun 5.30pm Les Corps Glorieux – Ian Pattinson.
- EVERY WEDNESDAY 1.00 pm Recitals by superb artists.**
- 8 Sat 7.30pm **African Sanctus by David Fanshawe**
- 9 Sun. 10.40am **Fauré Requiem.**
- 23 Sun 5.30pm L'Ascension – James Davy
- 26 Wed 1.00pm The Jill Fielding Band
- 30 Sun 6.30pm **Advent Procession by candlelight**



### December

- 2 Tues 7.00pm Children for Children Carols Concert.
- 10 Wed 1.00pm La Nativité du Seigneur – Richard Tanner
- 13 Sat 7.00pm **Christmas Spectacular**
- 23 Tues 7.30pm **Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols**
- 31 Wed 7.00pm New Year's Eve Concert by Candelight

### January 2009

- 11 Sun 6.30pm **Epiphany Carol Service**

### February

- 1 Sun 10.30am **Patronal Festival Eucharist**
- 7 Sat 7.00pm **Messiah, G.F.Handel**
- 14-19 **CATHEDRAL CHOIRS IN MALTA**



### April

- 8 Wed 7.30pm Stabat Mater (Haydn) Emperor Piano Concerto (Beethoven) **Martin Roscoe.**
- 29 Wed 1.00pm Luncheon concert Ernst Barlach Gymnasium Youth Orchestra from Kiel

### May

- 16 Sat 7.30pm Renaissance Singers Crypt Concert
- 22 Fri 8.30pm **Phantom of the Opera** with **David Briggs**

### June

- 6 Sat 7.30pm **The Sixteen**
- 13 Sat 7.30pm Renaissance Singers Concert



### July

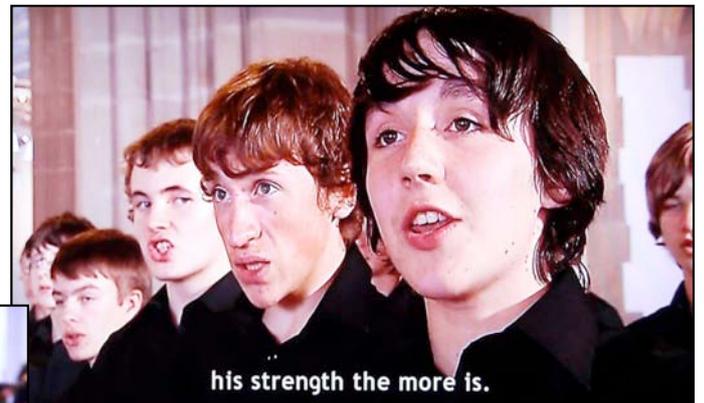
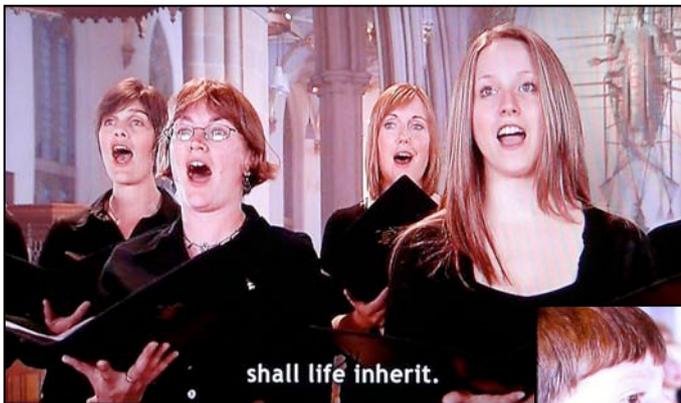
- 1 Wed 1.00pm Martin Setchell (Organ)
- 4 Sat 7.30pm **Last Night of the Proms**

**Tickets for major concerts: Church Street 01254-688-040**

# July 13th: Songs of Praise

The Beeb's *Songs of Praise* on July 13th was a special edition to mark the beginning of the Lambeth Conference. (Our very own Canon Chivers had arranged the worship for this Conference at the personal invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury.)

The programme traced the route made by Pilgrims of bygone years – visiting historic sites and ending at Canterbury. Our cathedral choir sang three of the hymns for this programme, and thrilling indeed they were. And there were some marvellous close-ups of our enthusiastic singers.



Full marks to every member of our choirs of boys, girls, and the Renaissance Singers, and to Richard Tanner, who conducted (but was never seen.) For some reason conductors of *Songs of Praise* are rarely shown, unlike conductors of orchestras.

Above, clockwise: Ann Oaten, Rachel Fielding, Helen Williams & Dr. Victoria Gauge.  
Next: Alex Lund, Callum Shaw, Charles Forshaw, James Mitchell & Jonathan Brookes.  
Margot Berry & Eileen Hemingway. and finally our boys and girls. Centre: Dominic Chivers



James Davy at the organ. (R: Back): Daniel Day, Arthur Geldard, Michael Smith, Front: Christopher Snape, Nicholas Day & Robert Mitchell



Laura Mitchell & Helen Williams.



Phil Johnson



Bradley Robinson



Janet Goodship



Gordon Shaw



Robert Mitchell & Adam Whittaker



Matthew Adelekan & Jack Aspinall

# BCOCA Surprise Wini Reunion in Germany

Last summer honorary Old Chorister DAVID DEMACK and his wife, RUTH, took your editor on a 10-day musical pilgrimage to Bach-land. i.e. to some of the towns in former East Germany where J.S. Bach had lived and created so much of his music.

It was, for JB, a most emotional experience – to stand where Bach stood, to worship in the church where he had created some of the world's greatest music, and to realize afresh what a mind-blowing talent he had.

For example, when the biologist, Lewis Thomas, was asked what message he thought should be taken to other civilizations in space to demonstrate the achievements of the human race, he replied, 'I would send the complete works of Johann Sebastian Bach.' And then he added, **'But that would be boasting!'**

Germany is very proud of JSB. On the train from Frankfurt to Dresden we passed through Eisenach where Bach was born in 1685. His 'Home town' (*Geburtsstadt*) was on the station name:



We stayed in the beautiful city of Dresden for three days. At least it had been beautiful before it was bombed in 1945 near the end of WWII. So heavy was the bombing that the exquisite Church of Our Lady (*Frauenkirche*) collapsed in the inferno. But the Germans have restored the city, stone by stone, to its former glory. It was moving to see that the golden cross which had been on the top of the dome (which was now displayed – burnt – inside that beautiful church) had been replaced by the City of Coventry as a gesture of reconciliation. The words *Father Forgive* were close to all our hearts...



JB, Ruth & David Demack, with the dome of the restored Frauenkirche, topped by the new Coventry Cross



It was thrilling to spend a day in Arnstadt where, in 1703, the 18-year old Bach received his first church appointment.

The citizens of this beautiful town are so proud of JSB that, 300 years after his birth, they renamed the church **The Bach Church** and they erected a statue to the young man in the town square!

(They'd sort of forgotten that in 1707 they'd sacked him from that church because the authorities didn't like his over-ambitious playing: he'd also threatened one of his altos with a sword!)

But it was in Leipzig where the supreme thrills came for us, for there was a week-long Bach Festival in that city, with leading musicians from all over the world playing and listening.

How marvellous it was to attend concerts and a Sunday morning service in Bach's own church, the *Thomaskirche*.



We stood by the famous statue of the mature Bach where **Richard Tanner** had stood 6 months earlier. And we heard a stunning performance of JSB's *B Minor Mass* on our last evening.

But before that, David looked at the comprehensive programme of events and discovered that Blackburn Old Chorister **IVOR BOLTON** was to conduct a concert in the *Nicolaikirche*. I called Ivor on his mobile; he was astonished that we were in that city at the same time, and so he got us free tickets.

The church was packed for his concert, where he conducted C.P.E. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with outstanding German soloists, choir and orchestra. He was given several standing ovations, and afterwards we celebrated with Ivor with cooling drinks on the pavement outside a nearby tavern. **Ivor was a chorister here nearly 40 years ago and we are so proud of him.**

**Whatta triumphant end to our Bach Pilgrimage!**



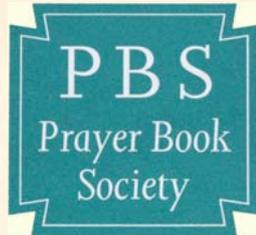
# THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

## Quote from a recent letter:

Parishioners will find comfort in worshipping in the language and style they are familiar with from their childhood...

## JOIN US IN HELPING THIS TO HAPPEN.

Find out more from  
**Hon. Secretary,**  
**Neil Inkley,**  
**6 Knot Lane,**  
**Walton-le-Dale,**  
**Preston PR5 4BQ**  
**01772-821-676**



## OC PETER HEALD in Ely...

...has been BCOCA's stalwart Archivist for a couple of years. He and his wife, **Constance** (who were both founder-members of the Blackburn Bach Choir – aka The Renaissance Singers) have dedicated a sizeable chunk of their garage to sorting out and storing the masses of priceless treasures that have come their way. We are so very grateful.



But now, OC The Revd. **Ian Hollin**, who has just retired and is now living in Penwortham, has generously agreed to take on this mammoth task. Again – we are so very grateful.

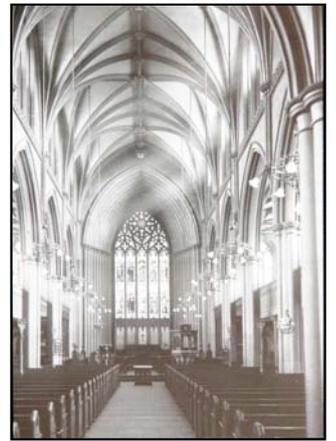
So if you have letters, magazines, press cutting, recordings or photographs from the cathedral choir of yesteryear, please give Ian a call. *Thanks.* **01772-749-806**

QUOTE: "The most important characteristic for an archivist is a keen intelligence." *Source unknown!*

## We have been saddened by more deaths

### OC HAROLD THORNER (1921-2008)

was a familiar figure at the cathedral where he was our Archivist. He was a chorister shortly after the parish church had been made a cathedral in 1926 and saw all the changes in its architecture from just a nave to the glorious cruciform cathedral which now graces the town centre.



He had been a Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Navy during WWII and later taught at St. Wilfrid's School. He was a quiet, most courteous man who, as many of us know, had to bear great trials during the latter part of his life.

May he now rest in peace.

*The photo is of the Nave of the then Parish Church. The East window is now in the North Transept.*

**DUNCAN STAINER (1949-2008)** was an early member of the (then) Blackburn Bach Choir. He was the great-grandson of Sir John Stainer – Organist of St. Paul's Cathedral and composer of the *Crucifixion*. It gave your editor (when he was the conductor of the 'BBC') continual joy to see Duncan sitting next to fellow bass **Andrew Darke**, Dr. Harold Darke's grandson. (*Harold Darke* – composer of *DAKE* in F etc., and of *In the Bleak Mid-Winter*, who also taught JB the organ at the Royal College of Music 60 years ago.)

Duncan came, with his wife Rachel, to the 40th anniversary celebrations of the 'BBC', aka The Renaissance Singers, three years ago. What a joy it was to see them all again.

*Duncan*



*Members of the Renaissance Singers in 2005 who were also in the Singers during JB's time as conductor.*

Duncan was a very gentle soul and greatly loved by all who knew him. He and Rachel had been climbing in Scotland when he had a heart attack, and he died almost immediately.

OC **Phil Hunwick** attended his memorial service in the Friends Meeting House in Sidcot, Winscombe, which was attended by some 300 friends and relatives.

Phil wrote: *The memorial service was in the context of a Quaker Meeting and was very moving as several people – relatives, friends, former pupils – rose to their feet "as the Spirit moved them" to give their memories of Duncan. He was a very gentle and unassuming man and yet one who commanded enormous love and respect from the very many people whose lives he touched.*

The music included *Love Divine*, sung to the well-known tune by his Great-Grandfather and, of course, *God so loved the world. He most certainly rests in peace.*

## More memories of DAVID COOPER

Director of Music, Blackburn Cathedral

1983-1995

who died last June after a long illness.

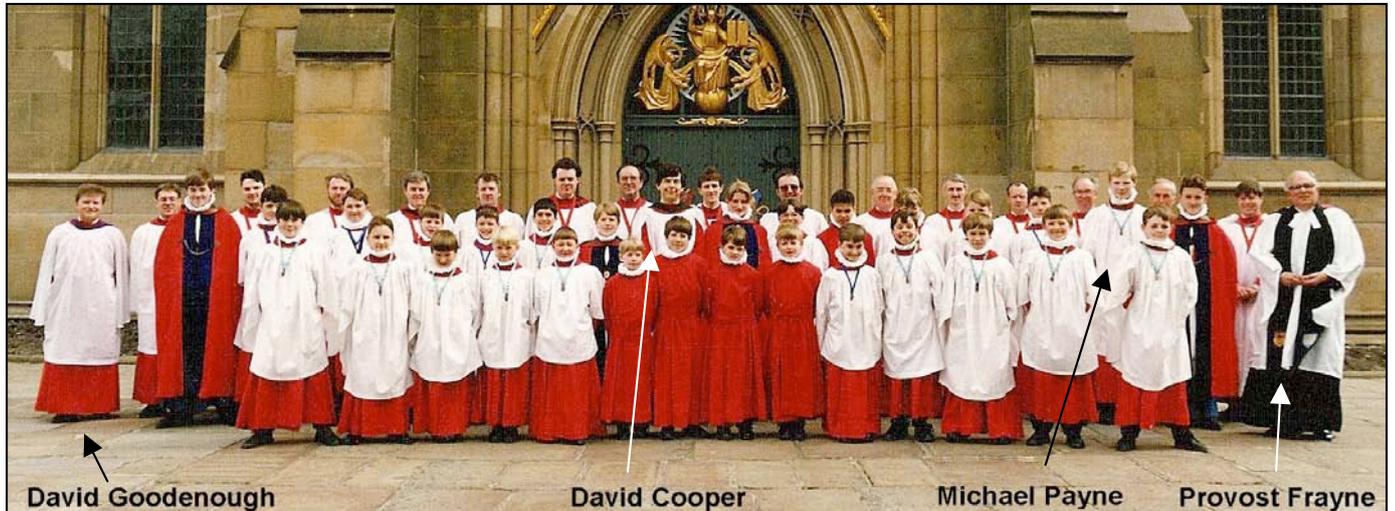
from one of his former choristers, Dr. Michael Payne

I read with pleasure the various tributes to David Cooper (DC as he was known) in the August edition of *Music & More*, and they provoked a great deal of fond memories of my time as a chorister under him, though being only a minor I never came into contact with his 'vulgar' side!

I sang under DC during his last three years in Blackburn and he was one of the most remarkable people I have come into contact with.

rather stony-faced proclaiming his hatred for it, saying that often he had to programme works he disliked on to the music list; mildly ironic considering the number of core-repertoire pieces we never performed.

He also had a penchant for Howells' evening canticles informing us eager boys that Blackburn was one of the few cathedrals in which Howells' St. Paul's service could be performed properly because of the similar acoustic. Incidentally, he always stopped us early on (bottom of page 5 though exactly which chord I cannot be certain) in the Magnificat proclaiming that a certain chord was his favourite chord ever. Each Ascensiontide we always performed Finzi's *God is Gone Up* and in rehearsals he could never get one of the opening awkward triplet figurations right (end of bar 8) –



He was one of those rare people who teach and instil into you so much without you realising it. A case in point was his 5p knowledge questions. When I first arrived at Blackburn the old, thick 5p pieces had been replaced with the new, smaller coin. DC hated them and would ask us a whole host of musical questions in order to rid himself the 'horrible coin'. He always tried to broaden our musical knowledge and would occasionally play us a short passage from a piece and ask us to identify it. Being a precocious child I was often one of the first with my hand up, and made a little bit of extra pocket money from the 5p questions, though never enough to buy anything significant.

During David's tenure, Harold Darke's Communion service in E featured quite heavily on the music list, often coinciding with an Episcopal visit. For the preceding rehearsals David would walk around the song school instilling the rhythm into us of the start of the 'Gloria' was **1-2-3-4ry be** (I can never think of the Darke setting without recalling him).

I can also never forget several of his small traits. He would always improvise before the Eucharist on Easter Day rather loudly and enthusiastically, leaving **David Goodenough** to warm the choir up downstairs, where we could just about hear, but definitely feel DC's distant paean; it was always great thrill to come upstairs to place our music in the stalls before the service and hear him properly. I always recall his typewritten letters to the choir, done on his own typewriter with its distinctive font. He was always very caring and one occasion I had been absent from the Cathedral for over a week due to a vicious attack of laryngitis and he rang home on the Sunday after Evensong to enquire how I was. He was also fastidious about the choir register and had his own elaborate codes including E for excused and L for late; if you clocked up too many lates you were given a menial task to perform. One thing that I was amazed was that DC did not have perfect pitch but he had trained himself to recognise aurally any note played to him.

There were numerous pieces which never featured on the music list during his tenure: Noble in B minor, Wesley's *Blessed be the God*. Yet one Easter time I recall performing Stanford's *Ye Choirs of New Jerusalem*, the boys loving it and DC conducting it

he always said halfway through the introduction, "coming up to bit I can never play". Again I can never hear those opening chords without thinking of DC

When he left Blackburn providence was not kind to him. On his final weekend burglars broke into the Cathedral on the Friday night. The police cordoned off the Cathedral so the 8:30 boys' voice rehearsal on the Saturday was late in starting because none of us could get to the cathedral. The following day, DC had chosen the music to reflect personal favourites and pieces which he had first conducted at Blackburn. For his farewell Eucharist he chose Darke in F (the first piece he conducted on his arrival in Blackburn). Towards the close of the first phrase of the Agnus Dei, the Swell and Positive stopped working and after an embarrassing pause David Goodenough, on the organ, hurriedly had to find alternative stops on the Great (other side of the organ) to continue; Jim Prowse's face (who was singing the solo) was quite a picture. During Communion a frantic looking DC was seen playing around at the back of ambulatory restarting the blowers before 'normal service' could be resumed.

One of DC's great penchants was for the psalms. We spent a lot of rehearsal time with them and often used David's own chants. Who else has ever written a psalm chant starting on a c minor seventh chord in third inversion or such an aggressive chant (which was used to great effect in psalm 129)? *'Many a time have they fought against me...'*

David Cooper



Whilst at university in Durham I used his chants whenever I could with my chapel choir and they loved them. I still play through his chants occasionally using photocopies purloined from the Cathedral (whenever I thought no-one was looking).



For me, David will live on his delightful and small compositional output. We always loved singing his setting of George Herbert's *Come my Way*, written for a Blackburn choirs' festival, a wonderful example of his expressive writing. There are certain hymns I can never sing or play without thinking of his remarkable and effective descants: *Crown him with Many Crowns* (written, I believe, for a significant birthday of **Canon Godfrey Hirst**; '*Crown him the*

*potentate of time*' seems rather apt for a birthday!) or '*Jesus Lives! Thy Terrors Now*' which starts in Bb major and for the final alleluia thrillingly modulates to G major – it sounded magnificent in the cathedral's opulent acoustic and made quite an impression on a small 11-year old!

DC was always a very relaxed person usually returning to the 'coffee shop' after the Saturday morning rehearsal. One Saturday I arrived at the Cathedral for the early morning rehearsal to see DC flanked by DG, **Lindsey Cooper** and an enormous pile of organ music.

He was playing through a few bars of a piece and saying 'yes' or 'no'. DG was taking notes. It transpired that he was due to give a 'coffee concert' recital in the Cathedral at 11:30 (a mere 3 hours later) and this was his first (and only) practice session and here he was calmly choosing his programme. Whilst DC took the morning rehearsal, DG went to the cathedral offices to type and photocopy the concert programmes. After the rehearsal finished at 10.0 DC popped 'upstairs' did 45 minutes practice, then had a cup coffee before giving his recital, which needless to say was rather fine (incidentally, I think this was the occasion when he improvised his double fugue on '*Hark the Herald*', after all, he did not have to practise his improvisations!).

Another example of this was at the annual East Lancashire Regiment service when it was customary for the organist to play Walton's *Crown Imperial*, a piece DC could not abide, at the close of the service. One year DG was away and DC was playing. He must have forgotten he was supposed to play the Walton until either the Saturday night or Sunday morning and hating the piece he did not possess a copy. He hastily rang round the various organists in the choir to see if anyone had Murrill's organ arrangement. The best anyone could manage was a piano version which arrived half an hour before the service. This did not worry DC, who looked at it briefly before the service and played it immaculately at the end of the service.

He never liked losing and at one of our summer camps at Stonyhurst College, he challenged the organ scholar **Robin Walker** (then in his early twenties) to a game of badminton; a game he probably had not played for years. All the boys crowded around to watch our choirmaster play, knowing that he would be defeated. After an impressive game, DC eventually only just triumphed; it was the only time I ever saw him break into a sweat!

*Thank you, Michael, for these wonderful memories of a remarkable man. JB*

*NB Canon Godfrey Hirst's Eulogy for David Cooper, given at his funeral in Ripon Cathedral which appeared in our last edition, was edited. He told your editor that he said much more that was not written down.*

### From the Very Reverend Paul Burbridge former Dean of Norwich

Dear Dr. Bertalot,

Thank you so very much for kindly sending me a copy of Blackburn Cathedral *Music & More*. What a fantastic publication – it has all the general character of a national magazine! I am very impressed.

I think we met many years ago at Cambridge at one of the joint conferences of Cathedral Organists & Precentors. In those days I was Canon Precentor of York, working with **Francis Jackson**.

With very many thanks & all best wishes, **Paul Burbridge**.

PS: They did **David Cooper** proud in your August edition.

## What a joy it was...

...to welcome the choristers of **WELLS CATHEDRAL** to Blackburn in July. There were 39 of them, and they were led brilliantly, of course, by their talented Director of Music, **MATTHEW OWENS**, and by their new Sub Organist, **JONATHAN VAUGHN** (ex Bury St. Edmunds, St. John's College, Cambridge, and St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle).



They sang a most glorious Saturday Evensong with a large congregation enjoying every mellifluous note. They began with Mendelssohn's *Lift thine eyes*. JB was watching the faces of the congregation when they began and one lady almost rose up from her seat with a seraphic smile on her face for the second 'lift', because of the exquisite tone which filled every corner of our cathedral.

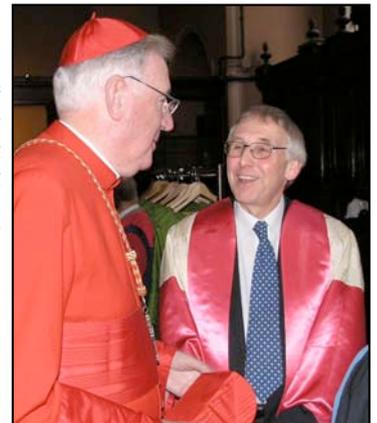
In addition to other music, they sang **David Cooper's** lovely setting of *Come my Way*. It was sublime.

The soaring notes of the boys and girls inspired and blessed us all. It was a privilege to be with our distinguished guests. Thank you so much for being with us.

### From Dr. Alan Thurlow, Director of Music Emeritus, CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL

Dear John,

Thank you very much for the latest edition of *Music & More*. I really appreciate being kept informed about all that goes on at Blackburn, and am constantly amazed by the wealth and variety of today's music tradition at the Cathedral there. What a continuing tribute to you in the work that you did all those years ago in establishing the groundwork and setting the standards.



Dr. Thurlow with the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster in 2007

The current edition is, of course, particularly poignant with the various tributes to **DAVID COOPER**. Although our paths crossed only infrequently I enjoyed his company very much on the occasions when we did meet and was very impressed by him as a person.

I introduced his lovely anthem *Come, my Way* into the repertoire at Chichester and it remained a firm favourite during the remainder of my years in office. I found the tributes to him extremely moving and, of course, learned so much more about him and about his great contribution to the music at Blackburn.

Tina joins me in sending our very best wishes,  
Yours ever, **Alan**. (See p. 36)

# Memories of a Blackburn Cathedral Chorister

BY OC JIM HULME, FROM MANCHESTER

*"Forty years on when afar and asunder,  
parted are those who are singing today  
When you look back and forgetfully wonder  
what you were like in your work and your play".*



*Val & Jim Hulme at the BCOCA Reunion in Whalley Abbey 2008*

Queen Elizabeth's, or QEGS, was a recruiting ground for Blackburn Cathedral Choir whose director of music, **Thomas L Duerden** (TLD), was also the school's part time music teacher. Having served my time from the age of 8 in my local Parish Church choir of Holy Trinity it was the discovery by TLD that I was able to sight-read that led to my becoming a chorister in the Cathedral Church of my town of birth.

There were, however, serious obstacles. My father, Frank Hulme, was a lifetime worshipper at Holy Trinity and for a family member to be a Christian elsewhere was a serious matter. He did, however, recognise the honour and opportunities that came with being a cathedral chorister and in due course his permission was given. His agreement was not unconditional and I was required to continue my attendance at Holy Trinity Sunday School and when I was confirmed I was to attend Holy Trinity Church at least once per month for Holy Communion at 8.00 a.m. No breakfast before communion was the order of the day!

My introduction to the cathedral choir was by way of observing morning service from the organ loft above the north transept



Access was by way of the kind of winding staircase that you would hope to find in a castle and after a couple of such visits I knew that I wished to join the choir. In due course I came along to choir practice on a Friday evening at the song school, which at the time stood in St. Mary's House in the cathedral grounds opposite the entrance to the crypt on the south side.

I was totally unprepared for the rules and conventions of cathedral choir membership.

Tom Duerden was obsessed with clarity of diction and we were required to articulate our words fully and most importantly to repeat the sound of the consonants when the end of one word shared the same consonant as the start of the next. TLD would utter the sounds of "t" and "d" whenever they occurred and it was not uncommon for hymn books to be sent flying as a reminder to those who fell short on this matter.

Prefect Jim Hulme in 1957



The way a boy stood was of equal importance. How else could the diaphragm function effectively unless he stood upright with hands clasped in front of his navel? And woe betide any boy who adopted exaggerated facial expressions or whose body swayed in order to give an appearance of being moved or otherwise affected. The voice and the music were all that were needed to express either the sorrow of the passion or the joy of the resurrection. We never sang when seated.

I was taught how Latin words should be spoken. The convention of Latin speech at QEGS whereby the letter "v" was pronounced as "w" was followed with equal zeal by TLD so that "vivat" was pronounced "weewat", the letter "i" being pronounced as "e". We thought that TLD must have been very old indeed to have known how Latin words should be pronounced especially as the language had ceased to be in everyday use for some considerable time!

After a short period of probation I became 'Dec 12', the newest choristers taking the higher numbers as the pecking order was in reverse. 'Dec' was short for Decani ('The side of the Dean') whilst the opposite side of the choir was 'Can' or Cantoris ('The side of the Cantor, or Precentor').

The schedule was demanding. There were two practices and evensong after school either on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday, the work being shared alternately by Decani and Cantoris. Full practice with the men of the choir was Friday evening. I remember boys-only practices on Saturday morning although I can't recall whether this was a regular event. We sang two services on Sunday, arriving at 9.45 a.m. for matins at 10.30 a.m. and at 6.00 p.m. for evensong at 6.30 p.m. Mid-week evensong was in the crypt during the winter and in the Cathedral itself in summertime. And all this on top of my continuing commitment to Holy Trinity!



*From Prefects' Board No. 1 in the Song School*

In the nineteen fifties Matins was still the order of the day with Choral Holy Communion being celebrated on one Sunday per month. Stanford's setting in B flat of the *Te Deum* is a strong a memory and I am surprised that I am able to remember in detail the words and the Oxford Psalter settings of many of the Psalms, and of course the chants that accompanied them. We sang all the psalms appointed for the day although we were grateful that Psalm 119 was apportioned so that we never needed to sing it from start to finish. Sadly the change in the liturgy for the Eucharist means that I am unlikely to hear the various settings that were commonplace for the 1662 Prayer Book setting. Whilst Merbecke reflected a traditional approach I had soft spot for the more melodic Harris in F.

I loved the simple beauty of many of the anthems and in particular the haunting strains of Stanford's *Beati Quorum* whilst Tallis's *If ye love me, keep my commandments* is as fresh in my mind today as it was then. Whilst Christmas is

for many the musical season of the Christian calendar, I believe that nothing compares to Passiontide and Easter, although the great Advent hymn *Sleepers Wake* remains a firm favourite. Who can fail to be lifted in spirit by *This Joyful Eastertide* or moved by the more solemn music of the preceding weeks including various composers' versions of *Ave Verum* and John Ireland's *My Song is Love Unknown*.

The building work of the Cathedral church was still in transition and the choir was stationed very much at the east end with the Bishop's throne taking centre place. We processed in from the crypt up the steps which now give access to the café and Cathedral shop. The song school in due time moved to what I guess is its present location under the north transept.

Because of a commitment to the parish church of Holy Trinity, my own family were rare visitors, possibly once per month, although my brother Frank would come along in support when home on leave from his national service. My aunt Ethel, my godmother, often joined the family on their monthly attendance at evensong, and I am told that once she had caught sight of me in the procession she cried until the end of the service with the oft repeated line that I looked an angel.

But of course angels we were not. We were young boys who possessed all the mischief that should be expected of those aged 11 to 15 years. Easter was a great occasion for other reasons – the Saturday morning after Good Friday was also pay day! Each choirboy received a small payment and the Easter fair which traditionally was held on Blackburn's market place would eat up a fair proportion as we eagerly ended Saturday morning practice and exchanged the encouraging tones of TLD for the waltzer and the big wheel! The Hake Boat chip shop on Railway Road was the final venue on Friday evening. We wore Eton suits and collars on Sundays, which meant a speedy dash from the bus stop at Bastwell to my home on Whalley New Road, carefully avoiding my peers who might have been less than encouraging in respect of my appearance.

But the big annual event was the choir trip to Southport.



TLD would check the weather and I can't recall ever experiencing anything other than glorious sunshine. The first stage was a train journey from Blackburn to Lostock Junction whereupon we would change onto another train to Southport. The annual cricket match between Decani and Cantoris was held before the weekend crowds arrived and in the afternoon it was the Pleasure Beach. Dinner (lunch was something that happened in the south) and tea were at Salt's Restaurant before returning home in the early evening.

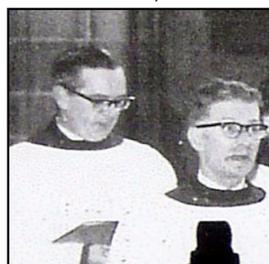
Our social life was enhanced by attendance at RSCM festivals and I recall, accompanied by **Peter Sharman**, the delights of St Elphin's School at Darley Dale near Matlock, whilst **John Wilkinson**, **Stephen Monk** and I were privileged to attend a festival at St Paul's Cathedral in London. An annual service at Samlesbury Hall followed by tea was an equally enjoyable event.

But cricket wasn't restricted to the playing field. For small boys the sermon was the dreaded part of choral worship and it was **sermon cricket** that was used to maintain attention and to provide amusement. Whoever was sat next to you was invited to partake and it was agreed who would bat first. If the preacher used the word "and" then a run was scored. If he used the word "but" you were out and your opponent came to the crease. I always batted first when Canon Lambert took the pulpit as his "ands" were profuse and his "buts" were a rarity!

Mention of Stephen Monk, or Steve Monk, reminds me that we were not, as I have mentioned earlier, angels! Steve and I were now of an age when distractions by the fairer sex were the order of the day and two young ladies who I think should be nameless were our girlfriends. For a while they attended evening service and TLD wrote to my parents and warned them of the dangers I was in due to the fact that "two females" were waiting for the two of us outside the song school on Cathedral Walk.

**The age of being a choirboy is not easy with the contrast of being 11 and 15 years old. How sad that all too often the wonderful thing that you were a part of only becomes truly important when years have passed.**

If I thought that *Forty Years On* was an unattainable eternity, 53 years ago is but yesterday. I am now so proud that I was once a Cathedral Chorister and that I was privileged to become a Prefect and subsequently Head Prefect – "Cantoris 1"! Sadly I can't recall all the names from the past but some of them I do remember – choristers include **Peter Crowther**, **Philip Wilson**, **Paul Botting**, **John Wilkinson**, **Peter Sharman**, **Geoffrey Kenyon**, **Peter West**, **Barry Moizer**, **Steve Monk**, and **Paul Fielding**. Provost Kay and Canon Lambert come to mind. Of the men I remember **Mr Smith**, **Mr Fielding** and **Mr West** – first names of elders were not appropriate in the nineteen fifties,



Left:  
Bernard  
West  
&  
Harold  
Fielding in  
1962.  
Right:  
Jim Smith



and Mr (**Fred Dewhurst**, a master at QEGS and relief Organist and Choirmaster at the Cathedral. What a great joy it was to speak to him after Sung Eucharist this May and at the BCOCA Reunion in September.

The character I remember most of all is of course **Thomas L Duerden** who had belief in me that sadly as a 15 year old boy I did not fully appreciate and did not fully repay.



His kindness was demonstrated in the most wonderful way. My contemporaries may remember of my keen interest in buses, which stood me in good stead as I carved out a career in the bus industry. TLD would travel the country judging music festivals and on his return he would shout out a question! "James – what buses run in Chelmsford", to which I replied correctly "Eastern National, Sir", whereupon TLD would toss across the room an Eastern National bus timetable, and I accumulated a library in that way from around Britain. When guests descended upon us, it wasn't musical prowess that TLD would invoke to impress them, he would invite them to put me to the test as I was able to name almost every bus company in Britain however large or small.

Of the music, for me Bairstow's *Lamentations* has no peer. The harmonies, the changes of chants, the appropriateness of the melodies to the mood coupled with the pointing and of course the rousing *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord Thy God* combine to give both spiritual and musical satisfaction. The *Lamentations* were traditionally sung on Passion Sunday, and my recollection of the sun streaming through stained glass windows was also a sign that spring and the joy of Easter were around the corner.

**And it was Bairstow's *Lamentation* that brought me back to the Cathedral for on Good Friday 2008 when my wife Valerie and I attended morning service at the Cathedral to hear it sung by the choir.**



**Jim Hulme**  
Manchester  
September 2008

**Richard Tanner** so kindly interrupted the serious business of choir practice to allow my brief introduction as a chorister from 50 years ago and how grateful I am to him for putting my in touch with John Bertalot whose enthusiasm and encouragement have ensured that I wish once again to become part of life at Blackburn cathedral through the Old Choristers' Association. It's good to be back.

**Jim: Welcome back and thank you! JB**



**Thank you, Gordon and Sheila!**

**A MONTH LATER...**

...the Renaissance Singers entertained a distinguished company of generous friends in Dutton Hall, Ribchester – the historic home of Mr & Mrs. A Penny. It was organised by the Friends of Blackburn Cathedral Music, and over £1,000 were raised for bursaries for our cathedral choristers.

**RENAISSANCE SINGERS PARTY at Gordon & Sheila Shaws' in June**  
*The pictures speak for themselves!*



**Above:**  
Hostess Sheila Shaw relaxes with Margot Berry.

**Left:** Courteous host Gordon Shaw with Edward McCullough

**Below:**  
Sarah Turner



Right:  
H.H. Judge  
Anthony Russell,  
Canon Andrew Hindley,  
Hostess Mrs. Catherine Penny and her son Francis

The Renaissance Singers in the gardens of Dutton Hall.



The Dean & Jean Duerden 15



Exquisite music was directed by James Davy and there was a lavish buffet in the Pennys' spacious dining hall. We are so grateful to **everyone** for their hard work which made such a glorious evening possible.

## Dr. Dennis Townhill OBE

Director of Music Emeritus, St. Mary's Cathedral Edinburgh

It was sad to hear of the death of Dennis Townhill, who had visited Blackburn Cathedral several years ago, and always enjoyed reading our Newsletter.

Both **OC Bob Keen** and **OC John Keen** were choristers there when they moved from Blackburn to Scotland some years ago.

### Bob wrote

Dear John,

We are very sorry to hear this news of the death of Dennis Townhill. Yes he was Director of Music all the time we were there. He was always highly energetic, and apart from the Cathedral work, travelled to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in Glasgow several days each week.

We had orchestral concerts with the cathedral choir and the Music School orchestra, augmented as necessary, each year - Bach's Passions alternating each Good Friday, and Brahms' or Fauré's Requiem on Remembrance Sunday - and then the Messiah or the Christmas Oratorio in December each year.

He usually gave regular organ recitals during the Edinburgh International Festival in August and on more than one occasion played all of Bach's organ works during the Festival, with the choir singing the chorales to go with the Chorale preludes.

We went to Edinburgh at the end of September last year following our Ruby wedding anniversary and while there I went to a concert in the cathedral which he had organised for the Rotary Club of Edinburgh where he was a member and had been for many years, and indeed tried to get me in when we lived there. The concert was by pupils of St Mary's Music School and given to raise funds for a music scholarship. Dennis introduced the concert and although looking a little flustered beforehand, he did the job well and showed no signs of any health problems.

Dennis and Mabel moved house after Christmas because their lovely flat over the road from the Cathedral had become too large for them to look after.

When Pauline and I went up in February, the move had been completed. We saw them at the Sung Eucharist on the Sunday morning and went to speak to them after the service.

Their lives had revolved around the Cathedral, but instead of living 2 minutes walk away, they had moved down the hill away from the city about 2 miles away on the North side and really needed the car to get around.

They have a son, Vaughan, in Edinburgh but their daughter, Barbara, who used to live in Manchester moved to Ireland a couple of years ago, and she had been coming over to help them regularly.

They were a delightful couple and right up until the back end of last year, they were in constant touch with old choristers and friends and still very active.

Yours,

**Bob  
John Keen wrote**

JB

What a month! First **David Cooper** (whom I didn't know), then **Keith Bond** and now **Dennis Townhill**. Keith and Dennis were inspirational, in their own rights, in my own choral development.

### Keith Bond

My strongest memory of Keith (RIP) stands out for all the wrong reasons and is one that you have published previously in the BCOCA newsletter. Arguably it is one my most embarrassing



Dennis Townhill during his visit to Blackburn

moments to date. I was a probationer at the 1978 Nine Lessons and Carols and had the honour of sharing the organ stool with Keith but alas, the more dubious honour of turning Keith's pages during a complex voluntary.

His score was significantly more advanced than my sight reading skills as an 8 year old and as he neared the foot of the second page he helped me out by saying "You can turn over now" ... to which, I enthusiastically responded by turning over on the organ school, a full 180 degrees, to face a packed congregation and then realising the error of my ways, turned straight back to face a rather frustrated Keith and some flapping pages!

Along with yourself and Frank Thorpe, Keith was also significantly involved in helping me progress through the various choirboy ranks.

### Dennis Townhill

My Dad and I joined St Mary's Cathedral Choir, Edinburgh in December 1983, which was then under the direction of Dennis Townhill (RIP). The "Bertalot trained" label carried a lot of weight and made meeting Dennis's entrance requirements a whole lot easier and as ever, I thank you for that.

I had reached my swansong year or so as a treble whilst my Dad headed straight in to bolster the alto ranks.

Notable differences compared with Blackburn were slower psalms, girls in the main choir (nationally, that was a real rarity at the time), brass choir stalls to which hands tended to stick to (esp. in the cold winter months) and annual performances of some very fine and moving choral / orchestral works (St Matthew and St John Passions (alternated year on year) and Fauré's Requiem to name a few). We were blessed with the wonderful sounds of the St Mary's Music School orchestra whose patron at the time was the virtuoso **Yehudi Menuhin**. I remember the Edinburgh choir stalls also being blessed one particular Sunday in tenor form with a cameo appearance from one **D. Crompton!**

Dennis industriously organised a 3-week tour to California in 1984 for the Cathedral Choir and Music School Orchestra and a second tour to Norway in 1990 for the choir only. One abiding memory will be Dennis conducting a rehearsal of **Zadok** in the magnificent Bergen Cathedral. He deliberately stood us next to the organ on the balcony so that we would be closer to the proverbial roof as it lifted off! The Scandinavians below watched in awe.

**Their dual passing marks a particularly huge loss to the choral world after they have enriched so many people's lives with their hugely gifted musicianship, not just in the UK but beyond our shores. They will be missed but never forgotten.**

With sympathies

**John**

### Dennis's Funeral in St. Mary's Cathedral by John Keen

Dennis was a hugely significant part of my choral life and so, thanks to an understanding employer, I was able to make a long but justified day trip to Edinburgh and witness a truly magnificent funeral service with communion. The nave was pretty much filled and given the summer holidays it was a huge relief to see a full choir in situ. In fact I understand that the choir were flying off to South America for a tour within 48 hours of the funeral.

It was Dennis's wish that Peter Backhouse (his Assistant Organist from 1977-1991) play the organ and follow strictly the testamentary wishes regarding the music (handwritten by Dennis in 1997 I understand). That wish list included the always moving Fauré's Requiem, Ave Verum (Byrd), and hymns *Jesu the very thought of thee* and *All my hope on God is founded*.

# OLD CHORISTERS' NEWS

## 1. Update from the Crews from OC Emily

Dear John

Hope this finds you well. I just thought i'd send you an update of what we're all up to.

Firstly my big brother, **OC Adam** finally got married this summer to Kelly.



L-R: *Emily, Jacob (Adam and Kelly's Godson – their goddaughter Tegan seems to have escaped this photo), sister Naomi, Adam & Kelly (née Charter now Crews) Jonathan Millican – Best Man, and Vicky Angel*

The wedding took place in Carlisle Cathedral and the weather held out for the occasion. We all had a super time - Naomi and I were bridesmaids. We had **Phil Hunwick** in the choir – marvellous – and Andrew Johnston of "Britain's Got Talent" sang the solos of "Come My Way" (**Cooper**).

**OC Naomi** has just finished her first year at York St John University and is thoroughly enjoying it: she's taken up rowing and is cox for the York St John rowing teams.



As for me, I've just finished my final year at Oxford Brookes University – it doesn't seem like 2 minutes since I started and I had an amazing time whilst I was there. I've got a 2.1 degree and am looking forward to my graduation ceremony in September and hope to be back with the Renaissance Singers if they'll have me..

I've also just got a job working for the **Northern Chamber Orchestra**, based in Manchester, as adminis-



trator and doing some concert management for them. Alongside this I'm doing freelance work too, both up in Lancashire and down in Oxford still, so I keep touch with everyone down there. I'm also putting together the **Blackburn Concert diary** for this season and in my spare time organising things for our up-and-coming **trip to Malta in February when our choirs perform the Messiah**.

Both Mum and Dad are well and looking forward to having me at home for a while (at least they say they are!).

Best wishes as always

Em

*Wow! Heartiest congratulations to all the Crews, who have been and (through Emily) are continuing to be central to our adventurous music programme at the cathedral. Well done, ALL, and thank you! JB*

Organ pieces included Leighton's 'Prelude on St Columba' and Bach's last Chorale Prelude: 'Vor deinen Thron tret'ich' (*Before Thy Throne I now appear*).

On a personal level, the most defining moment was arguably when, at the kind invitation of Provost Forbes CBE, all the old choristers in the congregation moved from their seats to stand either side of the centre aisle in the nave whilst the choir sang Dennis's own 'I heard a voice from Heaven'. That line up included Richard Townhill (grandson of Dennis), who developed into a fine treble during the 1980s. We remained flanking the nave whilst Peter played Bach's 'Fugue in E flat pro Organo Pleno' and the coffin bearers led Dennis from the cathedral one final time.

It was an immensely huge honour to be a part of that, an extremely proud moment, incredibly moving and something I will never forget.

Shortly after DT's funeral, a few of us retired to Starbucks for tea, coffee and some amusing reminiscing.



*Four of Dennis's 1980s altos with Peter Backhouse's wife Ann, all re-united (L-R Bob Keen, Robert Marshall, Ann Backhouse, Robert Allan, John Keen).*

Dad informs me that you played the organ for Keith's Memorial Service. I'd imagine you gave him the triumphant send off which he so richly deserved.

Best regards

John

*Thank you, Bob and John, for your so-moving memories. JB*

## OC EDDIE HOWORTH

It was with much sadness that we learned, just before our Annual Reunion, of the death of OC Eddie Howorth. Eddie was a most faithful attendee at our Annual Reunions, even though he lived in the Isle of Wight. He last came to us in 2004 – after which he was ill for a several years, but recently we heard that he was recovering.



Eddie was a Choir Prefect in 1947 under TLD – a contemporary of some of our most illustrious Old Choristers. OC Bryan Lamb remembers that he and Eddie were formally admitted to the Cathedral Choir together – on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1942.

We shall miss Eddie dreadfully, and send our deepest condolences to Mrs. Howorth.

1942	Alan Hodgson
	J. Michael Wilkinson
1943	Peter Fielding
	John P. Highton
1945	Alan D. Holden
1946	Gordon Fielding
	Ralph N. Robinson
1947	Edward J. Howorth

## 2. OC DAVID ROBINSON from Cheshire, sends good news



This picture taken at Niagara shows me (right) and my new companion **Jan Bartai** (far right) with my cousin Francis and wife Marie, whom I had not seen for 30 years until our holiday in July.

Jan was head of music at the Queen's School in Chester for 16 years but now teaches piano privately and accompanies various stage productions.

Faced with a 25-mile commute to Sale five days a week because of office reorganisation, I decided to take early retirement and did so on July 11. Jan has seven dogs and two horses, so I have no trouble filling my time. I have also taken over Gill's crossword business to top up my income and would welcome new clients!

I still keep my voice active and have just started the new season with the Northwich Rivendell Singers. At the end of the month we will be moving to a country cottage near Peckforton, about 15 miles south of here.

OCs who have had connections with the belltower might like to know that my father (Frank) is still alive and kicking at 86.

1964	Peter Eastham
1965	K. Neil Fellows
	Ian F. Harrison
→	David Robinson
1966	Charles Hopwood
1967	Derek Crompton
1968	Bernard Hargreaves

*Well done, David! Those were vintage years for our cathedral choir as you can see from our Prefects' Board No. 2 in the Song School. Peter & Derek are still singing in the cathedral choir, and Neil, Ian, Charles and Bernard are active members of BCOCA! JB*

## 3. From OC DAVID TATTERSALL in NZ Retired Lt. Commander in the Royal Navy

Hi John,

I lost contact with BCOCA as I could never manage to get to the Reunions for they always coincided with the start of submarine's running periods. When I finally had shore-based appointments I had lost touch and had my family commitments. It's hard devoting time to both when you live in Somerset and work in London.

I managed to have a few lunches with [former Squadron Leader] OC **Bryan Lamb** though. (Very interesting job he was doing too – but I won't elaborate!!)



When I left the RN, due to a problem with two discs in my back and the fact that I refused to let them operate on me while I could still walk, I took over the main child care role and **Helen**, my lovely wife, continued her Radiography career on a full time basis. Helen was trained at Guys (where I first met her in 1986) so is a very capable radiographer and has always been well respected wherever she worked.

Helen was head-hunted by NZ Breast screening (her specialization) and was offered a choice of areas here in NZ about 2 years ago. Having lived on the West Coast of Scotland with its never ending rain when we first were married and I was navigating nuclear subs, we went for the nicest climate with the best schools for the children and chose Napier, in Hawkes Bay.

What a good choice it has turned out to be. The climate is almost Mediterranean, with a backdrop of mountains and a top class ski field only a 2 hour drive, but only 5 minutes from our house to the sea. We get the national Ballet, concerts and international sports matches too (I went to the England-Black caps one day test last summer which was outstanding. Almost 700 runs in the day which ended in a draw meant that my loyalties were not tested!!)

I have set up a small plant nursery selling veg seedlings to the local garden centres. It is proving to be quite successful, but its main objective has been fulfilled already – namely keeping me out of mischief!

Have a look on the internet where we are, and if you ever manage to get out this way you will be assured of a very warm welcome and a place to stay. We have a constant flow of visitors and Auntie **Betty Parkinson** is possibly coming to see Stephen next year and **Jim Farquhar** may travel with them and stay with us. We are only a coach ride from Wellington and have a superb local airport. It is the centre of New Zealand's wine country and is world renowned for its 1930s Art Deco buildings. We feel so settled and are enjoying a superb lifestyle too.

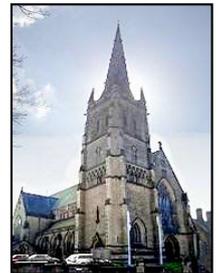
Well John, I must get back to my plants, take care,  
**David.**

*David – again, terrific to hear from you. If there's room at the end of this magazine I'll tell a story of your outstanding career as Head Chorister at Blackburn Cathedral! JB ... (Next time!)*

## 4. 1993 Organ Scholar DAMIAN HOWARD

Dear Dr. John,

I am very busy as you know as Director of Music of Lancaster Cathedral and the place seems to be undergoing a rebirth. I already have two choirs – choristers from the cathedral school, and a newly formed Ladies' Choir. I hope to form a specialist choir eventually a little bit like the Renaissance Singers.



Before coming here I was at Sedbergh School as Organist and Teacher of organ, piano and harpsichord with **John Seymour** – who is an Old Chorister of Blackburn Cathedral.

I do a lot of teaching in schools and privately, and also concert work. I have a recital booked next year at Bath Abbey. God is very good to me – I don't go short in any way.

Thanks so much for writing a Responsorial Psalm for our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. It would be so wonderful if it were also the year in which the organ was restored to its former glory! We've already raised £60,000, and have only £40,000 more to go!

Yours **Damian**

*Congratulations, Damian, on all the excellent work you are doing at Lancaster. Well done! JB See their website*

[www.lancastercathedral.org.uk/](http://www.lancastercathedral.org.uk/)

# Welcome to our new Residentiary Canon!

The Reverend Dr. Susan Penfold was Licensed, Collated and Installed as a Canon Residentiary and Diocesan Director of Ministry during a most impressive Choral Evensong on Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> September. (See front cover, with the Bishop and Dean.)

A large congregation filled the Nave, and the chancel almost overflowed with visiting clergy – all of whom knew where to sit and what to do thanks to meticulous rehearsal beforehand led by our own Canon Andrew Hindley. (Below)

There was a most helpful introduction in the order of service, explaining what a Canon is, and also telling us something of Canon Sue's distinguished career.

She originally trained as a scientist, but since then has worked in parishes in the Dioceses of Chelmsford, Durham and Bradford, and most recently in Wakefield as Diocesan Director of Ordinands. Many were the distinguished guests who came to see Sue that day.



Clergy and choir lined up in the North Transept and then they all processed down the Nave, singing *Christ triumphant*.

The choir was, of course, in top form – singing the canticles to Stanford in C, and the anthem *Let all the world* by RVW.



**Bishop Nicholas** was, as ever, superb in his leading of the legal parts of the service, and Canon Sue also spoke so very clearly when she made her vows.

When **Dean Christopher** installed Sue into her place alongside **Canon Chivers**, the entire congregation burst into applause!

Welcome, **Canon Sue**, and welcome to your family, the Revd. **Colin**, and to **Deborah** and **Tim**.

# TV Songs of Praise – again!

**RICHARD TANNER** was interviewed on the BEEB'S SoP on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September – during a programme devoted to the Psalms.

He was seen conducting the boy choristers who were singing a psalm – superbly. And he was interviewed, during their singing, by Pam Rhodes.

Richard paid tribute to Dr. Barry Rose's training of the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral – where Richard was a chorister.

*'When I first started singing the psalms as a boy chorister at St. Paul's Cathedral I was enormously privileged to have the experience that so many choristers have of singing psalms every day, and the spiritual impact upon one's life is incredibly profound.'*



# JB at Hereford Cathedral



Your editor was enormously privileged to be invited to lead a choral workshop at Hereford Cathedral in September for diocesan choirmasters.

We were given the right royal treatment beginning with an exquisite Choral Evensong sung by the cathedral choir under the inspired direction of **Geraint Bowen**, and accompanied equally musically by the cathedral sub-organist, **Peter Dyke**.

This was followed by a sit-down dinner in the recently transformed Cathedral Hall – which is almost Venetian in its splendour. After that JB led an inter-active session on choirtraining. The choirmasters responded marvellously!

Peter Dyke is also the very active diocesan RSCM representative, and he leads a lively programme of organ lessons for 30 diocesan organists (15 lessons each per year) as well as energetically encouraging diocesan choirmasters. JB was very impressed!

**Uganda Revisited  
by Old Chorister, John Wilkinson OBE  
from Winchester**



*John 50 years ago!*

John has just returned from another successful period of work in western Uganda in the South Rwenzori Diocese (SRD), representing the charity **Education Uganda**.

He visited 14 project schools and colleges, some very close to the Congolese border in the hills, where children had never had a visit from a white person before! He also met with the SD Bishop and the Ugandan Defence Minister (with small army!).

Prior to the visit, John also hosted five Ugandan teachers visiting the UK for the first time. He then returned with them and four teachers from Hampshire schools to establish curriculum links between the two countries under the Global School Partnership scheme. The work of Education Uganda in introducing individual slate technology to schools is progressing well and raising standards. There are now 30 schools in the programme with another 60 scheduled for next year. The visit was challenging, busy and demanding, but very rewarding.



*John during his previous visit to Uganda in 2007*

John also attended the Winchester Cathedral Old Choristers reunion in June and met a colleague lay clerk from Ely whom he hadn't seen for 35 years! In 2009, Winchester hosts the Old Choristers Federation Festival. It will be good to welcome colleagues from BCOCA to Winchester on that occasion.

*Well done indeed, John! JB*

Your drinks are brought in five minutes, and food within 15. An image of the food you've ordered is also projected onto your plate so that you can see what you're ordering:



... and if you want to change your tablecloth, just push another projected image!



There's a wonderful atmosphere – the place is full of intelligent young (and some not-so-young) people; the food is delicious and MOST reasonably priced, and when you need a taxi, just push another image!

Nearest Tubes: Oxford Circus, or Tottenham Ct. Rd.

**Book your table: 020-7851-7051.**

*Well done Noel, and your business partner! JB*

**OC Noel Hunwick's new Restaurant**



**(134-136 Wardour St., London)  
is a terrific success!**

A party from the cathedral (which included the entire Hunwick family, plus your editor, his London cousin, and a former student of JB's, who is now resident conductor at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden) enjoyed an unforgettable evening there in September.

The whole place is digitalized – food and drink are ordered from images projected onto your table; just push your chosen image!



(Here we're ordering desserts...)



*Look at INAMO's super website*

[www.inamo-restaurant.com/](http://www.inamo-restaurant.com/)

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# Richard Tanner directs the largest RSCM Course in the USA

Heartiest congratulations to Richard Tanner who received rave reviews from his directing of the Royal School of Church Music's American annual 'showcase' course for singers and choirmasters in July. It was held at a large Episcopal Church In Pennsylvania, and was attended by over 150 musicians. There were choral rehearsals, and a sung service every day, but the course ended with a most impressive Choral Evensong.

The main works they learnt and performed were Langlais' *Messe Solennelle*, Vaughan Williams' *Let all the World*, and *O Clap your hands*, Stanford in *A Canticles*, and Bertalot *Responses* (written for Blackburn Cathedral).

This photograph of all the church musicians, headed by Richard, speaks for itself! **Richard's been invited for 2009 as well!**



# AMERICA CHOIR-TOUR 2008

by Alex Wood – member of the Girls' Choir  
with additions by others

12 Blackburn boy choristers, 6 girl choristers and three adults met at Manchester airport bright and early on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August, excited at the prospect of our trip to the States where we were going to participate in a week's relaxed choir course with the choristers of Trinity Church, Princeton, on the New Jersey shore.

This came about from the visit that Trinity choirs made to Blackburn Cathedral last year – from the generosity of Trinity's Director of Music, Mr. Tom Whittemore, and the strong connection between our Cathedral and Trinity Church made by Dr. Bertalot – who had been Director of Music of both Blackburn and Princeton.

Our long flight was filled with movies and games. We arrived at Newark airport to be greeted by **Richard, Pippa, James and Ben**. (Richard had been directing an RSCM festival in Pennsylvania with 150 singers (see above), before being joined for a holiday by the rest of the family.) The adults who accompanied us were **Richard Tanner** of course, **James Davy**, Choir Parent **Bill Woodburn** and 'Auntie' **Val Edge**.

We all piled onto a train from Newark Airport for an hour's journey to a long-awaited Princeton, NJ, (which is halfway between New York City and Philadelphia) to be whisked off to our generous host families and fed with delicious food, dips in their pools and many laughs to be shared.



After a comfortable night with our Princeton hosts we went in style to Cape May on the New Jersey Shore; transport was a traditional American yellow school bus – no air conditioning and packed full of people and suitcases. With several choruses of 'Are we there yet?' we arrived at a hot and sunny Cape May.



The town itself was quite old fashioned and a bit like Blackpool but on a smaller scale, with mini golf courses and ice cream shops – we felt very much at home. We stayed at Holiday House, which was a four-storey beach house with large verandas and comfy rooms.



On Sunday a combination of Blackburn and Princeton choristers sang at the local Church for their Eucharist – Mozart's *Ave Verum* (from memory!). During the week in the mornings we would have breakfast and then it was over to the church for choir practice! Mr Tanner and Mr Whittemore (above) taught us the whole of Fauré's *Requiem* as both of our choirs are due to sing it in November. (See photos over)



We were also visited by some distinguished organists during that wonderful week:

With Tom Whittemore (our host), were L-R: **Bruce Neswick**, Director of Music of St. John the Divine Cathedral, New York City, James Davy, and on either side of Richard Tanner are Trinity's two brilliant organ scholars, **Stephen Buzard** and **Tom Sheehan**.



After our morning's singing we enjoyed a delicious lunch, which was made for us by none other than Mr William Woodburn, Mr Davy and **Auntie Val** for which they deserve a medal, as it was great!



Then it was on to **'Silent Time'**...on the first day the boys didn't get the hang of this – they didn't believe that Mr. Whittemore meant it when he said 'No talking!' – so it got stretched out from 45 minutes to more like 1 hour and 45 minutes. But after that they knew!

After work we had play, swimming from the Beach, and then, after devouring our 3-course dinner, it was free time until lights out at 11pm! (That's if you're lucky and are over 13...if not it's 9.45pm!).



*Tom W. with James Tanner on the beach*

During our stay in Cape May we saw all the sights from dolphin-watching on the beach to horse-drawn carriage rides through the town, from mini golfing and ice creams in the evening to watching the *Sound Of Music* on a huge screen, sitting on our towels on the beach. Not forgetting Auntie Val's all-important 4 S's ... **S**unbathing, **S**hopping, **S**inging and **S**ight-seeing!



To top off our fantastic week at the seaside we held a talent show.

Now the Americans have a different idea of what this means so whilst they all performed serious pieces of music all we could come up with was Mr Davy and his attempt at the Entertainer, plus Mr Davy and Mr Woodburn's collection of amusing duets, and Barry and Arthur (aka Barthur) singing a duet of Elton John's, *You're Song*, with Arthur singing as **Elmo** the famous Sesame Street character. But everyone enjoyed it.



With a sad goodbye after 5 fun-filled days in Cape May we boarded the school bus back up to Princeton, this time a more comfortable ride due to the drop in temperature!

By now it was Friday evening and everyone was very excited about the trip to **New York** the next day.

Two great journeys on the Staten Island Ferry enabled us to see the Statue of Liberty, then a mem-



orable visit to Ground Zero and a breath-taking visit to the top of the Rockefeller Centre: it was a day that none of us will forget!



*Laura Slater, Alison Holmes and Jamie Bett enjoying NYC*

On Sunday it was going to be hard to top the day before, but **Philadelphia** certainly did just that! For this however the three buddy groups split up and so they could do things in their own time.

The girls went with Auntie Val and a friend called Stephanie on a tour of the sights of Philadelphia, which was amazing, then we became 'The Ladies who Lunch' in a nice Italian restaurant and we ended up in Macy's for the **WHOLE** afternoon!



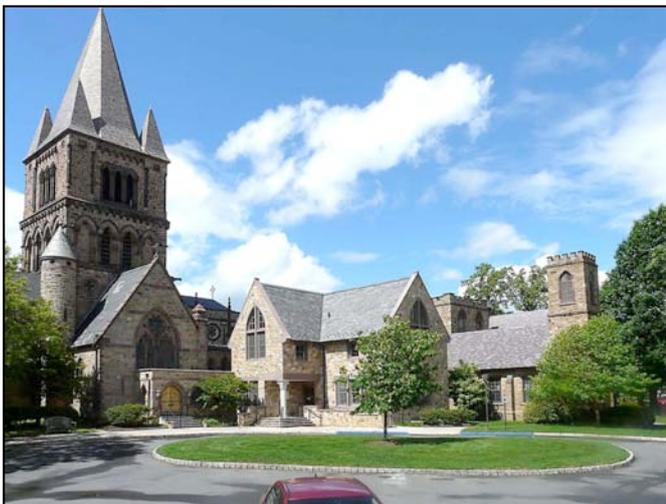
Bill's boys also went on the tour, but left early to go to the Franklin Institute to see the Pirate exhibition.

James' group went to see the Liberty Bell in the centre of Philadelphia.

James' group then went to Macy's, where there's the largest working organ in the world! Three recitals are given each day *during shopping hours*. It has six manuals and about 400 stops! It's **BIGGG!**

The day was a huge sensation but it was a calmer way to see city life. If that wasn't enough for one day, later that evening there was a big pool party in the lovely home of one of our Princeton hosts with a barbeque for all.

The next morning was our final morning in Princeton before the flight home. This was the point when the girls went dashing round the town for presents for our hosts and tour organisers. Then a lunch was provided for all at Trinity Church (*below*) followed by tearful goodbyes at the station.



Our flight home seemed shorter than we expected and we arrived in a cloudy England longing to go back to our newfound friends in the sun!

It was an amazing and unforgettable tour that everyone will remember. We were made so welcome by our host families and the choristers of Trinity, to whom we offer our most grateful thanks. Thanks, too, to the Adults who looked after us and especially to **Mr. Whittemore** who organised that wonderful visit, **and to our generous sponsors!**

## WE HAVE NEW BOILERS!



The new boilers and Condensing Heat Power unit have been installed as a result of winning a large grant of £250,000 (less 10% which the cathedral has found) from the Landfill tax, thanks to **Neales' Waste** and their Managing Director, **Richard Matthewman**, who is pictured here with The Dean.

Many of us remember what happened when the old boilers leaked a couple of years ago, flooding the Song School. Those days are over, and so we look forward to a warm cathedral this winter – supplied by energy-efficient equipment. Hooray!

## FAREWELL to HILARY & JILL

*by The Dean*

**Hilary Carr** and her sister **Jill Young** have served the cafe and cathedral well for several years now. Their cheerful and engaging personalities have rewarded many a visitor to the crypt, surprising us all by the warmth of their welcome as well as the attractiveness of the fare served at the counter.

Hilary and Jill were part of a splendid team when Chris Dobson was in charge of the cafe. When Chris left - now cooking at the Stirk House Hotel, near Gisburn - we hoped that Hilary and Jill might be able to continue the ministry of the cafe without him, though assisted by our willing volunteers until something definite was known about the Cathedral development.

Unfortunately, the pressure on the café-in-the-Crypt is so intense that it was very difficult for them to carry on so, with great sadness, we said goodbye to **Hilary** in September and **Jill** in October. They and their families have been great company and I hope they will come back to see us from time to time. Hilary will now be able to spend a little more time at her beloved allotment. The barrow may help!

**A heartfelt THANK YOU from us all**





# Choral Evensong

## Live from Blackburn Cathedral.



RICHARD TANNER rehearses the cathedral choir on Wednesday afternoon, 24<sup>th</sup> September, for their live broadcast of Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3.

He had chosen an ambitious programme of music, including an Introit, which James Davy's composed for our visit to Notre Dame, Paris, last year, and the glorious Howells' *St. Paul's Canticles*, Howells' *O pray for the peace*, and Sumsion's *Responses*.

How good it was to welcome back, as a full-time bass, **Judge**

**James Prowse** (extreme right), seen here with (L-R) newish bass **Antony Snape**, former Residentiary Canon **Godfrey Hirst** (who sings with us as often as possible) and very long-time (but ever-spirited) choirman **Phil Wilson**, who was a TLD chorister way back in the late 1950s.

It was also especially good to welcome back OC **Kit Dawson**, who is now studying at Edinburgh University, and who sings with the choir of St. Mary's Cathedral in that noble city.



Our BBC producer was **Simon Vivian** who, when he is free, sings at some of our major concerts with the Renaissance Singers. (see p. 36)

## Choral Evensong Live from Blackburn Cathedral.



And of course our superb organist was **James Davy**.

Unfortunately James's Postlude (a Howells *Psalm Prelude*) was cut off in mid stream; we believe that some passing hoodlum disconnected a lead from the outside broadcast van – just for fun. However, the whole Postlude was included in the repeat the following Sunday!

**BBC** Many were the complimentary letters and e-mails to the Dean and to Richard following that fine broadcast:

From Blackburn:

Mr Dean

Please convey my thanks to the D.O.M. and the choir for a splendid Choral Evensong even with a truncated Psalm Prelude. What a pity that the B.B.C. did not have in its archives some other choir recording by Blackburn Cathedral Choir. It was a little thoughtless of them for a Howells' Celebration to be terminated with an anthem from Winchester Cathedral by C. V. Stanford. Congratulations once again.

Regards

**Eric Barnes**

From Oxford:

Dear Mr Tanner

**BBC** I write to say how moved I was by the beautiful and vibrant singing of the Cathedral Choir today.

The total musical commitment came across today in an extraordinary manner. It is a long time since I was moved to write such a letter.

You have every reason to be so proud of your Choir. Please also thank Mr Davy for his fine piece in honour of the Trinity. Who is the publisher?

Again renewed thanks and all good wishes

**Edward de Rivera**

Director of Music

Oratory Church of St Aloysius Gonzaga – Oxford

From Malvern:

**BBC** It was wonderful to return today to the standard Anglican Choral Evensong after the hollow summer months, and I would like to thank Blackburn for their courage and effort in undertaking a full service so early in the new term. It was indeed a most engaging and enjoyable service in its every detail.

But more than that – the music was inspirational. Firstly in its choice: James Davy's introit, with its mix of ancient plainchant

and contemporary idiom, was an excellent gateway into the traditional service; Howells was nicely represented in contrasting styles, canticles against anthem; the psalmody offered understated variety to offset conventional chanting; even the Sumsion Responses sat well with the rest of the music list whilst still making their own point. It all hung together so well.

Secondly, and more particularly, in its performance: the lower voices were rich and mellifluous, with both tenors and basses finding just the right moments to make their presence felt, and always providing a solid yet sensitive framework; the choristers were truly astonishing for September – a piercing, pealing blend at *fortissimo*, but controlled and nuanced at *piano*, and cutting through the ensemble and the acoustic whenever necessary – they must surely enjoy their work to show such commitment and musical responsiveness. But it is hardly my place to offer a critique – suffice to say that your choir led today's service in exhilarating fashion, especially in the big sing of the St Paul's setting. Please convey to them all my congratulations and deep gratitude.

And more especial thanks to you yourself and your assistant for making it all happen in such electrifying style. You have at a blow vindicated the merits of Choral Evensong and the BBC's decision to return its broadcast to the Wednesday slot. At the same time you must be relishing the thought of what such a choir will achieve during the coming year. I wish you all well in your invaluable contribution to Blackburn Cathedral's ministry.

No reply is expected – I imagine your inbox will be flooded with similar messages of appreciation!

With kindest regards, **Peter Davis**

From the Isle of Mull:

**BBC**

Dear Mr. Tanner,

Once again, your Choral Evensong broadcast hits the spots which so many others fail to find!

As I read on your description on the Cathedral website, no lengthy tradition, no choir-school, simply a fine building in which to make music and a fabulous instrument, and your own conviction of what and why you are doing it.

Whatever the secret is, your broadcasts never fail to move in every department, and I send my humblest best wishes from a wilderness which is the Church of Scotland on the Isle of Mull, and salute and congratulate you all, and a doff of the cap to Howells.

Keep up the very fine work. Best Wishes and greetings,  
**Nick Reed**

**BBC**

**From Mr. Tom Whittemore  
Trinity Church, Princeton NJ**

to Richard Tanner & James Davy

Hey Guys!

Congratulations! I listened through the beginning of the Nunc then had to go off to a Staff lunch. Got back and listened to the rest!

WELL DONE!

**Richard:** elegant, spacious tempos and LONG MUSICAL LINES! Loved the *subito pianos* in the Howells! Really nice.

**James,** gorgeous Introit! Also lovely accompanying! Nice job! Psalms perfect!

Wow, I'd give anything to make music in a room like that!  
Love to you both!

**TOM**

**BBC**

**From Stephen Shipley –  
BBC Producer**

Dear Richard

Many thanks for forwarding all these responses to your broadcast. They are well deserved - as indeed are

the very positive comments on the [BBC] Message Board. It was an excellent broadcast sensitively led by Chris [Chivers]. Please thank the choir and James - not only for his fine playing but also for his introtit, which set the tone of the service beautifully.

All best wishes  
**Stephen**

**BBC** From Judy Martin, Director of Music, Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin:

Hi Richard,

Just got round to sitting down to hear your broadcast. I thought I must write as I was bowled over by the power and the sound of the choir in the building. For once the engineers seem to have used the acoustic well, and the result, even over the internet, was something with added sparkle! The Howells Mag must have absolutely exhausted those boys and yet they managed a great sound in the anthem. I also loved James' piece, and Tristan has just produced a copy of it for me to look at, so I'll go back for another listen.

Congratulations!! Blackburn goes from strength to strength and you must have been so proud of them. We played the voluntary at fortissimo in the office just now, and we loved that too.

I meant to say that I've played your CD (the one that starts with the David Hurd 'I was glad') many many times now (and of course that Howells voluntary is on there).

I particularly love the Hurd, Come my way. Is that published? I have a Cancer service, this term, that I'd love to do that in. Must dash, but please pass on my congratulations to your choir - tell them that their energy was absolutely exhilarating!!

Love to your family,  
Judy

**BBC** From Lee Dunleavy, one of Richard's successors as DoM of All Saints' Church, Northampton.

Dear Richard,

Just a quickie to say how much I enjoyed last night's broadcast. I thought the choir captured all the good things that the St Paul's Service has to offer, and the Sumsion Responses were much more lovely than I remember them - my predecessor at Hertford College Oxford did them all the time, but I could not quite get the point of all those moving quavers. You've got a fine Precentor there, too.

With all very best wishes, as ever, **Lee**

**BBC** From Peter Moore, Musical Director of the London Cantata Choir:

Dear Richard Tanner,

Thanks for your broadcast today which made a triumphant return to Wednesday evensongs.

I thought the entire service was a perfect demonstration of the very highest standards of cathedral choral music, which would be enviable anywhere let alone in the more difficult conditions at Blackburn [where there is no choir school].

The performance of the [Howells'] *St. Paul's Service* was the sort we all hope to pull off but don't often manage; full of intensity and lovely phrasing, so the contrast with the different style of *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem* showed up clearly – lovely expressiveness on page 8, by the way.

The immaculate psalm singing ... and the whole exhilarating service was ignited by the electrifying start to James's stunning introtit. His playing matched your own clearly inspiring direction, to congratulations to both of you!

With best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,  
**Peter Moore**

## Incidentally...

... it was a most happy coincidence that the lunchtime organ recital on the day of the broadcast was given by **Sebastian Thompson**, the Director of Music of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton – the 'other' Northampton Church! – for it was exactly 50 years ago that your editor took up his appointment there – direct from Cambridge.



Sebastian is now rebuilding the great music tradition that was the pride of St. Matthew's. Many previous St. Matthew's organists were 'transposed' to cathedrals – to Wells, New York, Llandaff, Norwich, King's College Cambridge ... and to Blackburn!

The other 'other' Northampton church (All Saints') which has a proud musical tradition has also had its fair share of cathedral music promotions – including Carlisle, plus the Assistant DoM at St. Paul's ... and, of course, Blackburn!

## Heartiest congratulations to

### 1. Barry Hudson-Taylor (left) and Bradley Robinson

who were promoted, respectively, to Head Chorister and Prefect at Choral Evensong on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September.



Photo: Amanda Snape.

### and to

### 2. Daniel Day

who, on 28<sup>th</sup> September, received the Dots Bertalot Memorial Medallion from JB

as the longest-serving chorister in the cathedral choir  
**Well done, all!**



# Blackburn Cathedral Old Choristers' 43rd Annual Reunion

Old Choristers from as far away as Ely and Hampshire gathered at the Cathedral on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September, to enjoy each other's company and to relish, once again, the privilege of singing God's praises together in this most blessed place.

One of the first to arrive in time for an early lunch in the crypt, were recently discovered TLD OC **Jim Hulme** (see p 14) with his former QEGS teacher, **Fred Dewhurst**. 'I still can't call him Fred',



said Jim. 'He'll always be Mr. Dewhurst to me!'

And next were founder member **Peter Heald**, from Ely, with **SOC Heather Starkie**, **John Marr** and incoming SOC **David Smalley**. Peter had a lot to smile about, for he was about to hand



over the BCOCA archives (see p. 10) to OC the Revd. **Ian Hollin** who had recently retired to Penwortham, and therefore had endless free time! But **Ian** still managed to smile (below left) with



OC **Adrian Wilson**, and OC **Peter Crowther** from Lancaster.

**Peter Crowther** is Chairman of the Lancaster Magistrates. We are so proud of our illustrious **JP**.

It was an honour as well as a great pleasure to welcome



**Harold 'Stan' Stancliffe** from Hants who, this year, was celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his joining the cathedral choir. BCOCA Chairman **Stewart Hopkinson** looks paternal as he greeted his elder OC colleague.

**Margaret Stancliffe** was there too with OC **Ernie Gorner**



and there was a celebratory 70<sup>th</sup> balloon wafting around the crypt that happy afternoon.

OC **Gordon Fielding** (L) also had a lot to smile about, for he was about to relinquish the treasurership of BCOCA – an office he has held with distinction (and profit for us) for well over 20 years.



"I started with an overdraft of £18," he told us, "but now we have a balance of £2,653 in the BCOCA account!" OC **Bob Keen** (R) looks on approvingly for he, too, had been a bank manager (in the days when banks were managed!)



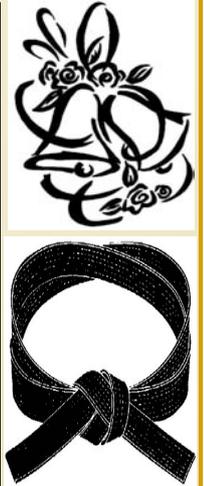
Another TLD group was (L-R) **Allan Holden** ('My Mother is now 102', he reported, 'and she's still so grateful for the birthday card the OCs sent when she was only 100!'), **Mrs. Jackie Robinson**, **Gordon Fielding** (again) and **Ralph Robinson** from across the border in Yorkshire.



with OC Rotarian **John Highton**, whose plate was nearly empty.

Two more almost-late-comers were two of JB's former choristers, **Stephen Holmes** and **Nigel Chew**. (below).

Both Steve and Nigel have featured prominently in recent Newsletters – Steve because of his marriage to Mandy, and Nigel because he's a Black Belt ... and so is his wife, Laura!



Then the Dean called for order and chaired, as ever, a well disciplined and highly informative Annual Meeting.



JB (Founder-Chairman of BCOCA 44 years ago!) was happy to be photographed with one of his former choristers – **Stewart Hopkinson**.



It was noticeable that almost all OCs wore their OC tie. Even JB, who has some 370 ties to choose from! But OC **Geoffrey Taylor's** tie seemed to attract the attention of BCOCA Vice Chairman, **Eric Bancroft**.

Then we all tucked in to a delicious lunch, including The **Dean** who sat with (L-R) **David Scott-Thomas**, who would be playing



L-R, Chairman **Stewart Hopkinson**, The **Dean** and Secretary **Alec Stuttard** who presented his Annual Report.

Retiring Treasurer **Gordon Fielding** presented his last financial report ('We're in the money!') and **John Marr** was elected to succeed him, and **Heather Starkie** came onto the BCOCA Committee where her dynamic presence will make itself felt.

The Dean reported that

1. **The Development Plan** for the Cathedral Close is currently on hold, due to the credit crunch.
2. **The Cathedral Worship Review** will result in a few 'unthreatening' changes; for example there will be some noticeable silences during services, to allow for meditation.
3. **A General Appeal** will be launched for the Cathedral in the New Year which will include finance for music, audio and lighting.. This Appeal will involve everyone – so stand by!
4. We welcomed **Richard Tanner** back from his Sabbatical at the end of last year. **James Davy** held the fort so very well; he is an exceptionally talented young man. (Hear, hear!)



the organ for our BCOCA Evensong, former BCOCA Chairman, **Gordon Shaw**, and Assistant DoM **James Davy**, who would be conducting.

(**Richard Tanner** had a long-standing recital engagement at Bridlington Priory that evening. He told us, the next day, 'The audience just wouldn't stop clapping, so I played them the *Widor Toccata* as an encore!')

Bob Keen's son, OC **John Keen** arrived just in time for lunch

5. The Government's National **Music Outreach** programme for schoolchildren is now in its second year. It aims to increase the quantity and quality of music in our schools, and Blackburn Cathedral is playing its full part in this adventurous scheme.

6. The **Anne Frank** exhibition, held in May, was a huge success – attracting some 13,000 visitors. Congratulations to **Canon Chivers** and to **Ms. Anjum Anwar MBE**.

7. **Residentiary Canon Dr. Sue Penfold** was recently installed (see front cover). She is the new Director of Training for the Diocese, and her appointment has caused considerable interest in the diocese.

8. The visit by 16 of our choristers to Princeton NJ for a musical camping holiday was a great success. We are so grateful to **Tom Whittemore**, of Princeton, for his generous invitation.

9. Two new ground-breaking **boilers** have just been installed!

Then the Dean presented to OC **Harold Stancliffe** a congratulations card, which we had all signed on celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his joining the cathedral choir. That was under **Dr. Brearley!** 'Stan' was clearly very pleased and he received a rousing ovation from us all.



We then all moved into the Song School where former SOC **John Marr** asked the Dean to bless a handsome new Board on which are recorded the names of all Senior Old Choristers since that office's inception in 1969 shortly after BCOCA was formed.



John had given this in memory of his Mother, who was such a strong supporter of the choir – especially through her three children who were all choristers here.

**Presented to the Dean and Chapter  
by John Marr on behalf of Blackburn Cathedral Old Choristers' Association  
and in memory of his mother Doreen (Marr) Salisbury  
September 27th 2008**

It was very moving for us to read the names of so many illustrious OCs who have blessed us so richly; some of whom are no longer with us. But their names are now inscribed in gold.

- 1969 Stanley Hitchen
- 1970 Fred E. Green
- 1971 James Smith
- 1972 Harry White
- 1973 Harold Fielding
- 1974 Colin Parmley
- 1975 Herbert Brown
- 1976 Robin Bridge
- 1977 Peter Fielding
- 1978 Jack Smethurst
- 1979 Norman Eccleston
- 1980 Bryan Lamb
- 1981 Allan Holden
- 1982 Ralph Robinson
- 1983 Trevor Porter
- 1984 Gordon Fielding
- 1985 Geoffrey Taylor
- 1986 Peter Heald
- 1987 Edward Howorth
- 1988 Tony Robinson
- 1989 David Battersby
- 1990 Michael Wilkinson
- 1991 Fred Smith
- 1992 Peter G. Crowther
- 1993 Alec Stuttard
- 1994 Tom Wilkinson
- 1995 Gordon Shaw
- 1996 Peter Hurst
- 1997 David Robinson
- 1998 David C. Metcalf
- 1999 Anthony Tattersall
- 2000 Albert B. Ogden
- 2001 Ernest J. Gorner
- 2002 Philip Carr
- 2003 Robert D. Keen
- 2004 Nigel Chew
- 2005 Stewart Hopkinson
- 2006 John Marr
- 2007 Heather Starkie

There followed a rousing rehearsal for Choral Evensong, which would be sung by the Old Choristers with our boy and girl choristers – led by James Davy, with David Scott-Thomas at the organ.

The music chosen by SOC **Heather Starkie** was *Locus Iste* – Bruckner, *Smith Responses*, *Dyson in F*, and *I was Glad*, by You Know Who.

**The combined choristers made a thrilling sound.**



What a great sight it was to see seasoned Old Choristers rehearsing alongside their worthy successors – and especially to hear **Matthieu Woodburn** sing fully half of the treble line of Dyson's *Magnificat* as a solo. What a lovely sound he made!



Just before Choral Evensong OC **Iain Thompson** turned up – happily to be photographed with **Pauline Keen** (wife of OC Bob, Mum of OC John). Both hail from Cheshire – Tarporley and Wilmslow, respectively.



**The service was magnificent!**

And after a short break to gather our breath we enjoyed a terrific Reception and Dinner in Whalley Abbey, where the bedrooms and the atmosphere are 4-star. How good it was to welcome Canon **Sue Penfold** there – sitting alongside Churchwarden OC **Philip Carr** and his son OC **Michael** who, after the meal, clearly enjoyed



listening to the Chairman's speech of thanks to so many folk for their work for the Association, including unofficial Archivist **Peter Heald** who had



gathered so many of our irreplaceable archives during the past few years, and was now handing this task on to OC The Revd. **Ian Hollin**.

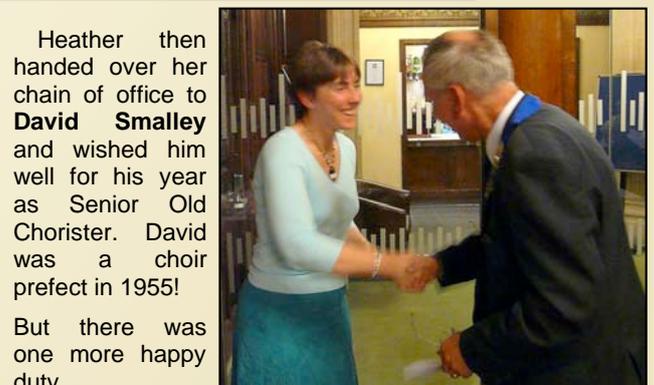
**Stewart** also paid tribute to the mammoth work that SOC

**Heather Starkie** had done. Working for a volunteer organisation to encourage active participation by others was never easy, but Heather had succeeded brilliantly.



And then it was **Heather's** turn to thank the Association for its support of her work during her year.

Progress had been made in raising the profile of BCOCA and this must continue.



Heather then handed over her chain of office to **David Smalley** and wished him well for his year as Senior Old Chorister. David was a choir prefect in 1955!

But there was one more happy duty.

Chairman Stewart presented a gift from us all (and a card which we'd all signed) as a token of our thanks to OC **GORDON FIELDING** for his outstanding work as BCOCA treasurer for over 20 years. Being a TLD chorister (Gordon was choir prefect in 1946) strong commitment to the cathedral was in his very bones, and this commitment spread from him throughout the ranks of BCOCA. We are so very grateful.



THE NEXT DAY (as St. John was wont to write) there was the Cathedral 10.30 Eucharist which, thanks to the Dean's enthusiastic acceptance of Heather Starkie's suggestion, featured input from BCOCA, not only by their singing alongside the cathedral choir for the Communion anthem (Elgar's *Ave Verum*),



*OCs rehearsing in the YPC Vestry with James Davy*

but also having BCOCA members welcoming worshippers as they arrived at the cathedral, and also reading the first two lessons –



*Heather Starkie and SOC David Smalley reading their lessons*



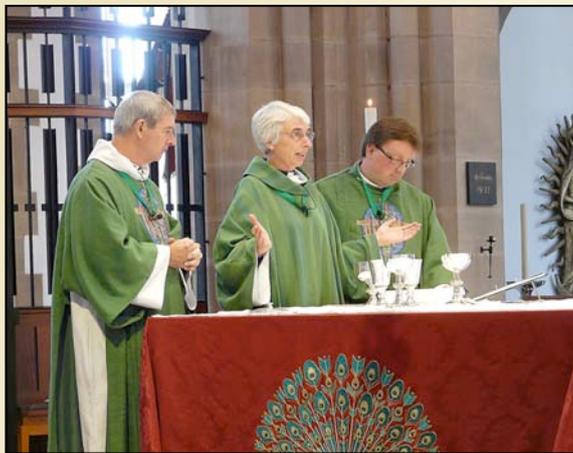
The collection taken by four OCs:  
L-R  
**Adrian Wilson, Eric Bancroft, Ralph Robinson and Ernie Gorner ...**

...and the Bread and Wine were offered by **Gordon Fielding** and **John Marr**.

How good it was to have **Richard Tanner** back with us as he conducted the Elgar with Choristers Old and Choristers Young.



And how especially good it was that **Canon Sue Penfold** was the Celebrant assisted by the Dean and Canon Chivers.



And then, of course, there was the usual joyful post-service reception in the Crypt .



How good it was to see Choir tenor, OC **Derek Crompton**, chatting with **Gordon Fielding**. And how good it was to see the younger generation (the much younger generation) in the shape of choir tenor **Andy Jump's** family – with Sarah and baby Fraser.



But there was one more photo to take. The Fielding family (whose connections to the Cathedral and Parish Church go back at least two centuries) have a faded snapshot of **Harold Fielding**

(Right) with his three chorister sons, **Gordon, Peter** and young **Paul**, which was taken outside the Song School some 50 years ago. They wanted an updated photo taken in the same place, so your staff photographer obliged.



L-R  
**Gordon, Peter** and **Paul**, with Paul's son, chorister **William**.



That brought to an end one of the happiest BCOCA Reunions we've ever experienced. **Thank you, all!**

# Two Historic Blackburn CDs

Paul Fielding has been working hard during the past few months to produce two historic CDs of Blackburn Cathedral Choirs. These historic CDs are **FREE** but we ask for a goodwill donation to BCOCA for at least £10 each. 01254-249-085

## Blackburn Cathedral Choir, 1948, 1962 Directed by Thomas L. Duerden



## CHORAL EVENSONG broadcast live 07-09 1948.

*Accompanied by TLD at the West organ – the choir singing, uncondacted except for the anthem, at the East end. (Faulty landline connection)*

- 1 Priest, Preces - Ferial. (Precentor: Canon Butterfield). Hymn 12 (Bourgeois) Psalm 37 (Mann & Wolstenholme).
- 2 Fade into Magnificat (Harris in A minor), 2<sup>nd</sup> lesson, Nunc Dimittis, Creed, Responses (Ferial).
- 3 *Father, all holy* (Charles Wood), Prayers, Hymn: *O Thou, who camest from above.* Postlude 'Gloria' Couperin.

## Recording of a BBC broadcast in 1948

*The choristers, conducted by TLD, with a separate accompanist*

- 4 Drake's Drum (Stanford). Who is Sylvia (C. Wood), The dog called Bingo (Cecil Sharpe), Follow me (arr. Percy Fletcher), Old Mother Hubbard (Victor Hely-Hutchinson).

## Private recording c 1948

*(Noise of the building of the new transepts in the background)*

- 5 Cook in G Canticles. Soloists (SATB): **Ralph Robinson, Arthur Howorth, Harold Fielding & Tom Robinson**

## Recordings made in 1962

- 6 Psalms 30 (Dyson, Bairstow) and 31 (Ley, Coleman)  
Plainsong Canticles – soloists **Harold Fielding (tenor) Philip Wilson (treble)**
- 7 Te Deum in B flat (Stanford)

## 1974: Blackburn Cathedral Choir, and Blackburn Bach Choir (Founded by JB, 20 May 1965) conducted by John Bertalot with Keith Bond (organ accompanist) JB at the organ of the Royal Albert Hall, for BBC TV, Nov. 1982



- 1 Suite Gothique (Boellmann) JB Organ  
Chorale & Menuet
- 2 Vierge: Messe Solennelle: Bach Choir  
Kyrie KB at Organ, Conductor JB
- 3 Vierge: Messe.  
Gloria (**David Rothwell** intones)  
Sanctus & Benedictus
- 4 Vierge Messe: Agnus Dei
- 5a Holy, Holy, Holy (arr JB) Cathedral Choir
- 5b Tuba Tune (Norman Cocker) JB Organ
- 5c Teach me, O Lord (William Byrd) Cathedral Choir
- 6 Nunc Dimittis (Stanford in A) Cathedral Choir

*This was recorded on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1974, the exact 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stanford's death. But as the recording equipment was about to go wrong, we had to record it in one take!*

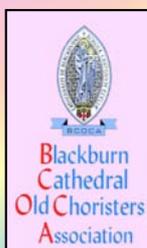
- 7a Faithful Shepherd Cathedral Choir  
with interludes composed and played by Keith Bond
- 7b Nunc Dimittis (Plainsong) Cathedral Choirmen
- 7c Coronation March from *Poppea*. Monteverdi  
JB Organ
- 7d Glory to Thee (Tallis arr. JB) Cathedral Choir  
Soloist: **Philip Chew**
- 7e Psalm 150 (Colin Mawby) Cathedral Choir

We are so grateful for the generous support of the FoBCM and BCOCA for helping to finance **Music & More**. And also to the many **generous readers** who send us donations – without which we could not continue.

It costs us well over £1,000 to print and mail **Music & More**. Regular donations are our life-blood!

**May it be obvious why we need your support.**

**Thank you!**



It was with the deepest sorrow that we learned of the death of **Bernard West's** wife, **Marie**, in October. She was 88. They had three children, **John, Alan** and **Frank**. Frank died a few years ago and his funeral was in the cathedral.

Bernard, as many Old Choristers know, was an outstandingly loyal choirman in the cathedral choir under TLD and his successors, and he was a founder-member of the Blackburn Bach Choir (now, *The Renaissance Singers*). He was also the choir's super-efficient secretary during JB's 18 years as cathedral organist.

Our prayers & love go out to Bernard at his sad loss.

## Will you support a Cathedral Chorister for the Choirs' concert tour of Malta in February?

Members of the Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys, the Senior Girls' Choir, the Young People's Choir and the Renaissance Singers – over 100 singers in all – will be making a concert tour of Malta from 14-19<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

They received this invitation from **the Prime Minister of Malta**, after his visit to us in January 2007. They will sing to him, they will sing to **the President of Malta**, they will sing in the **cathedral** and they will give a performance of Handel's *Messiah* with soloists and orchestra in the spectacular **Manoel Theatre in Malta** conducted by **Richard Tanner**. *This will be an unforgettable week for everyone.*



**FRASER EAGLE** are sponsoring much of this tour, (and so much else again this season) but not every chorister (or their parents) can afford the **£500**, which is required for the journey etc. And so we must raise **£8,000** to enable every chorister who wishes to go to be able take part in this life-changing experience.

WE ARE SO VERY GRATEFUL to the many generous folk who enabled 18 of our young choristers to take part in a choir course in the USA this summer (see pp 21-23). Richard Tanner says that this has had a profound effect on everyone who was privileged to go. Several OCs, (who experienced foreign tours when they were young) and others, gave up to £500 each, and that was so wonderful.

And so we are asking for yet more generous folk to contribute £500 each to enable these choristers to sing in these glorious places, and to walk where St. Paul walked.



*Malta Pro Cathedral*

Already one OC has offered £500 – which, with Gift Aid, will come to £610. **Thank you!** But if you can't afford to sponsor a whole chorister, please consider sponsoring half a chorister @ £250 or 1/5<sup>th</sup> @ £100 !

Cheques should be made payable to **Blackburn Cathedral Choir** and posted to the choir treasurer, **Mr. Derek Crompton, Cathedral Close, Blackburn BB1 5AA.**

**Thank you!**

## From former Blackburn Assistant Organist Ian Pattinson, Organist of Lancaster Priory

Dear John,

Please accept my apologies. I'm afraid you won't be able to see me at the BCOCA Reunion weekend, but I am busy all day Saturday with accompanying rehearsals for a *Messiah* performance that my mum's choir, Cumbria Baroque Choir, are doing on the following Saturday in Kendal Parish Church. And then, having recovered from that, I am getting up very early on Sunday to go down to Manchester for an all-day seminar organised by the Assoc. Board of the Royal Schools of Music on their new syllabus for piano exams.

As a result of these commitments, I've also today turned down a last-minute request to accompany an away-weekend at Alston Hall with the Lancaster Singers. They are having choral workshops, working on American part songs with American choral director John Dickson (do you know him or of him from your time across the pond?).

Life is ALWAYS hectic, and I'm frequently asked by one or more choirs whether I can do a job on a date when I'm already booked with another choir!

I've been busy this year, playing for the RSCM Northern Cathedral Singers at Evensongs in Carlisle and Liverpool Met Cathedrals, and have given recitals locally as well as accompanying numerous choirs and choral societies including my first Haydn 'Creation'.

The Lancaster Priory music scene has recently been particularly busy, with our second annual Priory Festival celebrating the Patronal Festival in the second week of September. We had extra services, together with recitals and concerts. These included a trumpet & organ recital by John Miller (the RNCM's Director of Brass Studies and also Deputy Head of Wind, Brass & Percussion) and myself, as well as a big final concert with the Priory Choir and Priory Players (an orchestra of Priory ex-choristers, people associated with the Priory and a few other local players).

The previous day I am accompanying a workshop in Lancaster organised by the Association of British Choral Directors, which will introduce singers to James MacMillan's recently composed 'St John Passion'.

Over the past couple of months since April, I've had the great pleasure of playing for several Evensongs at Blackburn Cathedral. Two of them were with the Cathedral Boys' and Girls' Choirs respectively, because Richard very kindly asked me to deputise, and one was the occasion of my mother's Cumbria Baroque Choir singing a Sunday Evensong during August. I will also accompany the latter choir at an E'song on Sat Nov 1st.

Best wishes,  
Ian

*Ian – the only possible response to this is a long & admiring PHEW! JB*





# The [National] Friends of Cathedral Music

...held their National Gathering in Blackburn in October, visiting not only Whalley Church and Abbey, but also rejoicing in the multitude of music-making which enlivens the very heart of Blackburn Cathedral's mission.

Some 120 cathedral music lovers came from all over this country and abroad, and they were treated to a galaxy of choral & organ music.

They included the distinguished President of the FCM, Dr. **Christopher Robinson**, CVO, CBE, seen here with the FCM's secretary, (left) **Peter Smith**,



The children were led by the dynamic **Jeff Borradaile**,



The Girls' Choir sang an exquisite Choral Evensong (Canticles by Dr. Robert Ashfield – former DoM Rochester Cathedral) and *The Lord is my Shepherd* by Kenneth Leighton.

After the **Dean** and **Richard Tanner** had welcomed chairman **Peter Toyne** from Liverpool, and all his members, we enjoyed a most remarkable concert – remarkable for its variety as well as for its enjoyment. The West end of the Cathedral was packed with junior school children from all over Blackburn.





At our grand piano, to accompany the school children, was our own **Joy Fielding**, who was attended by **Peter Jelley**, the Chapter member who is responsible for implementing here the Government's scheme to encourage singing in schools.

**Canon Hindley** welcomed everyone and the concert got under way – first with the massed children's choir singing a cluster of very rhythmic songs, some of them with actions, such as *What shall we do with the drunken sailor?*

These were greeted with tumultuous applause from the packed audience. (There was standing room only!)

Then our own *Lantern Voices* – a new choir made up of very young children – sang two songs. They were delightful.

They were followed by our own Girl- and Boy-choristers under the direction of

**Richard Tanner**

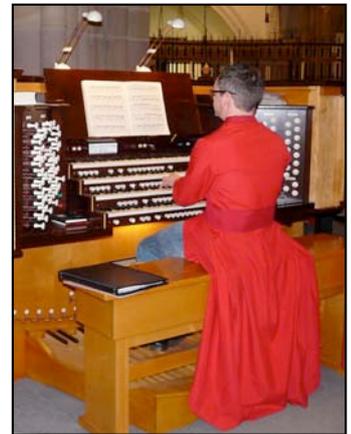
who sang Franck's *Panis Angelicus*, in two parts, followed by the ever-popular *Holy City*, whose ringing top Gs filled the whole cathedral with thrilling sounds.



And after the Widor the children sang again, followed by our own YPC directed by **James Davy**, who had waited for their turn very patiently.

**It was a glorious evening, which made a marvellous start to the visit by our distinguished and delightful guests from the Friends of Cathedral Music.**

*YPC men a-waiting!*



### DAY 2 of the FCM's Visit



Hardy souls travelled into Blackburn by 8.30 am to watch **Richard Tanner** lead his regular Saturday morning rehearsal for the boys. (Some Friends had to travel quite far, for there is a dearth of hotels in Blackburn!)



And then, after a refreshing cuppa coffee, they attended a riveting Choral Workshop in St. Wilfrid's School (a 20-minute walk from the cathedral) led by the FCM's President, Dr. **Christopher Robinson**, who is recognized as one of this country's leading choirmasters.

He was working with our **Renaissance Singers** and members of the **Manchester Chamber Choir**. What an inspiring time that was for singers and Friends alike! Three of the tips he gave us: (1) In warm-ups make sure your jaw is relaxed. (2) If your choir is singing flat, get them to open & lift their eyes. (3) If the sopranos fear an up-coming high note, get them to think of it as part of the sweep of a phrase, and especially the note *before* the high note.

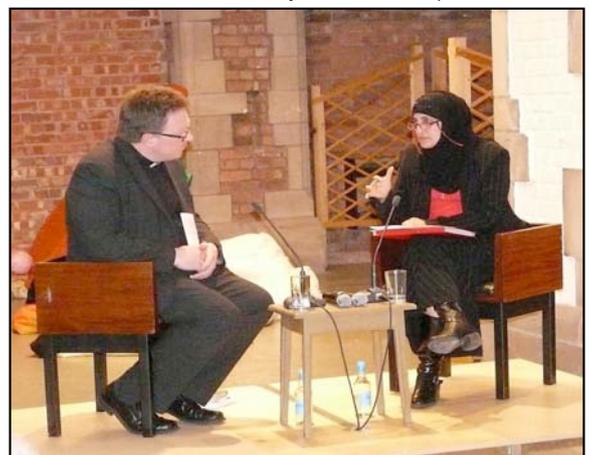
After lunch (Friends had to find their own from a shopping centre that was almost wholly demolished!), **Canon Chris**



**James Davy**

demonstrated our Kenneth Tickell chamber organ; Richard invited one of the children who played the piano to have-a-go on the little organ – which he did, and he brought down the house by his rhythmic skill!

This was followed by **David Scott-Thomas** playing Widor's ever popular *Toccata* which was very loud indeed – as the composer intended!



**Chivers** and **Ms. Anjum Anwar MBE**, led a dialogue in the crypt about the problems which we in Blackburn are facing.

'There's a stratum of our society,' commented Canon Chris, that will die fully 8 years before others. This is so worrying.' We now have 40 Mosques in Blackburn. Other

Cathedrals are asking for Chris and Anjum's input – including Peterborough, which has only two Mosques.

Many were the questions that the Friends asked of Anjum & Chris, both of whom were in top form.

After another thrilling Choral Evensong sung by the Choir of Boys and Men (*Howells' St. Paul's Service*) the Friends enjoyed their Festal Dinner in the Crypt.

It was good to welcome two distinguished guests & their spouses who recently retired as Cathedral Directors of Music:



Dr Alan & Mrs. Tina Thurlow from Chichester, seen chatting to the FCM's Chairman, Professor Peter Toyne from Liverpool.



and Dr. Christopher Robinson (L) with Mr. Peter Smith (FCM Secretary) enjoying the company of Mr. Terry & Dr Moya Duffy from Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral.

Resident and virtual resident guests at the dinner were, **Richard Tanner**, **Canon Andrew Hindley**, **James Atherton** and **Simon Vivian**, BBC producer, who is also Ben Tanner's Godfather.



It was your editor's privilege to be invited to be the guest

speaker at the end of the dinner.

His subject: '**Six Words and the Princeton Syndrome!**' Six words which help choirmasters to succeed (and which help us to live our lives successfully), and '**The Princeton Syndrome**' – well, ask him to give it again and he'll tell you what that means!



But he started his speech with a tribute to the outstanding music which **Richard, James and David** are giving us month after month after month. This was greeted with prolonged applause.

Dr. Robinson gave the vote of thanks so graciously and the evening came to a most happy end.

### DAY 3 of the FCM's Visit



Sunday morning Eucharist was surely the high point of the FCM's visit, for the combined cathedral choirs – Men and Boys, Girls and YPC, with professional soloists – sang Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, Haydn's *The Heavens are telling*, and RVW's *Old 100<sup>th</sup>* (it was his exact Centenary!) accompanied by the Northern Chamber Orchestra (*seen here is rehearsal*). *Photo Amanda Snape*



What a glorious sound they made! After the service the Dean gave a talk on the Cathedral Precinct Development – and this was followed by a delightful lunch.

**James Davy** gave us a splendid recital (ending with Vierne's *Carillon de Westminster*) and the choir of Men and Boys conducted by **Richard Tanner** sang yet another thrilling Choral Evensong (*Stanford in A*), at the end of which **Canon Hindley**, on behalf of the Dean, bade our guests a very grateful Farewell and then blessed us on our way.

Over a farewell cuppa tea in the crypt, the FCM Chairman, Professor Peter Toyne, was heard to comment, 'That was one of the best FCM weekends we've ever had!'

Well done, Blackburn, and showers of thanks and congratulations to the Dean & Canons, to Richard, James and David, and to the Virgers without whose work behind the scenes none of this would have been possible.

Blackburn is so grateful to the **Friends of Cathedral Music**, not only for their moral support, but also for their practical support. During recent years that have given £14,000 to Blackburn Cathedral's Music; It was with a grant from the FCM that the Friends of Blackburn Cathedral Music was able to start. The [National] Friends are most generous to other cathedrals as well – giving substantial grants to help their music programmes.



They have almost 4,000 members and last year they gave grants totalling £250,000 to Cathedrals. It was the greatest pleasure as well as the greatest joy to welcome them into our midst for this exciting and fulfilling weekend.

**Thank you!**