

Blackburn Cathedral Music & More £3 May 2009



Malta Messiah. See p. 20

A WELCOME ORGANIST OC

(But of course, EVERY Old Chorister is most welcome here!)

OC **Robert Fielding** opened the New Year's Wednesday lunchtime recitals with a superb programme which attracted a large and appreciative audience.

Starting with Byrd and continuing with Bach's Partita, *O Gott du frommer Gott*, he didn't touch the pedals for 25 minutes: a record for any recital here. But he more than made up for it with a dazzling performance of Widor's 9th Symphony to finish.



Robert's uncle Paul turned pages for him.

The audience was large not only because Robert is a superb organist (he's Director of Music at Romsey Abbey and runs courses for organists and choirmasters in the diocese of Salisbury) but also because he was supported by members of his prolific family – and by some other Old Choristers.



Back Row, Four Fieldings: Peter, son Robert, Gordon and Paul. Front: OCs Eric Bancroft and Allan Holden.

The Fielding family has had strong connections with Blackburn Parish Church and Cathedral for over two centuries. Paul finished his recital with a March by **Henry Smart**, requested by his Dad, Peter.

Smart was organist here from 1831-36. Almost certainly he would have known members of the Fielding family way back then. That's living history for you!



CHEQUE-MATE!

Rovers' managing director **Tom Finn** and Lancashire Football Association (LFA) Chief Executive **David Burgess** presented a cheque for £2,500 to Dean **Christopher Armstrong** for Blackburn Cathedral in January.



In his thanks the Dean said, 'We are extremely grateful to both Rovers and the LFA for this recognition and can't stress enough how the success of the football club is critical to the well-being of the town.'

'The Cathedral is developing a social cohesion programme called ExChange, which will encompass inter-faith work and community education, so the money will be a great help in sustaining and developing this project.'

'We co-operated with Blackburn Rovers for the *Anne Frank Exhibition* which attracted a record 13,000 visitors to the Cathedral, and we hope to further our relationship with the club in the years to come.'

BCOCA CHAPLAIN

OC The Revd. IAN HOLLIN

It was so very good to welcome Ian to his first BCOCA Committee meeting after Choral Evensong on 25th January for his cheerful smile radiated joy amongst us all.

Ian was a choirman here with Tom Duerden and JB – and then became ordained. Among the several posts he held in various parts of the country, his Precentorship of Exeter Cathedral fits him uniquely to exercise an active pastoral role amongst us.

And so the committee unanimously voted Ian to be BCOCA Chaplain. (He's already our Archives Master!)

Ian will hold himself in readiness for any Old Chorister who would like to chat about anything at all. His phone is 01772-749-806

His e-mail is

ianhollin@hotmail.co.uk

Welcome back, Ian!



Our Friend OC EDDIE HOWORTH by OC Allan Holden

A tribute given at our last year's BCOCA Reunion



**Eddie (L) and Allan in Eddie's home in the Isle of Wight
5 years ago after Eddie's long illness.**

I have, over the past few years, given Eddie Howorth's apologies for his absence at our Reunions due to his ill health. This year, however, it is for another reason for, as most of you already know, Eddie has joined the ranks of former Blackburn Old Choristers who have gone before us into our Lord's Kingdom. Our thoughts and condolences go to his wife Jan and family.

He will be sorely missed as he has been an active member of this Association from its inception over 40 years ago, and he was one of its keenest supporters.

I remember him travelling long distances to attend committee meeting when he was Senior Old Chorister in 1987.

1987 Edward Howorth

Eddie's name on our new Senior Old Choristers' Board

He joined the cathedral choir about 1942 and so began a long and happy relationship with some of us here today who were his contemporaries.



**Eddie's and Allan's names (with two other stalwart OCs)
on our Number One Prefects' Board in the Song School.**



We individually have our own memories of him when we were boys: for instance, playing football on the cathedral car park after morning service before being chased off by **Provost Kay**. We went to Blakey Moor School yard to finish the match, wearing our Eton suits. We would become embroiled in the heat of the battle, with Eddie always insisting that he played on the same side as **Peter Fielding**, otherwise he would risk going home limping with sore ankles!

He had a great sense of humour as some who were present at our Reunion weekends at Whalley Abbey will vouch for. These usually went into the early hours of Sunday morning when he and **Jack Smethurst** used to keep us in hysterics with samples of their joke repartees bouncing off each other continually. They would have done the Two Ronnies proud.



Besides our choir commitments we used to spend happy times visiting one another's houses and therefore acquaintances became seeds of sincere friendship, which still exist to this day. We all may live long distances from each other, but these Reunions bring us into contact again, and that is one of the wonderful aspects of being affiliated with BCOCA.

We should all be proud of being part of its fellowship and we should be eternally grateful to **John Bertalot** and **Peter Heald** and the other founder members for being such a force in its continuance, and for what it has become.

And so we have lost another valued member of our OC Fellowship, but as Christians it is a great consolation to know that Eddie has joined that wonderful group of former members of BCOCA whose voices are now linked together singing in our Lord's angel choir.

God bless them all for what they meant, and still mean to us.



Eddie Howorth

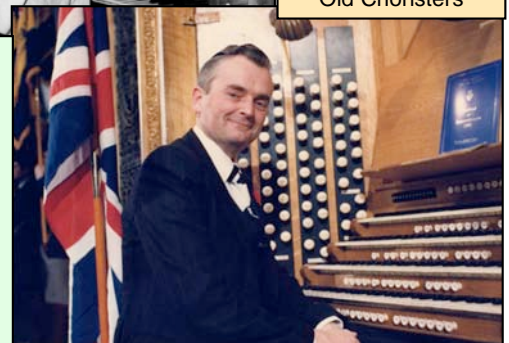
OC PAUL FIELDING'S IDEA of creating historic CDs of the Cathedral Choirs from years gone by, is a great success.



T. L. Duerden's choirs in **1948** and **1962** had their own incisive attack and commitment.

His boys of those days are now amongst our most honoured senior Old Choristers

Similarly the Cathedral Choir and the Blackburn Bach Choir in **1975** under **JB** made their own thrilling sounds.



The CDs are FREE – but a donation of at least £10 to BCOCA funds is requested. Paul has already accumulated £250. **Order your CDs from Paul now: 01254-249-085**

WE WELCOME a new Choirman!

Paul Wakefield, who joined the cathedral choir on 18th January, looked very much at home when your roving photographer met him in the men's vestry after Choral Evensong the following week. Clearly he has a great taste in literature!!

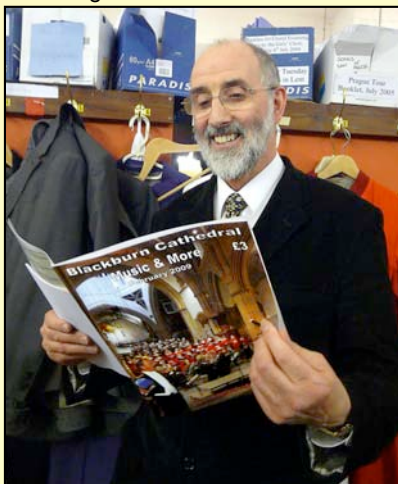
Paul is a retired Primary School teacher, and his home is near Middleton, Manchester. He joined the Manchester Cathedral Voluntary Choir when it was directed by **Gordon Stewart**, and left that choir recently after 27 years' service.

Paul said: My wife **Susan** is a Manchester girl, we met at Cardiff University and celebrate our 38th wedding anniversary this year.

We have three children: **Sally**, 34 who recently 'retired' from being a music teacher to have a son (our grandson **William**). Our other two children **Emily**, 32 and **Edward**, 29 both live in Birmingham. As for me it might be better not to mention I was brought up in Wolverhampton and am a lifelong supporter of Wolves – that might not go down to well with choristers who are Rovers supporters!

Paul's ready smile shows that he already enjoys the music and the abounding good fellowship of Blackburn Cathedral. Long may he be with us.

Welcome, Paul!



Have you fixed your summer holiday yet?

If not, consider spending a week or two by the beautiful Aegean Sea – in a luxurious apartment at very reasonable rates!



Senior Old chorister DAVID SMALLEY writes: "Alison and I first visited the Altinkum in Turkey in 1976 on our way round the classical sites of the Aegean, and we are now the proud owners of two apartments in Altinkum which could be available to readers of **Music & More**."

"Up to 12 people can be accommodated, so if anyone wants to plan a trip to Troy, Pergamum or Ephesus etc., or just laze on the beautiful beaches, get in touch to discuss options."

01254-812-439.

Discover what's on every week at the Cathedral
www.blackburncathedral.com/

From OC Dr. Simon Daniels in Newcassle on Tyne

This is **Iaiaian Thompson & me** outside **Chateau Daniels** before the Great North Run in October. Only one of us was running....maybe you can guess which?



From the Prefects' Board No. 2 in the Song School

Mum came across this weekend (she arrived literally seconds after the latest BCOCA mag hit the doormat) and



we both had a wonderful day singing Mozart's Requiem in a choir of 1000 under the stewardship of Simon Halsey at The Sage.

We had to rattle through the rehearsal, so there wasn't a lot of time in which to add any real finesse, but to perform with the Northern Sinfonia was a real honour.

I am singing the Requiem again later this year with Sophie (my daughter)'s school (Central High)...this is a Girls' school so Dads are needed for the Tenor & Bass parts. Sophie has the dubious honour of having both Dad & Grand-dad singing with her, and of being the only girl in year 8 to think that choir isn't totally un-cool. Clearly she can see how cool her Dad is & knows that choir didn't do him any harm!

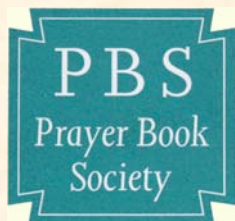
Best wishes to all in Blackburn and thanks for keeping us all up to date. I fancy myself as a bit of a photographer (I use the corridors of the surgery as my own personal gallery) so some photos will be winging there way to **David Smalley** for his NOTELET competition. [See p. 8]

Simon

Simon, terrific to hear from you – delighted that you're keeping healthy by running hither and thither (in a Northerly direction), and singing, and that Iaiaian came to see you. Your Mum hasn't changed since those far-off days when you were a chorister here 30 years ago! JB

Prayer

O God, who became as we are,
may we become as you are.
William Blake, 1757-1827



ALL ARE WELCOME AT OUR
FESTIVAL OF TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL
Saturday 9th May 2009

11.00 a.m. – Choral Holy Communion
Celebrant: The Bishop of Blackburn
Preacher: The Dean of Westminster

2.10 p.m. – Guest Speaker
Dr. Keith Hamnett (Edge Hill University)

3.30 p.m. – Cathedral Choral Evensong
Services sung by Octavius Singers

Come to any part or the whole of the day free-of-charge.
A chargeable buffet lunch (with wine) is available at 12.30 p.m.

Tickets for lunch **MUST** be pre-booked (£8 each)
Telephone 01772 821676
Fax 01772 259340

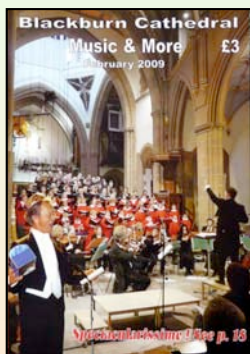
From **MICHAEL BARRY**
Editor of the national magazine for all UK
Cathedral Old Choristers: **Once A Chorister**
(OAC)

Dear John - another spectacular issue of Music & More (Feb 09)! It puts all others to shame and is such a good read!

I am just putting the finishing touches to this year's OAC mag. and wondered if I could use the splendid photo on your front cover (Rutter's *Three Kings* with Stephen Varcoe à3)? If I am allowed, to whom should it be credited?

I might include it near the Blackburn Article, or freestanding with a reference to the Blackburn article, and if Winchester don't come up with a suitable photo (they are the main contributors this year) it could well be the whole A4 back cover.

With all good wishes,
Michael



Yes, it was your editor's photograph, but he moved soloist Stephen Varcoe from his position on the right side of the stage to the left! Such are the marvels of Photoshop! JB

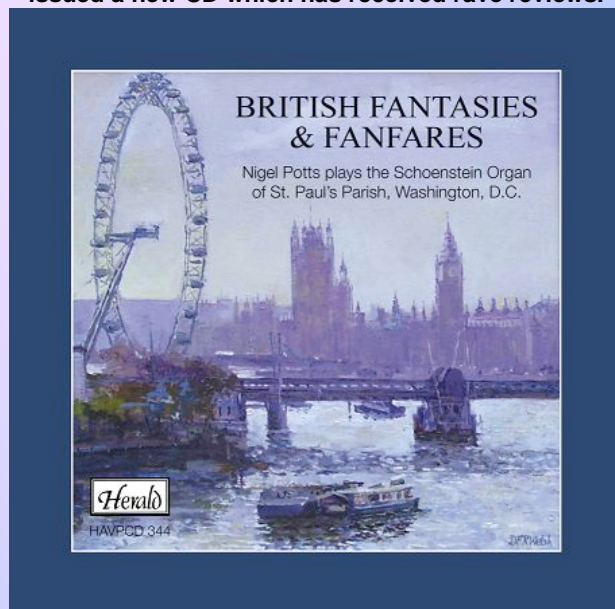
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Send your news, with JPEG photographs, to
The Editor, Dr John Bertalot,
john@bertalot.org

Former Organ Scholar NIGEL POTTS

who is now organist of a church in New York, has just issued a new CD which has received rave reviews.



- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| Fanfare | John Cook |
| Rhapsody, Op. 17, No. 1 | Herbert Howells |
| Fantasia Choral, No. 1 in D flat | Percy Whitlock |
| Wedding March for Organ | York Bowen |
| Melody in G minor | York Bowen |
| Fantasia, Op. 136 | York Bowen |
| Evening Song | Sir Edward Bairstow |
| Saraband for any 3 rd October | Paul Spicer |
| Fanfares and Dances | Paul Spicer |
| Nimrod from Enigma Variations, Op.36 | Sir Edward Elgar |
| Orb and Sceptre (Coronation 1953) | Sir William Walton |

The CD can be ordered at www.heraldav.co.uk
This looks terrific! Well done, Nigel.

From an Anonymous Lady in the South of England

My dear John,

Thank you so much for another fabulous edition of Music and More. As always bright colourful pictures with interesting and readable prose. There is always plenty to comment on and I am so glad you are able to get around to so many important events.

In the midst of all the musical reports and photographs I was fascinated to read about your **Candid Camera!** We are getting so many different 'gizmos' in our church that I cannot keep up with them.



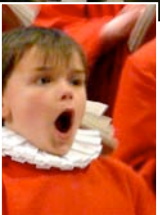
Except for the Prayer Book services we have everything on a screen and the sermons are lavishly illustrated with pictures and script which are moved around as required using 'song pro' etc. To enter the parish office when the administrator is alone in the buildings one has to ring the bell and if she likes the look of you on her television monitor she will let you in. I like the idea of the 'voice of God' ringing out from the cathedral!

How lovely that you were able to present your grandfather's silver tray to the Cathedral. It reminded me that my father's cousin, **Norman Ham**, was **Borough Treasurer of Blackburn**. I am not sure when he retired but I suppose it would be around 50 years ago.

Thank you, dear friend – I've kept your letter anonymous for I wouldn't like you to get into trouble with your Vicar! JB.

The Best Messiah yet

It is difficult, even for your editor, to run out of superlatives but, really, the performance given by the combined choirs of Blackburn Cathedral – boys, girls, men, the Young People's Choir and the Renaissance Singers – by four superb soloists accompanied by CANZONA playing period instruments and led by Theresa Caudle, was the most bestest that we have heard, thanks to meticulous preparation and inspired direction by RICHARD TANNER.



The attacks were precise, the dynamics were so expressive, every chorister, from youngest to most experienced, sang every note with supreme confidence, and the whole spirit of the performance was one of continuous delight. And the message of the Gospel shone forth strongly throughout the 2½-hour performance.

But before it began there was a Reception in the North Transept for Sponsors and Friends who, through their generosity, enabled this concert to take place.



Among the first to arrive were (L-R) Claire & Garry Wilde, Francis Glare & Graham Pilkington...



followed by Andrew Dewhurst of Maple Grove Development, Tina Pilkington, Emma Dewhurst & Stephen James.



It was a special joy to see two Blackburn Old Choristers – (R) Gary Wignall, and centre, Tom and Joy Wilkinson. Gary was head chorister in 1954, and Tom in 1956! Tom and Joy would be celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary two weeks later. **Congratulations.**

Handing round canapés was Stephen England, step-son of our new Cathedral Caterer, Amanda McCreadie. (P. 11)

The refreshments were outstanding – they included strawberry confections, miniature glasses of melon soup, easily handled paper cups of fish and chips, sausages on sticks – and more – and, of course, wine.



And how good it was to see retired judge Brian Duckworth again, now fully recovered from his operation. ('I'm so proud of him', confided his wife Carolyn to your editor.) Brian was enjoying the company of Sheila Walker, Joe Prest and BCOCA Vice Chairman Eric Bancroft.



Canon Hindley welcomed a smiling Susan Hughes, and Ron & Doreen Gent. ('I'm a Gent', said Ron.)

Not only did the singers sing, but some of them, especially members of the Young People's Choir and the Head Chorister, also welcomed guests with plates of appetizing canapés.



The **Bishop of Lancaster** and **Mrs. Pearson** were hemmed in by smartly dressed young men who were sure that their wares would be snapped up. (L: **Head Chorister Barry Hudson-Taylor** and YPC member **Adam Whittaker**.) They were...snapped up!

Seated in the audience we saw OC **Jack Holland & Connie**, and members of their family. Jack was a leading alto in JB's time, and he is a dogs expert – so much so that he was invited to be a judge at Crufts, but alas, ill health prevented him from accepting. But he looked great that night!



A few rows further back was OC **Chris Hunwick** with his wife **Geraldine**, and Chris's Granddad, **Bill Livesey**. *Photo below.* Chris's dad was singing tenor in the choir.

Chris is, of course, Archivist to the Duke of Northumberland, and his younger brother, **Noel**, who is half-owner of INAMO Restaurant in Wardour Street, London, recently welcomed our former Dean's Virger, **Howard Waddell** to dinner at INAMO...



...Howard, who is now Head Verger at Chichester Cathedral, had brought a guest to INAMO with him that evening – Ms. **Patricia Routledge** who lives in Chichester!

After a warm welcome from **The Dean**, who paid special tribute to **MAPLE GROVE** and to our other sponsors, the large audience was all set for a wonderful evening of music.



Yes, we are so very grateful to our Sponsors and Friends.

Thank you!

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DEVELOPMENTS



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OF BLACKBURN
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supermarkets

The Renaissance Singers



Fraser EAGLE Group

The soloists lined up in the crypt for a compulsory photo:

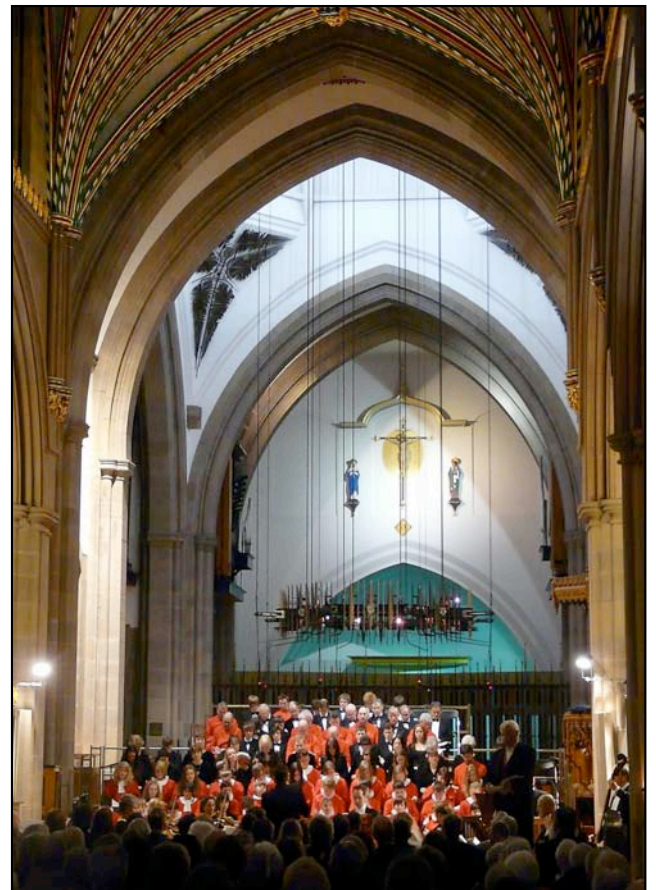


With **Richard Tanner** were (L-R) Counter-tenor **Henry Jones**, former chorister and choral scholar of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

Tenor **James Atherton** – former Blackburn Chorister with our late DoM **David Cooper**, and now a lay clerk in the choir of Gloucester Cathedral. (He sang most of his solos from memory – an impressive feat!)

Our own **Philippa Hyde** who radiates joy with every note she sings. She is such a delight for ear and for eye, and

Bass **Mark Rowlinson** who, among many other musical 'troughies', was chosen to sing the baritone solos in the *War Requiem* for Benjamin Britten's Memorial Concert in London.



The whole evening was a musical and logistical triumph.

Thank you, ALL, so very much.

Fotographers Phorward!

This announcement was inadvertently omitted from the mailing to some Friends in February, so this is a second chance for all those who did receive this notice! *Go for it!*

Our Senior Old Chorister, DAVID SMALLEY, has come up with a great way to raise funds for BCOCA – which is fun, creative and functional.

He proposes printing sets of 12 Notelets with photographs on the front covers taken by readers of *MUSIC & MORE!*
Pastoral photos, great views, flowers ... whatever!

Entry fee is £5.00 for up to 5 photos, and David will judge the best 12 photos himself.

Mail your £5.00 cheque, made out to **D. Smalley** to David Smalley at
14 Branch Rd.,
Mellor Brook,
Blackburn BB2 7NU

**Queries to David at
01254-812-439**



Photographers may send up to **FIVE** digital photos each, sent **ON LINE, JPEG** quality, to David Smalley at

davidsmalley100@hotmail.com

Include the place and your name so that they may be reproduced on the notelet:

“Lake District by John Smith”

Do NOT send prints, please.

The best 12 photographers will be rewarded with a free set of 12 notelets, and the top 3 photos will be reproduced in the August edition of *Music & More.*



If all the Notelets are sold we could make several £100s for the Blackburn Cathedral Old Choristers' Association. The Association exists to foster chorister fellowship and to help the choirs' programme of Blackburn Cathedral financially – so this is a Good Cause, well worth supporting!

NEW CLOSING DATE: JUNE 1st so get snapping!

Here are two photos submitted by an early entrant



Sunrise over Mellor



Sheep may safely graze

From Stephen Connolly, Bass with the King's Singers

Exciting Course for Singers

I'm writing to inform you of a new and exciting Singing Course I have recently founded and will be directing.

It is an international summer school for young singers with a *Cappella* choral singing as its emphasis. This year's course is based in beautiful Devon at Exeter Cathedral and its Choir School.

We are expecting a wonderful week of choral singing with an international line up of participants from around Europe and beyond working at a high level of music making

I expect that this opportunity will appeal to many of Blackburn's old choristers and I would be more than happy if you could send this mail and link around your membership and indeed to any young singers you might think would benefit from such an experience

Please find below the link to the Web site and for this year's International [A Cappella School Course](http://www.international-acappella-school.webeden.co.uk) taking place in August 09.

www.international-acappella-school.webeden.co.uk

Enjoy the Web site!

Best wishes

Stephen Connolly. e mail: ks6bass@aol.co.uk

What about it, Young Old Choristers? Over to you!



JONATHAN TURNER

our 2005-06 organ scholar
and now in his last year as organ scholar of
Lincoln College, Oxford, has been
appointed Organ Scholar of Southwell Minster.



Dear John,

I auditioned at Southwell on Tuesday 13th January, playing Bach's G major Prelude and Fugue (BWV 541) and the Finale from Vierne Symphony No. 1. **Paul Hale** (the Director of Music) also got me to do various tests including improvisation, transposition, sight-reading and psalm accompaniment. I also had to take a short rehearsal of the boys when I went through Naylor's *Vox Dicentis*, which they seemed to enjoy!

Both Paul and **Philip White-Jones** (the assistant) were lovely and the interviews were pleasantly relaxed. Having already been to Canterbury and Guildford I'd built up a bit of experience, but one is still never sure in such situations.

Anyway, by the end of the day all the candidates were called to the Deanery, where we had tea whilst the Dean, Paul and Philip came to a decision. In many ways that was the worst part!

I was called through by Philip, at which point a decision still hadn't been finalized. We chatted once more and after the Dean had read my C.V. and Paul and Philip were sure they had enough to keep me busy with over the course of the year, they offered me the job. I was delighted, and obviously accepted the position.

There is still plenty of room for me to improve and I was convinced Southwell would be a wonderful place in which to learn. The choir is excellent and both Paul and Philip are extremely talented musicians. I am particularly looking forward to spending some time on a tracker action instrument as well as working on the FRCO paperwork with Paul.

I'm also very grateful to **Richard, Greg and James** who provided me with references and advice along the way!

If you need any more details just let me know, and feel free to cut it down as necessary - I thought it best to give you a full overview...

I hope all's well with you and many thanks for yet another wonderful edition of *'Music and More'*. It's nice to keep up-to-date with events I've missed in Blackburn.

All the best,
Jonathan

Heartiest congratulations, Jonathan. Southwell Minster is a most beautiful cathedral with two superb organs, and Paul Hale is an inspirational director of music. And, of course, our very own James Davy was organ scholar there. Philip White-Jones was organ scholar at my Cambridge College before going on to Winchester. So you are the latest in a line of most distinguished musicians in that bless-ed place. JB

From OC FRANK HARE near Malvern

Hi John

Great magazine again. I love the pictures, including the ghost [of Olivier Messiaen]!

On reading about the **African Sanctus** and **David Fanshawe**, I am reminded that I sang at his wedding in Romsey Abbey around 1970. He asked the Romsey Singers (I was second tenor), similar to your JB choir, to provide 8 voices to sing a part-song he had written, which was to be sung to his new bride.

She sat on a stool in between the choir stalls and we sang to her a very strange item, which had no libretto apart from strong words which did not make sense. Long phrases like "greeeeeeeeeeen". Weird.

The small ensemble went to a house to rehearse next to his wife-to-be's parents. When we arrived, there were a lot of high falsetto sounds coming from the study. There we found DF still writing the score making all of this noise. One lady singer said when she heard it, "I want to go home". However it all went well. DF conducted it from the front pew of the nave.

We also sang "Love is sickness full of woe" by Moeran. There is a moral there somewhere.

We all trooped off to his reception too. I was mad because I missed my first ever FA Cup Final.

I heard African Sanctus on Radio 3 when it first came out, whilst I was motoring to give a talk to the Southport Scientific Society (they asked me back so I must have said something right). The "Our Father" knocked me out then and still does. I want the Sanctus on my "Desert Island Discs" when asked, to wake me up in the morning. Brilliant piece. Those drums - wow!

There we are. What an odd story, but as vivid as ever in my mind.

Love to all

Frank

Thanks Frank a great story! JB

A BIG WELCOME TO AMANDA McCREADIE our new head chef

Amanda, who began her career at the Dunkenhalgh, near Blackburn, when she was only 14 ('It was privately owned in those days,' said Amanda. 'It's a 700 year-old building with original turrets and porticos, and now it has 175 en suite rooms,') and had also worked at Gleneagles, which is a luxury 5 star hotel resort set within its own estate in Perthshire, and then worked for a Relief agency in Lancashire, is now transforming our Café in the Crypt to provide us with delicious lunches throughout the week, and also to cater for the hundreds of guests who attend our concerts.

She showed herself to be fully in charge at our recent *Messiah* concert – providing delicious canapés – see pp 6-7 – not only for Friends in the North transept, but also for our other guests in the crypt.

It was a *tour de force*.

'I have a son, Barry, who is 5,' added Amanda, 'and we have a most helpful staff here, including **Steven Wrightson**, and many willing volunteers from the congregation.'



Amanda with head server (in both senses!) **Richard Robb.**
Welcome, Amanda!

Music & More and More & More !

We are so grateful to readers who are sending generous contributions to Music & More to help us keep this publication going.

More cheques will be very welcome, please, made out to **The Friends of Blackburn Cathedral Music** with '*Music and More*' noted on the cheque.

Mailed to the Bursar, Cathedral Close, Blackburn BB1 5AA
Thank you again!

Congratulations to Richard Tanner, Greg Morris and David Briggs, yet again...

... for they have received rave reviews for their recording of David Briggs' organ concerto and Requiem which they made three years ago here in Blackburn Cathedral.

The reviews are published in the February 2009 edition of THE AMERICAN ORGANIST, which goes to its 3,000 members in the USA and throughout the rest of the world.



Order these recordings on line from David at
www.david-briggs.org.uk

The reviewer writes of the Requiem: *It is evocative, mystical and compelling. The vocal ensemble Euphony, founded by Richard Tanner, is described by Mr. Briggs as 'truly a dream choir'. With vocal purity, fine blend, vitality of sound, excellent diction, and sensitivity of dynamics and phrasing, they render the luscious and sometimes complex harmonies and melodies of this music with artistry and conviction.*

Greg Morris is a skilled collaborator in the Requiem, and a brilliant soloist in the Organ concerto. This fine work can proudly take its place alongside the many other recent and established works of this genre.



Richard Tanner, David Briggs and Greg Morris about to record David's organ concerto in 2005

The American reviewer was equally loud in his praise of David Briggs's THE ART OF ORGAN TRANSCRIPTION, which he also recorded on the Blackburn organ:

David Briggs provides stunning performances of his own transcriptions of two beloved orchestral works: Schubert's 'Unfinished' Symphony and Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony.

The Blackburn organ is a thoroughly modern instrument, well endowed with color, brilliance and power; capable of a wide dynamic range ... (The performance) is pure exhilaration.

Well done indeed, David, Richard & Greg! JB

'Called to Serve'

Canon Sue Penfold
is making her mark in the Diocese

On 31 January the Cathedral hosted the annual service to mark the achievements of those who have completed diocesan lay training courses, which included certificates presented to each participant by the Bishop. Their leaders are:



L-R: Judith Smith, Director: **'Called to Serve'**
Alison Parker, Director: **'Called to Serve'** for the North Lancashire District Methodist Church
Rev. David Wood, Acting chair of District for the North Lancashire Methodist Church
Rev. Ann Wren, Director: **'God our Rock'**
Canon Sue Penfold, Diocesan Director of Ministry
Angela Lee, Director: **'A Faith to Live By'**.

There was a lovely atmosphere as the Dean, Bishop Nicholas and the large congregation shared in worship ...



... which included a mime with movement and music:
Short scenes were acted out showing how a Christian can be raised in the Faith from baptism through confirmation. A translucent flag was waved over each scene representing the work of the Holy Spirit. It was moving and most expressive.



The singing of prayers was led by two pupils from St. George's School, Blackpool:



L-R: Rachel Morris and Kayah Reddy, and their teacher, Mrs. Lindsay Meechin.

This year was extra-special, as it marked the completion of the first year of the new course, **'Called to Serve'** which is run jointly with the Methodist Church in Lancashire, so we had the joy of ecumenical participation. The service included short talks from some of the participants about how their studies had enriched their lives, and afterwards there was enthusiasm for starting courses in some new parishes next September.



Bishop Nicholas gives a certificate, watched by Canon Sue, Ann Wren and Jacqui Mallinson (Course Administrator).

None of those involved was yet from the Cathedral congregation – how about changing that for next year?

Phone Canon Sue Penfold, 01254 503085, or contact ministry@blackburn.anglican.org

OC DAVID METCALF

It was with sorrow that we learned of the death of DAVID METCALF in February. David was a long-time tenor in Blackburn Cathedral choir during JB's and Provost Jackson's tenure, and was also our efficient choir secretary.

He was an enthusiastic member of BCOCA and helped to organise car treasure hunts and 'safari' dinners, when we went from house to house for starters, main course and dessert. These events were such fun.

His home was in Preston, and he was, until ill health prevented him, a faithful attendee at our BCOCA Annual Reunions.

David also sang for our two recital tours of Holland and North Germany, and was firmly supported by his wife, Eva, to whom we send our deepest sympathy.

David's family have asked that those who would like to send a gift in his memory should do so to **Rosemere Cancer Foundation, c/o Oakenhurst, Station Road, Kirkham, PR4 2HA.** Thank you.



From Dr. May Papastephanou – a former JB choirparent at Trinity Episcopal Church, Princeton NJ, USA

Dear John,

I am writing to thank you for sending us the latest copy of your spectacular **Music and More** magazine. I don't think I should call it a magazine as it is so beautifully produced that it is more like a book. The photos are beautiful and the articles so interesting. Even though I don't know any of the people mentioned I enjoy reading everything.

And it is so nice that you write about parts of cathedral life other than the music, like the receptionists and Virgers.

What a wonderful gesture to give your treasured family silver tray to the cathedral. I wish we had a tray to carry the Communion vessels from the sacristy to the altar at Trinity. Just this morning we had an e-mail from the Altar Guild directress admonishing us to carry only two things at a time to and from the sacristy as so many vessels have been dropped and dented recently!

Your Christmas Spectacular and Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols looked - spectacular. How wonderful to be able to attend things like that. Do people have to make reservations to get a seat?

With love from us both, **May**

Thank you so much, May. Yes, folk do have to book for our major concerts, but a few manage to squeeze in if they come early enough! JB



Mrs. Mildred Sleight (née Whiteside)

who was a founder-member of the Blackburn Bach Choir (now, The Renaissance Singers) told your editor that the choir which she now accompanies in Scunthorpe had won the BBC's **Choir of the Year** last December.

• **Heartiest congratulations!**

Millie wrote: *The event was held at the Royal Festival Hall and there was great excitement as we boarded our buses at 6.00 am, and, of course, even more jubilation when we were chosen the overall winners. The choir is now in the middle of rehearsals for our production of Britten's Noye's Fludde.*

Millie ends her letter by saying that she is about to become a grandmother! Your editor still thinks of her in her mid 20s when the choir first rehearsed in the Song School in 1965! (Photo of Millie taken around 1968.)

2 Motorbikes in South America!

In January OC Steve Holmes and his friend Pete Sandford shipped a pair of 1940s Norton 500 motorbikes to Buenos Aires in Argentina for an eight week adventure retracing the trip made by Che Guevara and Alberto Granado in 1952 and which was later featured in the movie *The Motorcycle Diaries*.



Pete (L) and Steve before they set out.

Steve writes: We've managed to find two Norton Model 18 bikes, exactly like the one used by Che and Alberto. Whereas their bikes only made it as far as Santiago in Chile (about one third of the trip), we're hoping to make it the whole of the way on our bikes. I hadn't realised that these particular bikes were produced for only a year or so either side of WWII so there really aren't many around. Finding Osama Bin Laden might have been easier but we got there in the end!

We'll be trying to stay faithful to the route that Che & Alberto followed and seeing what's changed since 1952. Both Che and Alberto had their diaries of the trip published so there's quite a lot of information available.

It was the poverty, hunger, suffering and injustice that Che saw on this journey which made him decide that the route out of the oppression of the Latin American people would have to be by armed struggle.

The route takes us from Argentina to Venezuela via Chile, Peru and Colombia. We'll be travelling alone, camping, sleeping outdoors and also staying with locals.

1973 Stephen Holmes

Steve: You are amazing!

May you return full of exciting accounts to share with us. JB

Heartiest Congratulations to

Peter Fielding and his chorister nephew William who played the lunchtime concert on March 4th.

The Fielding clan is amazing (see page 2). They've been connected musically with the cathedral for some 200 years when it was the old parish church.



Peter played works by Bach, Beethoven and Chopin, then ended his recital by playing a Schubert March duet with William.

The large audience of nearly 100 gave them a well-deserved ovation!

[Full page photo Music Outreach Project]

Music Outreach Project Concert

The Cathedral Nave was crammed full of singing children and their attentive, admiring parents on Saturday 7th March (see *photo opposite*) for another display of musical talents from local schools:

**Benjamin Hargreaves C of E Primary, Accrington,
St. Andrew's C of E Primary, Oswaldtwistle,
St. Anne and St Joseph's RC School, Accrington,
Moor End Community Primary, Oswaldtwistle, and
St. James's RC School, Blackburn**

This scheme – to bring singing back into our schools – is financed by the government, and led by energetic and inspiring conductors.

The photo opposite shows **Gill Fourie** and **Jeff Borradaile** leading the singing of the five schools, with our own cathedral choristers at the far end awaiting their turn to sing.



Lantern Voices is a choir made up of younger children – they rehearse once a week in the cathedral led by Joy and Jeff, and they enjoy every minute of it. *See our cathedral website for more details: www.blackburncathedral.com*

And we've never seen adults sit so still for 60 minutes! They drank in every note their children were singing, and some even recorded the concert on their mobile phones!



The energy shown by these young people, not only the children, but also their conductors, was amazing.



Then came the turn of **Richard Tanner** and **James Davy**, who explained the cathedral organ to them, and invited the children to blow into some organ pipes!



Our own **David Scott-Thomas** (L) not only conducted, along with our own **Joy Fielding** and **Jeff Borradaile**,



David also accompanied the children most rhythmically on our grand piano – watched by **Peter Jelley**, a member of our Cathedral Chapter, whose responsibility it is to coordinate the Government's music initiative here in Lancashire.

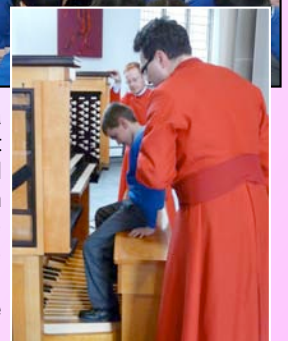
Judging from the turn-out that day, he's doing a great job!

After the five choirs had sung their first four songs, our own Cathedral **Lantern Voices** sang to us, conducted by the irrepressible Jeff.



But then Richard asked for a volunteer to play the 32ft Serpent stop, and a young lad called James played the bottom C (technically CCCC). The children were amazed at the 'grumbling' sound it made!

And then he asked if anyone played the piano, and 'Rebecca'



came forward and played "Twinkle, twinkle little star," with one finger on the Positive – which sounded delightful.

After that our own **James Davy** let rip with a Purcell Trumpet Tune ending with full organ and over-drive.

Who knows what musical seeds may have been sown by these close encounters with our magnificent cathedral organ.



And finally came the turn of our own cathedral choristers whose voices filled the cathedral – with César Franck's *Panis Angelicus*, and John Rutter's ever popular *For the beauty of the earth*.



The next MOP Concert will be in Blackburn Cathedral on Saturday June 13th at 11.30 am. Don't miss it!

But that was not the only event in the cathedral that morning.

In the crypt was a cake sale in aid of the shortfall of the expenses of the choirs' singing visit to Malta.

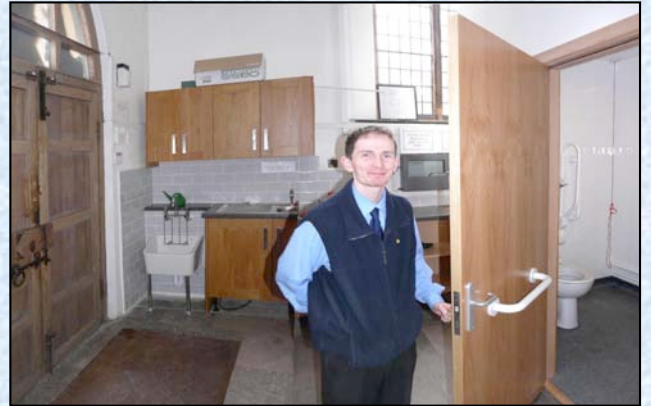


L-R: Choirparents Amanda Snape, Jackie Schilz, Siobhian Phillips and Chorister Jack Aspinall. They made well over £100 that morning. Well done!

New Loo

There's always something new in our Cathedral!

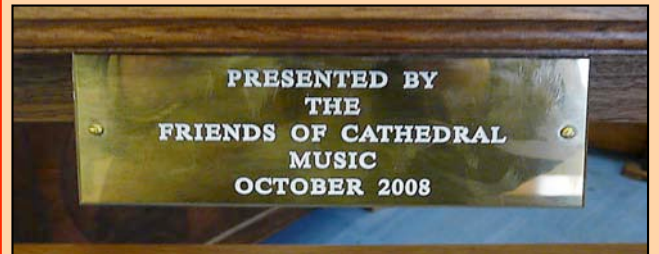
Dean's Virger **Mark Pickering** showed your staff photographer the sparkling New Loo, which has very recently been installed in the South Nave Porch. How convenient!



We are so grateful

to the (National) Friends of Cathedral Music

who have donated four new music desks for the Song School at £500 each. We have so many singers these days that these extra desks were urgently needed.



It was so good to welcome the **FCM** to Blackburn Cathedral last year for a weekend of music-making. They do a wonderful job throughout the UK to help and encourage cathedral choirs; these new music desks are their most recent gifts to us. **THANK YOU!**



The 2009 (National) Friends of Cathedral Music Magazine

included a 'rave' write-up of their visit to Blackburn last October. Headed '**Blackburn pulled out all the stops**' with an illustration of a

Serpent (our pedal 32ft reed is called 'Serpent' and is world-famous!), the review began: *What a wonderful weekend it was way back in October – Blackburn really pulled out all the stops for us. All credit to Richard Tanner and the music staff and to Diocesan Representative Dudley Green for so efficiently carrying through his original inspiration... the tour de force [on Friday] evening was a popular concert illustrating some of the range of Blackburn's music, from Jeff Borradaile with an unbelievably enthusiastic choir of 50 primary school children, to the cathedral choirboys performing the old tear-jerker, The Holy City... Richard Tanner's Saturday morning rehearsal with the boys did not waste a moment... Canon Hindley's depth of knowledge and entertaining comments about the cathedral were so refreshing. At the end of the festal dinner we were regaled by a series of choir stories from John Bertalot, the father of Blackburn's musical reputation. I was overwhelmed by Mozart's Coronation Mass with orchestra [on Sunday morning]... What a wonderful weekend indeed!*

Yes we can: doing faith like JAZZ in the age of Obama

*Canon
Chris
Chivers
relates how
he took a
unique trip
in order to
prepare for
his William
Temple
Lecture in
Blackburn
Cathedral
in January.*



A call from several African newspapers late in November 2008, asking me if I would consider covering the Presidential Inauguration in the US in January 2009 – if Barack Obama won! – set in motion a train of possibilities and events which eventually saw me standing in the coldest temperatures I've ever endured, wearing two jumpers and three pairs of socks, typing a report on my Blackberry just one hundred feet away from the podium at which President Obama gave his Inaugural address.



A priest who moonlights as a journalist – or is it a journalist who moonlights as a priest?! – is an odd species. But a species that seems to open some unexpected doors, perhaps because I take an angle on events which is different from that of your normal hack!

I'd written a piece about Obama for a South African newspaper just after I'd met him briefly early in 2007, and just before he'd declared himself a candidate for the presidency. Someone noticed this in the Obama campaign and I got put on the email list. This in itself was fascinating as it meant that I was able to follow – almost daily – developments as they happened.

I soon began to sense that there was something extraordinary about the way in which this grass-roots activist turned lawyer turned politician was galvanising young people as the life-blood of his 'yes we can' campaign. And this realisation was the genesis of the lecture I gave two years later in which I argued that the churches can learn directly from the style and approach which saw the unimaginable become a reality [for the full text of the lecture go to the [exChange](http://www.blackburncathedral.com) page at www.blackburncathedral.com].

I read voraciously everything that Obama had written himself – and every speech he gave. I read almost everything that was written about him in book form – and a good many articles

besides. And with this background framework in place I ventured to the US ahead of the inauguration determined to check out my hunches – these became five 'golden threads' as I referred to them in my lecture.

I wish that I had had chance to go to down-town Chicago, to the church that President Obama attended when he worked there, and to see the projects he animated and assisted in the poorest neighbourhoods. But I couldn't fit this detour into a schedule which took me instead to the Boston area – to rich Harvard and Cambridge, as well as black down-town Boston – to New York to explore similar contrasts, to Philadelphia – with its large black community, and finally to Washington – which as well as being the legislative capital, actually has the largest percentage of black population in the US.

I was deliberately approaching the Obama phenomenon from the black perspective – he was after all about to become the first African-American in history to be US President. I wanted to know the hopes and aspirations of black America. But – in relation to the lecture – equally, I wanted to know why so many young people of all colours had been energised by his vision of renewal and hope.

I wrote six 'op ed' articles – variously published in Cape Times, Cape Argus and the Church of England Newspaper – as well as gathering data for a live broadcast on the BBC's Daily Service – rehearsal at 3am US time, broadcast at 4.45am US time! – the morning after the Inauguration. I kept a radio diary for BBC Radio Lancashire which they aired in five pieces during Brett Emerton's afternoon show the week after my return, sent pieces back for the Lancashire Evening Post and Lancashire Telegraph, and interviewed various people in connection with the Temple Lecture I gave in our cathedral on January 28th.

Of course, the Inauguration events were stunning. Five hours in the cold was more than worth it for the Inauguration itself. The concert at the Lincoln Memorial was memorable, not least for the way in which the only protesters present (a vociferous group of anti-gay 'Christians') were heckled into silence by thousands around them. The Inaugural Prayer Service – which I attended following vast intakes of caffeine after my early morning BBC start – was quite simply one of the very best liturgies I've had the privilege to worship within for a very long time.

But the moments I'll most remember are the times I spent with a group of teenagers at the [Liberty Bell and inside Independence Hall in Philadelphia](#); with a dreamy-eyed, idealistic group of rowers at Harvard; with a group of young people at the Kennedy graves in Arlington Cemetery, and with a priest-friend at the Kennedy Library in Boston.



For it was through these encounters that I gained a real understanding of US identity, of what's best about the American psyche, its values and aspirations.

All of this found its way into the six articles which are available on the same page of the cathedral website as the lecture. What was said to me – the amazing insights I gained from ordinary Americans about their concerns and about their faith in God – will, I'm sure, always be with me.

And whatever happens in the Obama presidency – and my goodness he's got as tough an agenda to face as any recent US President – I shall always be able to say that I was there, and that I have the t-shirt to prove it!

Canon Chivers' Obama-related writings will be published in a short book later this year – see www.blackburncathedral.com

TWOSIDES ONESTORY

Guantanamo Bay from both sides of the wire

Undoubtedly one of the highlights of Holy Week 2008 was the occasion when former Guantanamo Bay detainee, **Moazzam Begg** was in dialogue with **Anjum Anwar** MBE, Canon **Chris Chivers** and our Holy Week Preacher from the US, Canon **Michael Hunn**.

So well-attended – and so moving – was that event, in a week when the focus falls on history's most celebrated political prisoner, that when **exChange** had the opportunity to have Moazzam Begg back again, they jumped at it; especially so, as they learnt that he was to be accompanied by another fellow detainee, **Umar Deghayes**, and a US former Guantanamo guard, **Chris Arendt**.

Chaired by Ms Anwar, who had worked so hard to attract such a large audience, and Canon Chivers, each participant gave an account of their experience of Guantanamo.



To hear of the abusive behaviour endured, the inexplicable detentions of so many people, the harrowing stories of often very young detainees so consistently isolated and abused, clearly stunned many who were there.

One member of the audience was so sickened by what he heard that he nearly walked out.

Though most had perhaps read stories in the press or seen accounts on television, there is of course something powerful about direct testimony. It felt, as Canon Chivers suggested, that 'we were on holy ground'. This was particularly true when it came to Chris Arendt's testimony, for though we have of course heard from prisoners quite often we had never before heard from a former guard.



Detainee Umar Deghayes, Canon Chivers, Detainee Moazzam Begg, Guard Chris Arendt & Ms. Anwar

Chris went to Guantanamo when he was 17. (He's only in his mid '20s now.) He had originally volunteered for the US National Guard to earn money for college, but found himself sucked into being a very different guard.

Facing the reality of this some years later was clearly painful. Finding himself caught up on the oppressive side of history, finding himself part of a system that was denying people basic human rights had certainly taken its toll on him. He spoke with an honesty that 'won hearts and minds' – if it is possible to redeem a phrase so often associated with US foreign policy in Iraq.



Former Guantanamo Detainee (L) interviews former Guard

An hour and a half, which no-one will surely very easily forget, simply flew by.



When it came to summing up what had been heard, Canon Chivers, who had just returned from covering President Obama's inauguration – the president had made it his first executive act to announce the closure of Guantanamo Bay – said this:

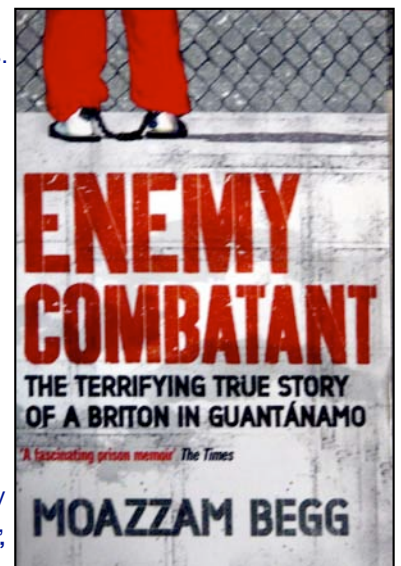
"Christian preachers always speak in threes.

If you're unsure whether you have responsibility for what you heard here, remember the three words Barack Obama uses all the time: "We are one."

And if you're unsure about whether we can actually make a difference, remember the other three words he uses:

"Yes we can."

And finally, three of my own less poetic words, "Do something now."





PRE MALTA
and
2009 Blessings
by former choirparent
and current choir wife
SHEILA SHAW

Thanks to encouragement from **James Davy**, after a long period of 'silence', I returned to choral singing last year by joining the Blackburn Music Society, which he conducts.

It was therefore a great privilege for me also to be able to sing with the Renaissance Singers and the Cathedral Choirs for the performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Malta. I attended the rehearsal on 6th February and sang with the choirs for the pre tour performance in Blackburn Cathedral.

My birthday fell on rehearsal day, but even though it marked a biblical milestone in my life it was not going to be celebrated until the 8th February when all the family could be together. So for once on a Friday evening I was in the same place as **Gordon**, enjoying the practice, unaware that anyone knew my secret.



At about 8.00pm I had the most memorable experience of my life. **Richard Tanner** interrupted the practice to inform everyone of my birthday. I was surprised beyond measure as the massed choirs sang 'Happy Birthday', whilst out of the shadows of the North transept appeared our eight grandchildren – daughters one and all, aged from two to thirteen, Charlotte, Katie, Mollie, Emily, Jessica, Elysia, Ella and Caroline, carrying posies of flowers, the older ones carrying candles.



The Shaw family with 8 Grand-daughters
Old Chorister father of 3, **John Shaw**, top L,
and Old Chorister also father of 3, **David Shaw**, top R.

The adults followed, that is our three children; Liz, David and John with their spouses Wayne, Janine and Sheila (junior). After a five-minute break and lots of hugs they all crept away again and the practice resumed. **IT WAS A DREAM.**

Thank you so much to everyone who made this brief interlude such an unforgettable experience.



The children said to me afterwards that they felt like the Trapp Family Singers as they crept in and out by the Crypt entrance in semi darkness.

Thank you, Sheila!

Oils on Canvas

Have you visited the new **art gallery in the cathedral crypt**? It really is worth seeing – for it's the start of a major project in which artists exhibit their paintings for display and for sale.



Canon's Virger Jeffrey Robinson admires Russell John's painting of Ashness Bridge.



And whilst you're in the crypt, why not sample one of **Amanda McCreddie's** delicious lunches in the **Café in the Crypt?**

The menus that she and her colleagues are now presenting are as mouthwatering as the paintings on display!



Our Cathedral Choirs' Singing Visit to Malta

with contributions from **Sheila Shaw, Kathleen Bill** (wife of Chapter member Canon Tom Bill), **Canon Chris Chivers and Richard Tanner,**

20 boy choristers, 16 girl choristers, members of the YPC, 40 Renaissance Singers, 30 parents, spouses and helpers (including the **Dean and Mrs. Armstrong**), four soloists (**Philippa Hyde, Henry Jones, James Atherton and Mark Rowlinson**, see their [photo p. 7](#)) and six music staff spent an amazing week in Malta in February through the generous invitation of the Prime Minister of Malta, **Dr. Lawrence Gonzo**, which he gave to us when he heard us sing in Blackburn Cathedral two years ago.

Everyone had been thoroughly briefed – thanks to special meetings and a superb 32 page book which included every bit of information that anyone could possibly need, from a detailed daily schedule, which rooms we would have at the hotel, to who was allowed to swim in the hotel swimming pool, and even the Maltese National Anthem in Maltese, which the choir might sing before the *Messiah* performance. (In the end, we didn't sing it!)

Our coach for Manchester Airport left the Boulevard at 7.30 am on Saturday, 14th February and our flight left at 10.30. When we arrived in Malta some eight hours later we were whisked off to the San Antonio Hotel in St. Paul's Bay facing the Mediterranean and, after settling ourselves into our rooms we enjoyed a good dinner, and then bed.

Richard Tanner, James Davy and David Scott-Thomas had arrived two days' earlier, for Richard would spend sixteen hours rehearsing the orchestra for our *Messiah* performance.

Sheila Shaw wrote: The fascinating history of Malta has interested me greatly since I first visited St Paul's Bay in 1978 and was reminded of those lessons at school – was that story of St. Paul's shipwreck really true? The Maltese people are so friendly and most speak English, so when I knew of the tour, I wanted to be part of it.

After breakfast the next morning our coach left the hotel at 8.30 to take us to the Pro Cathedral for rehearsal and to sing the 11.00 am Sunday Eucharist.



Canon Chivers wrote: Shipwreck Sunday was being celebrated at the cathedral – the Sunday when the Maltese remember that **St Paul** was shipwrecked on Malta where he received 'hospitality from the natives', as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

The combined choir members certainly experienced such hospitality in the crypt afterwards for lunch, but not before they had sung Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, filling the building with a musical radiance that all appreciated. The Right Reverend **Geoffrey Rowell**, Bishop of Gibraltar, who was preaching, raved about the quality of the singing. The welcome was warm and the hospitality of the people was much appreciated.



Lunch and fellowship after Eucharist in St. Paul's crypt.



The view of Valletta from St. Paul's Cathedral was spectacular

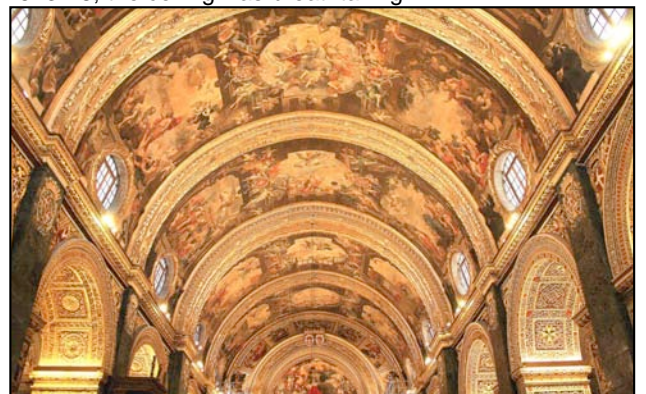
The rest of the day was free when we could explore that beautiful island.



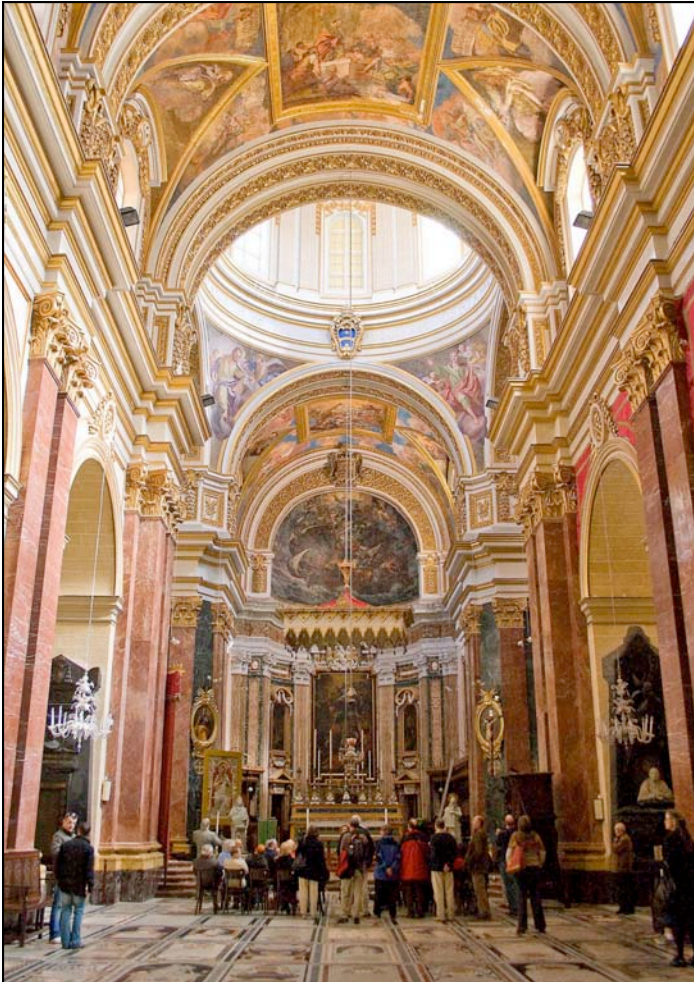
Andrew Orr, Gordon Shaw, the Dean, Judge James Prowse, Peter Eastham and Richard Tanner

waiting for transport to the High Commissioner's Reception

Monday was supposedly free (except for Richard, James and David who would be rehearsing the soloists with the orchestra in the Manoel Theatre). Some of us visited St. John's Cathedral which was built by the Knights of Malta 1573-78; the ceiling was breathtaking:



When St Paul was shipwrecked on Malta en route for his trial before Caesar in Rome, the governor of Malta was called Publius. (See Acts chapter 28 for a blow-by-blow account.) This magnificent cathedral is reputedly built on the site of Publius's villa. He converted to Christianity after St Paul healed his father. The semi-circular fresco above the altar depicts the shipwreck.



But that evening the British High Commissioner held a Reception for us.

Canon Chivers wrote: The three occasions at which music was offered in Malta could not have been more different. From the 18th century classical splendours of Valletta's Anglican Cathedral, to the intimacy of the British High Commissioner's Drawing Room, and on to the nobility of the Manoel Theatre – built ten or so years before Handel's *Messiah* was written, and boasting the distinction of being one of Europe's oldest theatres.

Each building had a different acoustic. Each occasion demanded a different feel.

Richard's enthusiasm was more than matched when a select group of singers – including the soloists for *Messiah* – performed for the newly arrived British High Commissioner and her guests.



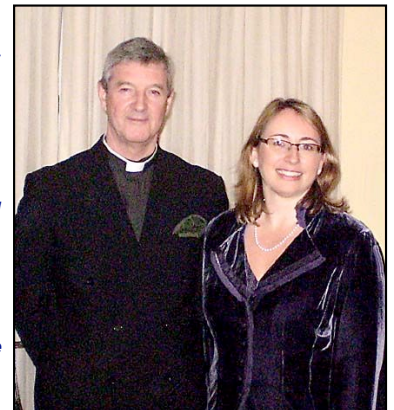
Richard Tanner conducting his select group of singers

A drawing room is not always the best place for singing, but on this occasion a beautiful mixed programme of choral and solo items elicited a lovely tone from the singers.



Guests at the High Commission included Lino Attard, Chairman of Malta Philharmonic Orchestra Board of Directors, the Dean of Blackburn, Ruth Vella, Director of Operations for Fraser Eagle in Malta and Kevin Dean, MD of the Fraser Eagle Group, our most generous sponsors.

Right: The Dean with our host, Louise Stanton, the British High Commissioner.



The Prime Minister of Malta (R) Dr. Lawrence Gonzo, talking with Kevin Dean, MD of Fraser Eagle Group.

There was deep appreciation from the gathered Ambassadors and High Commissioners, to whom the younger members of the group spoke with especial animation and maturity. No one will forget cathedral chorister **Matthieu Woodburn** speaking in French to the Belgium ambassador!

Gordon Shaw was also full of praise for the mature and highly commendable demeanour of the young singers. The Dean described the event as '*near to perfection as possible*'.

Our main engagement was to sing a performance of Handel's *Messiah* in the Manoel Theatre, Valletta.

The theatre was funded in 1731 by Grand Master of the Knights of Malta, and was constructed in just ten months. (The Portuguese Grand Master built the theatre to keep the young knights of the Order of St. John out of mischief but also to provide the general public with "honest entertainment.")

Sheila Shaw wrote: It was a joy and a privilege to be part of this performance. (See cover photo)



Richard and the music team, including the orchestra, worked valiantly to ensure that the choir could overcome the acoustical difficulties.



The dress rehearsal

The experience of performing in such an old building would enthuse anyone with an attachment to history. *Was there really a ghost?* (James Davy said that he had felt its presence!)

There were many shining moments, but one of the best for me, was the sound of the talented senior trebles as I sang next to them. At the conclusion of the performance, when the lights came on in the auditorium, from our vantage point, we could gaze around and take in the beauty of the theatre. It was a delight to see all the people standing in their tiered boxes to applaud, led by the Prime Minister. The atmosphere was wonderful.

Canon Chivers wrote: The theatre had the driest of acoustics, and it must have seemed impossible for the singers to hear the orchestra. But the balance of choir, singers and orchestra achieved by Richard Tanner was remarkable.

Not only had he taken an orchestra used to playing the classics of the Romantic period – these are the stable fare of Malta's Philharmonic Orchestra – and enabled them to achieve levels of performance practice in relation to Handel's Baroque masterpiece that they may never before have achieved, but he also welded together the whole in a manner that was inspiring for musicians and audience alike.

The rhythmic and narrative drive of Handel's work was utterly convincing. The soloists were sparkingly good, and the Maltese Prime Ministerial *imprimatur* was of course simply an added bonus, which everyone will remember for a long time.

The TIMES of Malta wrote a glowing critique:

With Blackburn's great, old choral tradition backing it, little less than a magnificent performance could be expected of the Choirs of Blackburn Cathedral which was performed to a practically full house at the Manoel earlier this week.

They made a fine blend of really lovely crisp, well-articulated voices whose impeccable phrasing and diction was an utter delight. They sang with an apparent ease which made difficult runs seem like mere trifles, and with a high pure tone resulting in great satisfactory amalgamation of texture. There was no way one could single out which of the choruses sounded best for they all came across very well, fugues and all.

Richard Tanner endowed this very authentic reading with all his attention and very obvious affection. He elicited the best from all the forces under his command, vocal and instrumental. This was an evening to remember.

Mrs Kathleen Bill wrote: What will I remember as a non-choir member of the party?

1. The total commitment of everyone, from the youngest to the oldest singer and everyone in between, and to the detailed and painstaking rehearsals under Richard Tanner.

2. Richard himself, his enthusiasm, his full body language, his empathy with the orchestra and all the choir members, as he created to perfection every note and expression of feeling. He must have been exhausted.

3. The Fraser Eagle reps in Malta who looked after us so well, and now sadly have been made redundant, following the collapse of Fraser Eagle – another victim of the recession.

4. The 'Buddy Group' Leaders, who cared for all the young choristers and the continual check-ups to see that they, and we, were all present and correct.

5. The only negative was the weather – it was cold sometimes, cool at other times, but rarely warm and spring-like. You can't have everything!

Sheila Shaw wrote: Whilst in Malta there was lots more to enjoy, made possible by the freedom we adults enjoyed, not only was everything well organised, but the younger ones behaved so well and were so well cared for, we had nothing to worry about. For this we must thank those special adults who carried out their responsibilities with great skill and talent throughout.



Gordon and Sheila Shaw being serenaded at the final dinner

And Richard Tanner wrote: I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the Malta tour such a success. **Linda Bruce, Emily Crewe** and the **Fraser Eagle** team did a fantastic job with all the administrative work, which was an enormous task over the past 6 months.

Particular thanks to all who supported us so generously. And I would especially like to thank **Canon Hindley** and **Derek Crompton** for their practical support in setting up this tour.

Dawn Forshaw and all the Buddy group leaders and their deputies did a tremendous job looking after the under 18s. This was a relentless job, but I know that the children were exceptionally well cared for and, as a result of this care and guidance, all of the choristers developed as individuals whilst away on tour. And very special thanks to all the **musicians** whose dedicated talents made this an experience of a lifetime to be treasured by us all.

MORRIS MINIMUS

From Greg Morris, our former Assistant DoM who is now Associate Organist of the Temple Church in London.

Dear John,

Many thanks for your message about the birth of **Joseph** – our number 2. [Anna was MORRIS MINOR, so Joseph must be MORRIS MINIMUS.] We are now indeed a family of four, and Anna is a very proud big sister, as you can see from the attached photo.



Dr Rachel Thornton, Anna Sofia, Joseph and Greg Morris

Life is busy but very rewarding at the moment! Joseph has already had one visitor from Blackburn – **Richard Tanner** popped in to say hello when Joseph was just about 3 weeks old, so it was great to see him then. Time flies, and he is now 7 ½ weeks old – and I have to say looks rather different already from this photo!

I am also being kept very busy by work. Last year we had a year-long festival here at the Temple, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the Royal Charter granting the lands and the church here to the Inns of Court.

I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to perform complete the Organ Concertos by John Stanley (as you know he was organist to the Inner Temple for more than 50 years in the 18th century), and the high point of the year in June was a visit by Her Majesty The Queen.



I thought this year might be slightly less hectic, but quite apart from our new family arrival it is proving not to be. In the next few months, I have a series of recitals of Bach's organ music coming up, half of them here on the "romantic" Harrison, and half on the much more "classical" instrument at **St Martin-in-the-Fields**, which I hope will make for some interesting comparisons.

I will also be playing at **Westminster Abbey**, and am looking forward to coming back to **Blackburn** twice before the end of the summer – once to perform one of Couperin's organ masses, **(on Thursday 11th June at 6.30)** and once to record a CD of music by

Kenneth Leighton. It will be a great pleasure to play Blackburn's marvellous instrument again!

I hope all is well with you. With all best wishes, **Greg**
Heartiest congratulation, Greg and Rachel. What a delightful photograph. We eagerly look forward to welcoming you back to Blackburn on June 11th Greg! JB

JOHN ('JACK') BOLTON

It was with great sadness that we learnt, in March, of the death of John Bolton, OC Ivor's father. He was 92.



Ivor and John Bolton, 2006

Ivor's parents were so supportive of him and so proud of him throughout his meteoric musical career – from the time that he joined the cathedral choir from QEGS 40 years ago – winning the organ scholarship to Clare College, Cambridge – his marriage to fellow student (Dr) Tess Knighton – their son, Sam – and Ivor's conductorships all over the world. (He's now Director of the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra.)

John's funeral, which was at the Cathedral, was a feast of music chosen by Ivor, including Mozart's *Laudate Dominum* sung superbly by OC (and former Renaissance Singers member) **Laurenne Chapman** (she was John's Granddaughter), with Ivor at the organ and JB conducting the choir which Richard Tanner had formed for the occasion.

Jack Longstaff, who was music master at QEGS during Ivor's time as a pupil there and who coached him for his FRCO paperwork, played Bach's *Schmücke dich* before the service. **Richard Tanner** conducted Purcell's *Thou knowest, Lord*, as the cortège entered the cathedral and JB played Bach's G major Pièce d'Orgue (BWV 572) at the end of the service.

Canon Andrew Hindley led the service so sensitively, and many Old Choristers were there to sing and support Ivor and his family. It was a truly uplifting occasion for us all.

At the Reception after the service in the Butler's Arms, Pleasington, were some of Ivor's exact contemporaries in the cathedral choir all those years ago:

Phil Wilson and **Derek Crompton**,

John Marr (who succeeded Ivor as Head Chorister!)

Stephen Holmes (Bronzed from his 4 months in S. America.

See page 13) ...

and the irrepressible **Bernard West** who is, unbelievably, 89.

OCs **Phil Hunwick Gordon Shaw** and **Paul Fielding** also sang in the special choir which was led by **Alizon Elliott**, President of the Renaissance Singers.

SOC **David Smalley** was there, representing BCOCA.

Two days' later Ivor wrote a most generous e-mail to JB to thank everyone who created such a memorable service.

Dear John,

The thanks should be from my side. Briefly it was a wonderful service and I was thrilled and so happy to hear your unbeatable hymn-playing and see your inspirational conducting.

Your conducting gave me what many people have remarked on as my major strength as a conductor. Truly.

I could go on. But it was a moving occasion and we were all so happy to celebrate Dad's life afterwards amongst true friends.

Ivor

(Now conducting back in Strasbourg, dodging the NATO Conference security and helicopters!)

ROBERT MARTINEAU

5th Bishop of Blackburn, 1971-81

As we managed to note only briefly the death of Bishop Martineau's wife, Truda, in our last edition, it is right that we should pay fuller tribute to them both in this edition.

Canon Chivers writes:

For some years now – since I worked on the staff of St George's Cathedral, Cape Town – whenever I've visited South Africa, I have stayed with Nancy Gordon, wife of the late Gerald Gordon QC, former head of the Cape Bar.

Imagine my surprise when, one day in 2007, she showed me a beautifully illustrated book, *Rhodesian Wild Flowers* written by Robert Martineau, and beautifully illustrated by her sister, Lady Tredgold.

Lady Tredgold (aged 97), told us how this came to be written: [We are so grateful for these special memories and for this illustration of trees and animals which Lady Tredgold so delicately cut out of black paper for our readers. JB]



England was at war, World War II, and from her youngest colony, Rhodesia, our men had gone to England's defence. And then in came the RAF.

The newly-ordained Robert Martineau was appointed the RAF's C of E chaplain in the capital city. We became friends at musical evenings when Robert sang to his own accompaniment on the piano. The children especially adored him, and he was missing his own children of the same age who were left at home.

Robert's special charm lay in his versatility. His previous career had been that of an astronomer, with special research on conditions on the moon. He had seen war coming and though a natural pacifist he needed to be involved, and got ordained, before volunteering.

His many interests included captaining the water-polo team and beating the rabbi, our local champion, at chess. He played the piano to concert standard.

His immediate problem was how to make personal contact with the hundreds of very new and different young men in rapid transit from camp to war zone.

Every morning, crowded trucks left the Hillside Camp for the Matopos Hills wild bush country, strewn with strange stone outcrops and ancient painted caves, home to wild animals and a very occasional isolated African kraal. All trainees went on this exercise of direction-finding, making their way back to the trucks from an unknown destination on foot in uninhabited bush Veldt.

Robert joined them, for personal contact with the men. They saw the wild woods as wilderness and were amazed when he opened his flower press to show them some thirty or forty intriguingly different plant specimens collected on their walk. These specimens are now in the archives at Kew Gardens.

From these treks grew our book: *Wild Flowers of Rhodesia / Zimbabwe* which is still the standard reference work, with the text Robert Martineau wrote for them on board ship, on his way home.

JB writes:

During my 16 years in the University town of Princeton, NJ, I used to spend my August vacations in the UK, staying with as many friends as would put up with me. Two dear friends who offered me hospitality for a night in 1992 were Robert and Truda Martineau, who had retired to Denbigh, North Wales, eleven years earlier.



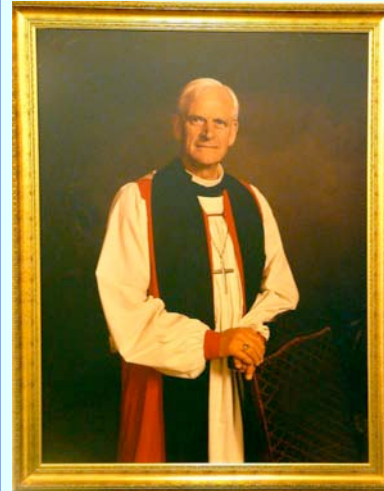
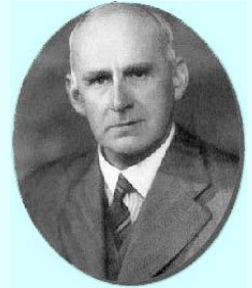
Truda and Robert displaying similar tastes in neck-wear.

(Photo by JB 1992.)

The entrance to their Denbigh home was through their beautiful back garden – which flourished, of course, because of their combined horticultural expertise.

That evening I asked Bishop Robert what had led him to seek ordination. He said:

'There were two turning points. I read mathematics at Cambridge and started life as an astronomer. The Astronomer Royal, **Sir Arthur Eddington**, said to me at our first meeting, "I cannot understand the mentality of those who look at the stars through this telescope and don't believe in the God who made them."



'And the second turning point came the day after the atom was split in the Cambridge Cavendish Laboratory; it was feared that great power might be released.

I was at a Quaker meeting and the scientist who had split the atom was there and said, "I'd like to put on record my faith that the God who made the atom is infinitely greater than the atom he made."

'This so moved me,' concluded Robert, 'that I began to seek for ordination.'

THE BLACKBURN MUSIC SOCIETY



... has a long and proud history in this town.

Its present conductor is our own **JAMES DAVY** who rehearses his singers meticulously every Monday night in Westholme School.

When your peripatetic photographer visited them in March they were hard at work preparing for their Cathedral concert on **Saturday, 25th April** ...



... when they will sing Mozart's lovely *Requiem Mass*, and Mendelssohn's tuneful *Lauda Sion*, accompanied by the Blackburn Symphony Orchestra.

If you'd like to join them, contact the chairman:

brianhealey@btinternet.com

Phone: 01254 51174

Valedictions and Promotions

It is always a moving occasion when **The Dean** says 'Thank you and Farewell' to choristers who have sung treble in our cathedral choir for almost a third (or more) of their lives.



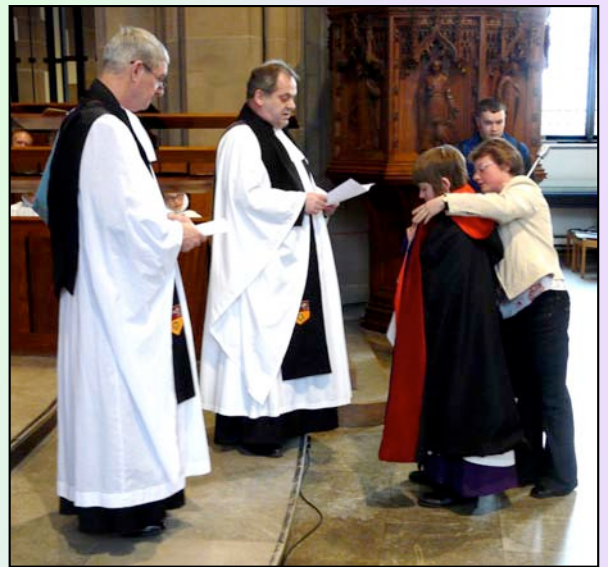
This was again true on Sunday, 15th March, when The Dean said a special *Thank you* to **Daniel Day** (left) who was our longest-serving chorister, and to Head Chorister **Barry Hudson-Taylor**, watched by **Canon Andrew Hindley**.



Then Senior Old Chorister **David Smalley** welcomed Daniel and Barry into our Old Choristers' Association, and presented them with their official BCOCA ties.



After which **Connor Buller** was promoted to Head Chorister (and duly coped), followed by **Matthieu Woodburn**, who was promoted to Deputy Head Chorister (and coped by choir mother **Amanda Snape** – see photo next column).



As **Connor Buller** was now the longest-serving chorister, it gave your editor great pleasure to present him with the **Dots Bertalot Memorial** silver badge, which has been worn with pride and honour by generations of faithful Blackburn Cathedral choristers for the last 29 years.



But that was not all. At the end of the service The Dean blessed our new Old Choristers, **Daniel** and **Barry**, and they recessed in the place of honour alongside the Dean down the length of the Nave. And now two more names will be added in gold to the Prefects' Boards in the Song School. These date back to 1923!

And so another chapter in our cathedral choir's history was written that day. *Thank you, Barry and Daniel, and congratulations to Connor and Matthieu.*



And very special thanks to all out choir families who support their sons and daughters in our cathedral choirs. Without this sacrificial, but so rewarding, family help there would be no choir. L: Family Buller, R: Family Woodburn.

Bilateral dialogue at Blackburn wins Archbishop's approval

Called to Lambeth Palace to take part in a consultation in March on the relationship of bilateral dialogue to multi-faith conversation, **Anjum Anwar MBE**, our dialogue development officer and **Canon Chris Chivers** received much encouragement for the work that they are doing.

"The depth made possible by bilateral, one to one conversation," said **Archbishop Rowan Williams**, "the nuanced way in which difficult questions may be explored, animates and energises the wider discussion of faith in our society."



Anjum Anwar In conversation with the Archbishop during lunch at Lambeth Palace. (Photo: Chris Chivers)

It was a special delight...

...for your editor, in company with **Derek & Marilyn Crompton**, to visit former SOC **BOB and PAULINE KEEN** in their lovely home in Wilmslow on April 1st. (They are also parents of OCs **John and Jill Keen**.)

Before a most delicious lunch, which was of 5-star quality created by them both, Bob showed us his family tree which he is compiling – 12 feet long and ten generations deep – with photographs of fully half the family members, which must, surely, make it unique.



Marilyn, Pauline, Bob and Derek holding the Keen Tree!

It was an additional delight that April afternoon to visit Mrs. **Marjorie Brown**, widow of former SOC **Bert Brown**, who lives in a lovely house opposite the Keens.



Bert was made a choir prefect in 1939 – the year that **T. L. Duerden** succeeded **Dr. Brearley** as Master of Blackburn Cathedral Music. Bert was a faithful attender at BCOCA Reunions when it was first formed 45 years ago – he used to drive all the way from his home in Wilmslow to be with us. We honoured his loyalty by electing him Senior Old Chorister in 1975.

1975 Herbert Brown

Marjorie is full of life and so grateful for all that Blackburn Cathedral Choir did for Bert. She celebrates her 90th birthday this September!

The Standards of our Wednesday

1.00 pm Lunchtime Recitals go up 'n up 'n up!

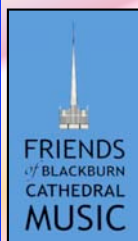
At least, they seem to. Every week we are dazzled and thrilled by the talents of a continuing succession of young musicians who come from all corners of the UK to play to us for just their travelling expenses.

The last Wednesday recital this season, for example, was given by **Simon Thomas Jacobs**, senior organ scholar of Clare College, Cambridge. Every brilliant note was musical and every sound was thrilling. And to enjoy it was an enthusiastic audience, which included the **President of the Royal College of Organists, David Sanger**. If you've missed these you don't know what you're missed



James Davy, Simon Jacobs, Richard Tanner & David Sanger

This edition of **Music & More** is supported financially by



BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL

HANDBELLS

by Blackburn Cathedral Bell-Ringer,
Blackburn Cathedral Old Chorister,
and Blackburn Cathedral Warden
GARY WIGNALL



In addition to the ten bells hung in the West Tower we also have a five and a half octaves set of pre 1st World War handbells. These are a Yorkshire style 'long set' for off the table ringing, which was the popular handbell ringing style for competitions in the heyday of handbell ringing up to the time of the first world war when it rather went into decline. These bells were made by J. Shaw & Sons of Bradford who are no longer in business.

The first archive record of them being used was on Bank Holiday August **1884**, when the Manchester Cathedral Society paid a visit to Blackburn.

'Proceeding by the 8.55 am express they arrived at their journey's end at 9.45 am. Alighting from the train the party made their way to the Parish Church where Mr. Parker the steeple keeper was waiting to receive them. The ringers then went up into the tower and having raised the bells in peal, rang a touch of 826 of Grandsire Caters, after which, leaving the belfry they had a good substantial breakfast at a coffee tavern about three minutes walk from the church. A peal of 5363 changes were rung following this in 3 hours 25 minutes.

In the afternoon a touch of 1159 Grandsire Royal was attempted but it came to grief.

A visit was then made to the Corporation Park, where (owing to a paragraph in a local paper stating that the ringers would play several tunes on handbells in the park), about 5000 and 6000 good Blackburnians had assembled round the bandstand. The company after a little delay mounted the steps of the stand and rang what tunes they knew with ten bells and a few courses of Grandsire Triples, Major and Caters and judging by the applause given after each piece was played, the audience were well satisfied with the music.'

The next record is of a group of cathedral ringers performing at a pageant which was held in 1927. This must have been held just after Blackburn Parish Church was elevated to the rank of a Cathedral.

This team visited several parishes and rang during a marriage in Burnley in 1950, I remember us playing 'Jesu joy of man's desiring', with a slight hiccup in the middle. We also rang at many venues in the Diocese at social events.

The handbells were next in use in the 1980s when a group of our present cathedral ringers formed a team with the intention of raising funds for their restoration.



The Burnley wedding in the late '50s of two handbell ringers: Brian & Mary Tomlinson. The young Gary Wignall is second from the right with the cathedral handbell ringing team.



At the Cathedral Ringers' AGMs in recent years the subject of reforming a handbell team has arisen, as a means of attracting young people to the art of bellringing.

The Dean is most enthusiastic about this and we set about to audit our five and a half octaves of handbells. Last year two octaves (25 bells) of them were sent to the Whitechapel Bell foundry in London for an estimate for their restoration. The result was that five of the bells were slightly cracked and would have to be recast, the remainder would be cleaned and retuned to the International Standard Pitch, new leather handles and caps needed replacing and the inside mechanisms cleaning and overhauled.

The cost of this would be £5300 including VAT.

This sum could be raised by sponsors donating a gift-aided amount. Letters have been sent out asking for donations and to date **we are halfway to achieving our total.** This is an exciting project which could enable us to form a Young Peoples Handbell Team. This would be most appropriate as 2009 has been designated 'Year of the Child'.

If you feel moved, reading this account, to contribute any amount to our fund raising efforts, please make cheques payable to **Blackburn Cathedral (Handbells)**, and mail to **Gary Wignall, Cathedral Close, Blackburn BB1 5AA.** All donations are gift aided if you are a tax-payer. This will increase your giving by 22%.

Thank you so much!



Gary Wignall.



**Would you like to learn how to ring handbells?
It's so creative!
If so, please let me know.
(Cathedral address above)**

Holy Week - Wholly Beautiful

We seem to be running out of superlatives to describe the impact that our Cathedral Concerts, conducted by Richard Tanner, is having upon our appreciative audiences; but, really, the Holy Week Concert on Wednesday 8th April was sheer joy throughout.

The Renaissance Singers were in topmost form – making exquisite sounds as they sang Haydn's tuneful *Stabat Mater*, accompanied by the most excellent Northern Chamber Orchestra.



The talented soloists were so greatly appreciated that the conversations we overheard during the interval were especially loud in their praise. The cadenzas at the end of their individual solos were not only dazzling but also so very musical.



L-R: Leader of the orchestra, **Nicholas Ward** (one member of the Singers was so enamoured of him that she asked how she could meet him!); **Marcus Farnsworth** (Bass), **Richard Rowntree** (Tenor), **Richard Tanner** (Conductor), **Jeanette Ager** (Mezzo Soprano) and **Nicola Howard** (Soprano).

Richard Tanner's conducting throughout was masterly: he looked at his singers, he looked at his orchestra and he looked at his soloists, so that they all performed as one. It was a joy for the audience to watch him.

And then international concert pianist **Martin Roscoe** gave a scintillating performance of Beethoven's *Emperor Piano Concerto*. Martin has strong associations with Blackburn Cathedral, for he advised us when we bought our grand piano and, going back over 40 years to when he was a student at the Royal Northern College of Music, the then Director of Music of Blackburn Cathedral taught him harmony and counterpoint!

Martin's performance, too, was masterly, Every note rang out with crystal clarity, and his *rapport* with the orchestra, thanks to his, Richard's and the orchestra's own supreme musicianship, was seamless. The audience listened in spellbound silence, for every

note could be heard so clearly throughout our packed Nave.



This was indeed an evening to be relished, and remembered with great thankfulness as we prepared for the joys of Easter. Thank you!

AMERICAN QUARTER CENTURY

In 2005 the Renaissance Singers (which JB founded as *The Blackburn Bach Choir*) celebrated their 40th anniversary with a gala concert in the cathedral, which was attended by many Alums, including some founder members. Their present conductor, **Richard Tanner**, generously invited JB to conduct that concert – which was a courtesy he will always treasure.

A similar anniversary was celebrated in Princeton, New Jersey, on 'Palm Saturday' this year, when the Princeton Singers (which JB also founded!) gave their 25th Anniversary Concert to a packed audience in Trinity Church, Princeton. Many Alums joined them for several items – including founder members. History repeats itself!

The Princeton Singers were rated during JB's time as one of the top three mixed voice choirs in the USA, and they made three tours of the UK – including three concerts to packed audiences in Blackburn Cathedral.

Other 'highs' were four concerts in New York City to celebrate the centenary of the American Guild of Organists; a concert to a capacity audience of 1,200 at the Hereford Three Choirs' Festival, and a concert in the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, when extra chairs had to be brought in to accommodate the overflow audience! Those were such privileged experiences for us all.



JB had been invited to conduct some of the items for the Princeton Singers' 25th Anniversary Concert this April, but, alas, he couldn't as he has his own church choir in Fence, which was singing a 25-minute setting of the St. Mark Passion on Palm Sunday which he had composed for them. But it was nice to be asked. Thank you, Princeton Singers.