

Golly, it's bin an eventful year! Herewith some of the printable happenings, missing out, as ever, whole heaps of essentials such as weddings, deaths, crises, weekly consumption of ice cream and Presidential goings on:-

SEPTEMBER...

...began by my returning from a fabulous month in South Africa, leading choral workshops all over the place and being broadcast and televised, to find that the whole of the interior of Trinity Church in Princeton had been painted - the first time for 30 years! Color had been used, but in a so-laid-back Princetonian manner - elegant good taste and subtle - that you'd hardly notice it, unlike the brilliant modern mediaeval colours in Blackburn Cathedral. However Trinity's paintwork, in addition to shedding more light, added at least a quarter of a second to the almost non-existent reverberation. That's progress!

8 Wed. Supamall: Was invited by **Ben Hutto** (chair of RSCM-in-America courses committee) to direct next summer's RSCM course for girls in Atlanta - yes! Two new publications arrived: *Mostly Manuals* - a collection of simple organ music published by **Kevin Mayhew** with some of my offerings therein, and my *St. Mark Passion*, published by **Augsburg**. They already publish my *St. Matthew Passion* and are in the process of preparing my *St. Luke*. Supaday!

The next day Augsburg called to invite me to lead a new-music workshop for them in Seattle in 1995. I considered the proposition carefully for at least 2 seconds before saying yes. There's no need to rush these things!

The following Monday I proofed my 'Proclaiming Pentecost' anthem to be published by **Flammer**, composed for **Fred Swann** and his choir at the Crystal Cathedral, L.A. A.O.K.

17 Fri. **Geoffrey Williams** (retired Canon of Blackburn Cathedral) sent me a copy of his recently published book on the history of the Blackburn diocese. In it he mentions my time at the cathedral with great kindness. Not everyone is so fortunate - his wit can be barbed but hidden 'neath a silky surplice so that those of whom he doesn't approve (his English grammar is impeccable) don't even know at they're being got!

19 Sun. **Robert Poovey**, brilliant organist from Seattle, 2,500 miles away, arrived for a week to watch me at work with my choirs. It's been my great joy, during my time here, to welcome a number of young choirmasters from many parts of the US who've heard that things seem to go well at Trinity, and wonder how it's done. Well, Robert was the latest, and as I was in the midst of writing a book (for Augsburg) on Everything I Know About Choirtraining, based on what actually goes on here, and as it is written in the form of a story, telling what a visiting choirmaster sees and does while he's with me, and as I used the real names of some of my boys and girls and lightly disguised the names of some of the adults, I decided to use Robert's name, very lightly disguised, as the questing young choirmaster, so 'Bob from Seattle' has his name plastered all over this, my second book - which was published nine months later. (NB: Sentences in my book are considerably shorter than that one!)

The next day Robert, who also plays the harpsichord, observed four straight hours of practices, from



a new boy thru teens. He told me afterwards, "I knew within the first ten minutes of your practice with the new boy that my journey was worthwhile." "Why?" "Because you were so gentle with him - you brought out the best in him. You enabled him to do things he'd never done before. It's just like your book come to life for me!"

Well, it was just like my first book come to life for me too, for 'Bob' brought

his lap-top computer with him to take notes - exactly as the young choirmaster was portrayed in the video of my first book on how I teach kids to sight-read music, called 'Five Wheels to successful sight-singing!' 'Scuse the commercial - but it was as amazing for me to see my previous book come to life in Robert as, apparently, it was for him to see it in me. We were both very happy!

22 Wed. Decided to try something entirely new in choirtraining. I started teaching a new boy, age 5 1/2 - for his mother is a nationally acclaimed mezzo-soprano who was looking for a choir to join, and his father sings bass. Thus we acquired two new singers for our adult choir and I began to learn how to talk to 5 1/2-year olds! I learned a lot during the ensuing months - so did he!

28 Tu. Received a copy of *Musical Opinion* (a leading British music magazine) in which an article of mine appeared describing the organ in Denver Cathedral - where I'd been a few months earlier. 'Snice to be remember-ed in the Ol' Country.

OCTOBER

2 Sat. Letter from **Peter Heald**, former chairman of Blackburn Cathedral during my time there, and now singing in Ely Cathedral (20 miles from Cambridge). His cathedral choir is singing my *Johannesburg Communion Service* next Sunday. Whoopee! I also received a letter from English publisher **Kevin Mayhew** accepting my setting of 'I was glad' for almost immediate publication. Whoopee again!

8 Fri. To the dentist for a small filling. He told me, kindly, that I also needed four crowns - cost, nearly \$4,000! One small hole in the tooth, one giant hole in the pocket!

14 Wed. Received an amazing letter from **Bunny Ashley-Botha**, director of the Drakensberg Boys' Choir School in South Africa, (which has been called the finest boychoir in the world!) saying that, because he and his fabulous choir had so enjoyed my visit to them in August, he'd love me to consider moving to the school permanently when I retired from Princeton, to become their musical advisor-in-residence. Wow - that completely blew my mind (i) because it was so pleasant still to be wanted, once I retired from Trinity in 1996, and (ii) because Bunny and his boys are so wonderful and the choir school is set in such idyllic quasi-Alpine

surroundings. I could think of nowhere more beautiful or fulfilling to be. I wrote him, telling him of my total delight, but that I would need to consult my cousins - which I did. I shall treasure Bunny's letter for the rest of my life!

17 Sun. My **Princeton Singers** gave their first concert of the season, to a most appreciative audience in Trinity Church. This augured very well indeed for our up-coming tour of England in August for which we would be working the whole year. At every concert we planned to sing at least four items from the list of some 40 pieces of music we'd be performing, and as we were singing for a week at St. Paul's Cathedral, program-planning was pretty heavily loaded with Mags, Nuncs and Te Dea!

John Baker, vice president of a health-benefits company, part-time captain in the US Navy, part-time professional recording engineer and full-time friend, recorded our concert and sent it to National Public Radio (the American equivalent of BBC Radio 3). They were delighted with it and planned to broadcast some of our carol concert in December. We were on our way!

My next door neighbor, **Neil Okun**, is a professional carpenter. What a useful neighbor to have! He'd fitted new leaf-shields to the guttering of my house, repaired my loft-ladder and fitted a new section to my back fence during recent weeks. Today he told me that my garage roof was rotting and it needed to be replaced. Four new teeth and a new roof - aye me!

20 Wed. To New York City with **Nancianne Parrella**, superly wonderful associate organist of Trinity Church, because she was accompanying the professional choir of St. Ignatius Loyola Church, Park Avenue, in a performance of the *Durufle Requiem*. (Their own asst. organist had found it a little daunting - I don't blame him!) Nanci was wholly wonderful, the choir was wholly wonderful and the brand new **Mander** tracker organ was also wholly wonderful. **Kent Tritle**, the wholly wonderful young director of music of that wonderfully holy RC church invited me to try the organ afterwards - I was thrilled beyond measure - every stop sings as a poem of artistic creation and the action is as light as a butterfly's wing. The sight of the floodlit 32' front casework reminded me not a little of the organ in St. Bavo's Church, Haarlem, Holland. There was quite a crowd in the vast organ loft when I was playing, including **John Mander** himself. He should be mighty proud of his creation. He was!

The following Wednesday the update to my music-creation program on my home computer arrived - 'Finale 3.01' for those who know about these things. Fitted it to my computer. It didn't work - not enough memory, something had to go!

29 Fri. An eventful day: Spent over 4 hours with my dentist for the first of four visits to crown me with many crowns. Cousins **Shella and Joan** in England wrote to say 'Go for South Africa!'. Bought an electronic keyboard to complement my Finale which finally worked. The keyboard didn't! Call from **Westminster Choir College**, (WCC), here in Princeton to ask me to teach a semester's course on composing. Yes - especially as it would pay for 2 1/2 teeth!

30 Sat. Discovered how to make my electronic keyboard work. I'd plugged in the outlet marked 'out' into the inlet marked 'out' instead of into the inlet marked 'in'. How stupid of me! **Jim Litton**, my distinguished predecessor at Trinity, has recently been given an hon. doctorate. How supa - well deserved. (Aye me!)

The next day Trinity celebrated its 160 birthday with an enormous lunch for over 500 folk in a nearby school. I then dashed off to Pennsylvania to conduct a Princeton Singers' concert in the most ENORMOUS former private house. I've been in some big American homes, but this one takes the biscuit! We sang in the library which has a ceiling nearly as high as that in Westminster Abbey (really!) and in the transepts (sic) were immense windows copied from those in Chartres Cathedral. The walls were decorated with 13th century tapestries and there was the occasional genuine mediaeval statue to fill in the blank spaces. We were staggered. The organisers were also staggered because they'd been expecting a modest audience (especially as it was raining hard) but folk flooded in (sic) and there wasn't even standing room. We were promptly invited back for a repeat performance next year.

NOVEMBER

4 Th. Letter from **Fred Swann** at the Crystal Cathedral, LA. His choir sang my 'Proclaiming Pentecost' last Sunday. It would be relayed world-wide during their weekly one-hour televised service on Nov. 7th. Yippee!

5 Fri. Given a compleat fizzle by my friendly doctor, a choir parent with two boys and wife in our choirs. AOK PTL! Note from my dental insurance people: they won't pay anything toward my crownings! Ho hum!

6 Sat. Wedding of **Diane Caruso**, this year's president of the Princeton Singers. During the reception in her home I met a music-publisher fellow guest who also has a supa music program on his home computer. His cost \$2,000; mine cost \$190! Also, **Mindy Whiting**, one of our most versatile soprs in the Singers, told me that she would, after all, be remaining with us this season. (There had been a strong possibility of her moving away). Hallelujah - for she was to be our major soloist in **Aaron Copland's** 'In the beginning' - the main choral work for our England tour - and the central work in our concert for the Hereford Three Choirs' concert. We all brothe again!

8 Mon. Superb chorister-boys' rehearsal - they all sight-read so wonderfully I could hardly stand it! Ditto the amazing teens. (Six major new anthems in the New Church Anthem Book.) My Book #1 really came alive that night!

9 Tu. Opened a letter from **Harry Bramma**, director of the RSCM. He wants me to give a workshop in England next June on how I teach singers to read music. Alas, I can't get over there at that time. Five mins. later I received a 'phone call from WCC inviting me to give a 5-day, 6 hours a day, course on choirtraining and sight-singing in July. Yes - I can get there, it's only half a mile down the road!

11 Th. Cleared the desk in my office - the first time for several years! Clearly I must have read my Book #1, for I tell in that How to Do It!

13 Sat. Led a workshop for NJ choirmasters on sight-singing at Trinity Cathedral, Trenton. Afterwards one of them came up to me and said, "That was marvelous! You remind me of John Cleese!"

14 Sun. **Neil** (next door neighbor) **Okun** gave me the bill for work he's done recently on my house. It cost as much as two new teeth. (I've got teeth on the brain!)

T18 Th. My second book had gotten stuck somewhat due to pressure of other things. So I got up at 6.0am today and really began to unstuck it. Augsburg wanted it by the New Year - I'd completed only 1/3 during recent months! During the next few weeks I

worked on it with increasing speed and desperation as the deadline approached!

21 Sun Lots of TV programs on President **Kennedy**. It was 30 years ago today that he was assassinated. I remember that I was in the vestry of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, about to take a choir practice, when the senior choirman told me the news. The world has not been the same since.

22 Mon. Heard the glad tidings that **Michael Nicholas**, who succeeded me at Northampton and eventually became organist of Norwich Cathedral, was to be the first CEO of the Royal College of Organists. I was delighted, for he is a superb organiser and one of the best committee men I've ever met.

29 Mon. Proof of 'I was glad' arrived from **Kevin Mayhew** in England. He does a wonderful job.

DECEMBER

Was MC for Trinity's annual parish preview party for our St. Nicholas Fair - which raises well over \$20,000 in one weekend for the church's finances. Wore a bright green sweater, red trousers and a white jacket - felt like a Christmas tree! Being compulsorily ebullient for three hours non-stop was pretty exhausting, but the organisers seemed pleased and the money rolled in.

The next day my Singers gave their Christmas concert in a nearby nearly new RC church. We were given a standing ovation - which augured well for John Baker's recording of it for NPR. (They broadcast our performance of the Byrd 'Great Magnificat', which we would be singing in St. Paul's Cathedral in August.) One of the audience carols was my arrangement of 'Good King Wenceslas' in double canon. Some of the patrons found this slightly confusing as I also told them that they had to stand when they sang and sit when they didn't. Those who were with it enjoyed it!

6 Tu. Augsburg accepted my setting of 'There is a green hill' which had been televised in August in South Africa, and Musical Opinion published another of my articles - on the amazing organ in Longwood Gardens, near Philadelphia (the American equivalent of Kew). I'd recently attended a superb organ recital in the ballroom there given by **Lee Dettra**, organist of the Military Academy of West Point (the American Sandhurst). His technique was staggering - so was the organ! The Longwood publicity said that their area of greenhouses was as great as three English Cathedrals but without comparable acoustics.. But how many English cathedral have waterfalls and tropical plants as far as the eye can see - or a ballroom?

8 Th. Quick 'hi' telephone call from **Ivor Bolton** in London, former Blackburn chorister. He's just been appointed conductor of the Scottish Chamber Symphony Orchestra, in addition to being conductor of the Glyndebourne Touring Opera. He's rather talented!

19 Sun. Superb Christmas concert in Trinity Church by Trinity's massed choirs, with orchestra from Rutgers University. We sang Britten's 'St. Nicolas' and RVW's 'Fantasia on Christmas Carols' (the latter conducted by my supa assoc. choirmaster, **Robert Palmer**) which the ubiquitous **John Baker** recorded and which was broadcast nationwide on National Public Radio on Christmas Eve. Wow!

Cousin **Dick** in England, Sheila's husband, sent me a cutting from the Daily Telegraph concerning politically correct inclusivity madness which is afflicting some Yule-tide celebrations in the old country. Quotes: Children at a school in Essex will sit on Mother

Christmas's knee... she says she is striking a blow for equality. 'We have Mother Christmas out on the sleigh delivering presents all over the world and calling in on her mobile phone to make sure that Father Christmas is cooking the dinner properly at home.' ... 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' will be shortened (sic) to 'Snow White' for it was 'irresponsible to put on a show with a name which could cause offence to people who suffer from a disease which restricts their growth.' ... And New College, Oxford, has exiled its Christmas tree because it would 'represent a violation of the individual's public space.' The greeting 'Happy Christmas' is replaced by 'Happy Winter (Non-denominational) Festival.' Yuck!

Fabulous Christmas Eve services at Trinity with lots of alumni returning to us from colleges all over the country to sing in our vast choir. When the Rector announced at both services that our choirs would be heard on NPR that evening, the congregations burst into applause! It started to snow during the midnight service and afterwards the choirboys wrote 'Merry Christmas' in the snow on my car. That was beautiful!

30 Th. Finally finished the first draft of book #2 - hallelujah! All that remains to be done is to revise it and then go through the grinding process of proof-reading, once the publishers get their hands on it.

JANUARY 1994

1 Sat. Phone call from **Keith Bond** in Aldeburgh, England (my former sub org at Bbn Cath.) In retirement, he's now hon. organist at Aldeburgh Parish Church - where Britten-Pears lived. He'd just played for soprano **Joan Cross**'s funeral and Everyone was there. She had been intimately associated with Britten in the first performances of his early operas: she created Ellen Orford in 'Peter Grimes' and Lady Billows in 'Albert Herring'. An era was passing from us.

3 Mon. Exciting day: **Choristers Guild** accepted a children's anthem I had written - 'Alleluia, come let us sing'. **Augsburg** intend to publish my book #2 by April! Received three most encouraging letters from RSCM reps. in Australia who want me to conduct festivals for them when I go there in 1995! My chorister boys and teens sight-read **Walton's Te Deum** amazingly well - just like book #1. A music student from Susquehanna University came to watch our splendid practices for this week - just like book #2! He liked what he saw - so did I!

4 Tu. Snowed up - everything cancelled, so spent 10 hours at home proof-reading the 2nd draft of book #2 and compiling an index.

11 Tu. Began teaching my composition class at WCC: a mixture of grad. and undergrad. students - some really rather talented. They appreciated my method of making them think for themselves rather than my pouring out endless boring wisdom at them! Letter from **South African Boychoir School** - they are considering varied possibilities re my coming to them after retirement. Life is exciting!

13 Th. Proof of my 'All things bright and beautiful' arrived from **Aureole** publishers. S'good!

17 Mon. Earthquake in Los Angeles (6.6 on the Richter scale) causing major roadways and apartment blocks to collapse. Called a friend who lives in Hollywood, **Eric Laurie**. He said that he heard it coming at 4.30am He jumped out of bed and held on to the TV set while the building rocked and water slopped out of the fish bowl! It's amazing where you go to for comfort in a crisis!

18 Tu. Weather still freezing. Work cancelled. Stayed at home and took down 182 Christmas cards from friends all over the world (thank you!) which I'd pinned to the genuine imitation oak beams in my sitting room. **Ann McGoldrick** called, (she is the Princeton Singers' wonderful concerts' manager and whirlwind energetic organiser incarnate), with the news that Princeton Rotary Club would sponsor the three High School members of the Singers to the tune of \$250 each for our forthcoming tour of English Cathedrals. Supa!

19 Wed. State of emergency declared in NJ and PA due to zero temps. and icy roads. Schools cancelled for the entire week. Lovely letter from a graduating teen who'd sung in our choir for 10 years, thanking me for changing the course of his life. It's worth framing. **'Thank you'** are the second two most important words read my book #2!) after the two words 'I will'!

22 Sat. Trinity's choir of Men, senior Boys and Girls (MBG) enjoyed a supa weekend singing at Garden City Cathedral, Long Island, with their choir, directed by **Robert Ludwig**. We gave a concert of coronation music to a packed cathedral on the Sat. nite. I rehearsed the audience in the 'vixats' of Parry's 'I was glad' and got them so wowed up that they felt sorry they were a republic.

28 Fri. Final fitting of my four crowns. A letter from another choir teen in which he said, 'How thankful I am for everything you've done for me, directly, indirectly, musically, intellectually and spiritually. I would run out of ink before I ran out of words...' Thank you! That's sort of letter that puts the frosting on an already glorious cake.

30 Sun. Watched the last two episodes of the British 4-part serial 'To play the King' on TV - and was so upset by the ending that I hardly slept that night. **Francis Urquhart** got away with it!

FEBRUARY

2 Wed. Proof of my 'To live with Jesus hour by hour' - an anthem for 2-part trebles, arrived from **Kevin Mayhew**. I like it!

5 Sat. Sent book #2 on two floppy disks to Augsburg. It is finish-ed!

8 Tu. Snowed up again. Two hi-school young men called to offer to unsnow me for \$25. We bargained and they did it for \$17, excluding the driveway. I like American initiative!

11 Fri. Snowed up again, so began typing my Christmas Newsletter!

12 Sat. Finished the 1st draft of my Newsletter. Dug out again by same two young men. One of them asked me about the 2nd world war. "You're probably too young to remember it, but..." Nice young man!

14 Mon. Wonderful review by **Michael Fleming** in RSCM world-wide magazine of my book #1. He recommended that choirmasters purchase both the book and the accompanying video! Exuberant letter from **Kay McLennan**, the RSCM rep in Australia, looking forward to helping me plan my visit there in 1995. Hallelujah!

16 Wed. **Kit Sherrill**, Trinity's assoc. Rector, told me that, after his brother died recently, his brother's daughter sat with her father's coffin at the undertaker's and felt she should talk to him as though he were still alive. She poured out her heart to him, bidding him farewell. Suddenly felt herself "suffused with a warm glow for fully three minutes and heard her father's voice saying, 'Everything is all right!'" Hallelujah!

17 Th. Proofs of 'How lovely on the mountains' and 'See amid the winter's snow' arrived from **Augsburg**. Up at 5.00 am to try to juggle space for photographs with space for text in my Newsletter. Something has to

go! FAX from **Richard Cock** in South Africa (one of my amazing hosts last August and long-time friend). He wanted 180 copies of my 'Jesus Christ arose from death on Easter Day' from **Fiammer** 'cos his SA Broadcasting Corp. choral society and orchestra would be televising it nationwide next month and they needed to learn it!

18 Fri. Took my Newsletter to the printers. The girl said that 1,200 copies would cost me \$90. Then she consulted her boss and revised her estimate to \$400! She eventually charged me \$324, but I'd have to collate and staple them myself. OK, OK!

23 Wed. To Seattle to lead workshops - but first I had to get to the airport by coach. It was snowing hard and messages came over the intercom saying 'no planes have taken off today!' We finally arrived at the airport after slithering most of the way and I landed at Seattle 1 1/2 hours late and was met by delightful hosts **David & Lisbeth Harje**, former members of Trinity's adult choir who now live in a most beautiful home filled with flowers, paintings and sculptures and with three balconies overlooking one of the myriad lakes in the Pacific Northwest. Exquisite!

The next day **Robert Poovey** ('Bob from Seattle')



Robert, Lisbeth & David with three balconies

came to lunch, then took me to his home, for I was to lead a workshop for Seattle choirmasters at his church for the next two days. We had over 70 there who were enormously enthusiastic and very responsive.

On the Sunday evening Robert took me to one of the most amazing services I've ever attended. It was **Compline**, sung in Seattle Cathedral, by some 12 men, directed by the former cathedral organist, **Peter Hallock**. The fame of these services has spread right across the US, for Peter started them some 20 years ago: wholly plainsong with a couple of Renaissance anthems in a darkened cathedral - and that's it! BUT it quickly attracted the young folk, and every week the place is packed to the doors by 500 teenagers and students in jeans and baseball caps. We got there early and found a quiet corner where we could see. The young folk began to stream in a good half hour before the service began; they sat in the pews, or lay on the floor and were wholly silent. The singing began in a corner of the cathedral lit by only one light. Everyone was so still I thought they'd gone to sleep, but, NO; when the creed began they all stood up as one - amazing! For the second half of the service I, too, lay on the floor and let the music soak into my soul. Hallelujah again.

MARCH

4 Fri. Amazing Day: (1) **Bunny Ashley-Botha** confirmed the arrangement we had arrived at re my being there: i.e. to be visiting director of his SA Boychoir

for one month for three consecutive years after I retire. Wow! (ii) **Choristers Guild** sent me a nice royalty for sale of some compositions of mine which they publish. (iii) Phone message saying that the **Princeton Singers** will be featured on 'With Heart and Voice' - a nationwide classical music program - in April. (iv) Amazingly generous letter from **Dr. George Guest**, recently retired director of music at St. John's College, Cambridge, in which he said, of the Singers' CD, 'I had no idea that the Princeton Singers were of quite such an exceedingly high standard. I don't think I have ever heard a better performance...many congratulations!' Thank you, George!

7 Mon. Call from **James Whitbourn**, BBC, who produces the annual King's Carol service. "We're all very disturbed by the lack of your Newsletter; the whole of the [English] cathedral world is agog!" Was able to reassure him that copies were, at that moment, winging their way across the Atlantic to him and to my former colleagues! He also invited the Singers to broadcast Choral Evensong, live, from St. Paul's Cathedral during our August tour. Super! (It didn't work out in the end, but it was nice to be asked.) He also told me that my successor at Blackburn Cathedral, **David Cooper**, had just been appointed to Norwich Cathedral, where he would succeed my successor from Northampton days, **Michael Nicholas**. The cathedral world is very small!

8 Tu Letter from **Fred Swann** (from you-know-where) offering my Singers the opportunity to sing on the Hour of Power worldwide television service, should we ever plan a concert tour of the West coast of the US. Wow!

11 Fri. Drove to Baltimore to lead a workshop for the splendid choir of the Church of the Redeemer (choirmaster, **Henry Lowe**) and watched by some 40 choirmasters. I was so impressed by the choir's enthusiasm and excellence as we worked at the Howells 'Coll. Reg Mag 'n Nunc' and my 'Abide with me' - and impressed also by their modern church which is enormous - but which has no choirstalls! Suggested an experimental form of seating for the choir which Henry and his supa singers felt would work. Stayed in a most gracious home which had three balconies (this is becoming a habit!) overlooking rolling Maryland countryside. My hosts, **Eddie & Joyce Brown**, could not have been more welcoming or attentive; a fabulous dinner, a whisky nightcap and then tea brought to me in bed the next morning! Those were two most wonderful days - thank you!

12 Sat The C of E ordained women for the first time!

15 Tu. Received a fabulous video recording of a half-hour TV programme made about my visit to S. Africa last August, which was relayed on S. African TV in Feb. I was thrilled to bits for **Ed Worster**, senior TV producer, had done a marvellously painstaking job in putting together a whole range of things I had done during four multi-faceted days in J'burg, from leading a couple of choral workshops for a 100 high-schoolers and also for an equal number of adults, to playing the organ in J'burg Cathedral, conducting a rehearsal with the SABC Choral Society, composing music, being interviewed about my Christian beliefs, and feeding ducks! Golly and Wow!

17 Th. Letter from the House of Lords expressing concern that my Newsletter hadn't yet arrived!

20 Sun. Enjoyed giving a joint organ recital in Trinity with **Tom Goeman**, superbly meticulous organist

who lives in Princeton and plays in Bethlehem (Pennsylvania!) We'd imported a large Allen electronic organ for the occasion which was set up at the East end of the church, with our 4-manual Casavant at the West end, and proceeded to play 'musical tennis' with Bach's T & F in d mi, Vierne's Final and a whole lot of other lollipops with each of us running from one end of the church to the other as we changed organs. It was great fun and the large audience seemed to enjoy it, too.

22 Tu. To the dentist for my 6-monthly inspection. He said, "You need five more crowns!" Oh dear, Oh bank balance!

23 Wed. Gave lunchtime recital in Princeton University Chapel. I was told that I played to the largest lunchtime audience they had had so far. The organ is glorious - rebuilt by **Mander** a couple of years ago - the chapel is the third largest University Chapel in the world - King's is first, and Duke second, being a foot longer than Princeton. (Rather a nice Royal succession - King/Duke/Prince!)

25 Fri. To Atlantic City, 70 miles away on the NJ shore, with the omnipresent **John Baker**, who knows the Right People, for he'd arranged for me to play the largest organ in the world - which is in the Convention Center of that gambling seaside city. This was to fulfil an ambition I've had since student days. When we arrived we were warmly greeted by the organ's curator who told us that, alas, a national fair was being held in the ENORMOUS center, and so I couldn't play it. (Have you ever felt frustrated?) However he showed us the organ's interior, and we were impressed beyond measure by the superb maintenance thereof. We saw the 100" solo trumpet and the 64ft full-length diaphone pipes which were highly polished and glistened like antique furniture - but this only whetted my appetite to try again when the hall was free.

John entertained me prodigiously on our journey there and back, recounting some of his distinguished family's history. His grandfather had defined the territorial limits of space for the then President of the US (= the distance at which an object may maintain itself in orbit). His great uncle had had the idea of making the original King Kong climb up the Empire State building. Princeton is filled with the most fascinating people!

26 Sat. Yet another letter from **Fred Swann**! The Crystal Cathedral is re-televising my 'Jesus Christ arose from death' Easter anthem this Easter Day. They relayed it last Easter (having recorded it the previous Easter). Hallelujah! My Singers gave a supa concert in Princeton that evening - several folk came because of some rather good publicity in last week's NY Times, with photo!

28 Mon. Some pretty rewarding mail today, including letters from four English cathedral organists: **John Scott**, organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, said that half the organ would be out of use during August when we would be there, due to rebuilding work. Ho hum! **Paul Hale**, organist of Southwell Minster and editor of a national music magazine, asked me for four articles on how I teach choristers to read music. Yes! - (but I still haven't got round to it!) **Allan Wicks**, former organist of Canterbury Cathedral, said that he and **Elizabeth**, looked forward to hearing my Singers at the Hereford Three Choirs Festival in August. **Stephen Cleobury**, of King's College, Cambridge, asked for a copy of my book #1 on teaching choristers to read music. I phoned the publishers who promptly sent him a complimentary copy, plus the video!

30 Wed. **Carol Carver**, 1/c religious music publishing at Augsburg, called to say that they like my Book #2 but would have to find the right title. I suggested, 'Everything You Wanted To Know About Choirtraining But Didn't Learn At Music College!' They didn't like that! What about 'The Church Musician's Hand And Foot Book'? Try again! '101 Immediately Practical Secrets (and More) For The Successful Church Musician'? No!

APRIL

11 Mon. Call from **John-Michael Caprio**, director of music of St. Patrick's RC Cathedral, New York City, inviting me to bring my Men 'n Boys 'n senior Girls choir (MBG) to join with his choir and professional orchestra in December for a performance of RVW's Christmas cantata 'Hodie'. We couldn't manage the date he suggested, so he changed it to one which we could! Wow!

15 Fri. To Madison, Wisconsin, for a bizzee weekend. My hosts, **Chappie and Linda Stowe** who are well-known church musicians in this country, had prepared a fascinating program for me: I was guest speaker at a dinner for clergy and choirmasters, worked with the Madison Boychoir for an afternoon, and conducted a festival for 250 children (when we sang my 'Christ upon the mountain peak' which I'd composed for them when in S. Africa). The kids sang very well and were given a standing ovation by the large congregation at the end of the service. Halfway through the rehearsal with this vast choir of children, a 12-year old boy asked me a question. I didn't quite catch what he said, so I asked him to repeat it. He did, but I couldn't believe my ears, so I went up to him and asked him to repeat it once more. He said, 'Do you want to become a Pastor when you grow up?' I was so stunned by this that, for once, I was speechless!

18 Mon. Proof of my cantata 'The Crown of My Rejoicing' arrived from **Aureole**. I'd composed it a couple of years earlier for the fabulous choir of St. Wilfrid's School, Blackburn who'd given a superb performance of it in Blackburn Cathedral which thrilled me to the core. Now it's available for worldwide use! The next day I spent over four hours with my dentist for the first of four appointments for my five new crowns. I was beginning to feel quite at home there!

23 Sat. The Princeton Singers threw a Gracious English Afternoon Tea, on this St. George's Day, for patrons who were supporting the money-raising efforts for our August tour of English Cathedrals. (We had enough to get us there, but not enough to bring us back!) It was so British I could hardly stand it! **Ann McGoldrick** hired a company which specialised in staging afternoon teas and we were confronted by willowy ladies in long flowing dresses, complete with hats and gloves who poured tea from silver tea pots so beautifully that I thought, at first, they must be wives of senators!

The Minister for Trade from the British Consulate in New York was there with his lady, and also the Mayor of Princeton, who's name was **Phyllis**. As the first madrigal we sang to the assembled throng was 'Fab Phyllis' the afternoon got off to a good start and we raised an appreciable sum of money.

Two of the most talented and delightful cathedral organists in this country blew in to see me this week: **Bruce Neswick** (Ch. Ch. Cathedral, Lexington, KY) was at WCC leading a course on improvising. His playing there blew the students away - his brilliance is staggering and we enjoyed a delightful lunch together,

with **Steve Pilkington**, head of the church music dept at WCC who had originally invited me to teach the course on composing. Bruce attended one of my classes, which I found slightly daunting, but he was kind enough to nod his head more than several times when I made constructive points to the students vis-a-vis inspiration! **John Fenstermaker** (Grace Cathedral San Francisco)'s continual ebullience has to be experienced to be believed. He erupted into my office one day, spotted my pedal-piano - he'd not seen one before - sat down at it and launched himself into a melange of pop music which had the whole place rocking! Papers were flying everywhere and I had to tidy up after he left - but it was worth it!

26 Tu. South African Election Day. One of my Princeton Singers, **Grant Parker**, who comes from Cape Town and is pursuing a doctorate in Classics here, was now eligible to vote for the very first time - which he did at the SA Consulate in New York. He arrived at the Singers' rehearsal that night slightly late, but when he walked into the practice room he was greeted with a round of applause from us all. He was glowing, as were we!

MAY

1 Sun. To New York for the night where I was attending a choral workshop the next day. I stayed with **John and Birdie Burdick**, long-time friends and parents of **Owen**, who is the staggeringly talented director of music of Trinity Church, Wall St., NYC (probably the richest church in the world, as it owns much of the Wall St. area). John & Birdie made me wonderfully welcome, even though Birdie was not feeling too well and retired back to bed after saying 'hi'. I was blessed, for they are such a gently gracious couple.

The next day I enjoyed a supa time at St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave., where **Gerre Hancock** presides fabulously over the finest men 'n boys choir in the country, and where **George Guest** (see March 4) was leading a weekend for choirmasters from all over the US, demonstrating his techniques with the St. Thos choir and sharing his erudite and splendid thoughts with us all. Almost Everyone was there and I enjoyed a tremendous time, not only listening to George, but also fraternising with some of the most delightful and talented colleagues you would wish to meet.



Bruce Neswick (Lexington Cath. Kentucky), **George Guest**, **Brian Jones** (Trinity, Boston), **Gerre Hancock** (St. Thomas NYC), **Bob Guade** (President RSCM in America, Akron Ohio), in between a couple of George's engaging lectures in Saint Thomas' Church.

That evening, **Brian Jones**, invited me and a few other friends for drinks in the apartment where he was

staying. Well - I've been in some fabulous apartments in my time, but none can match that belonging to **Chris Babcock**, who lives on the 60th floor of a modern apartment skyscraper which has, probably, the finest view in the world. His enormous sitting room (with grand piano and enormous settee festooned with cushions) has a vast curved window which occupies fully 2/3rds of the wall space. From it you have a panoramic view of the whole of New York, from the twin towers of the World Trade Center on the left, through the Empire State in the middle, only a few blocks away, to the United Nations Building and the East River on the right. As we downed gin and tonics surrounded by spectacular views and delightful company, the sun gradually set over the most exciting city in the world. Wow! And to think that my retirement was a little over 2 years away; how could I bear to leave all this behind me?

The next day, another member of my Princeton Singers caused us to break into applause. **Stephen Jackson**, a delightful Irish tenor, and grad student at Pr. Univ., who sang with **David Willcocks** when he was a student in London, (Stephen, not Sir D!) announced that he had been summoned to Rwanda to assist with the famine relief there. He was understandably nervous, for so many of his friends had been massacred there in recent weeks - but an even worse hazard was the disease from decaying bodies which was rampant and which could strike anyone at any time. We sent him off with our blessing and unrestrained admiration.

The next day **Kevin Mayhew** sent me his latest publication, a beautiful collection of anthems for two and three voices, which included my 'To live with Jesus'. I was thrilled. The day after **Augsburg** published my 'Christ upon the mountain peak' and the day after that they published my 'How lovely on the mountains'. That evening I auditioned a fabulous soprano who wanted to join my Singers. She had previously sung in the **Gregg Smith Singers** (a highly esteemed choir in the US) and had also been a professional sop. in a major NYC church. In addition she was the most delightful person. I knew that the Singers would welcome her - next season - for we were already full for this!

But the next day I received a telephone call from **Owen Burdick** to tell me that his Mother, **Birdie**, had died very suddenly the previous day. I was stunned, for I had stayed with her only five days earlier. I wept with him at the loss of such a lovely Mother and dear Friend.

15 Sun Auditioned a potential new boy for Trinity choir - he was quite good. "Have you sung before?" "Yes - in Hansel and Gretel." "When did you start singing?" "When I became human after being a cookie!"

Went to dinner that night with choir parents **Ted & Benita Ryan** (whose unsurpassed hostmanship has appeared in previous editions of these Newsletters) Their matchless welcome can only be equalled by the beauty of their 1684-1994 home, their exquisite cuisine and the fascinating conversation of their distinguished guests. Tonight one of their guests was **John-Michael Caprio** (see April 11) whose topics included not only the upcoming visit of my choir to his cathedral but more particularly the visit of the Pope to St. Patrick's for which he was commissioning special music, including an anthem for choir, organ and three brass bands. It's sometimes difficult to keep one's end up in such company!



Ted & Benita with John Michael Caprio

The Princeton Singers gave a concert in Philadelphia the next day, and were accorded another standing ovation - so I felt my end coming up!

25 Wed. Proof of my book #2 arrived - Augsburg want it back by next Wed! A number of passages had been improved, others amended, including six infinitives split! I found five of them!

26 Th. Final dinner of the season for my MBG choir and their families. We fed some 150 folk who were in party mood, and afterwards one choir parent, whose child had been with us for 10 formative years, showed his gratitude by giving me a check for \$1,000 to help with the music program. I was staggered!

I was staggered the next day, too, for I finally played the Largest Organ in the World! **John Baker** (again!) again drove me to Atlantic City, armed with the sure and certain knowledge that there were no Miss World or dog shows scheduled for that day. We were loaded with professional recording equipment and two cameras ready to record this once-in-a-lifetime experience. How can I describe it? The Convention Hall is as big as Victoria Station (the Brighton line) - but completely empty - and so the acoustics were like those of a responsive English Cathedral. It occupies four city blocks, is as high, inside as a 13 storey building and holds 41,000 people. The organ chambers are scattered



around the entire building. - the two biggest being on either side of the colossal stage. The seven-manual, 1,255-stop organ console, on one side of the stage, is gargantuanly vast - the lowest two manuals having a range, not of five octaves, as is usual, but seven! I played Purcell's trumpet tune as he would have wished, on the 100" wind pressure solo trumpet, and The Star-Spangled Banner and God Save the Queen with full pedal which was so loud and so low, with its 64ft diaphones and 21 1/3ft. reeds, that I felt like Thor playing up a thunderstorm! It was an experience that I shall never forget, and my gratitude to John for making it all possible is boundless.

The next day it was my priceless privilege to conduct, in New York, **Owen Burdick's** superb professional choir from Trinity Church, Wall Street, for the memorial service for his dear mother, **Birdie**. They sang Howells' 'Take him earth, for cherishing' and 'Loch Lomond' and were so responsive to my conducting that I could hardly stand it. When, at the end of the service, Owen played, exquisitely, Schumann's *Träumerei* on the piano, you could feel him saying goodbye to his mother; there wasn't a dry eye in the church. Afterwards there was a champagne and strawberries reception on the church porch where it was so good to mingle with distinguished friends - especially **Alec Wyton** who had had both Owen and Richard in his choir as boys at St. John the Divine Cathedral, NYC. That was one of the most special hours of my life and I thank **Owen**, his dad **John**, and brother **Richard** for welcoming me thus into their most loving family.

31 Tu. Halfway through the Princeton Singers' weekly rehearsal **Stephen Jackson** walked in - having returned safely from Rwanda. The room erupted into applause, for we were so relieved to have him back with us safely. However, at the end of the practice he confided to me that his colleagues in that troubled country were so distressed when he left them with so much work still to do, that he agreed to return for three months, starting the following week. He promised to meet us in England, ready for our tour - which he did. To know a hero is a pretty uplifting experience, especially as he wouldn't think of himself thus!

JUNE

The next day I watched the movie **IQ** being filmed a couple of hundred yards down the road from Trinity Church. It features **Einstein**, who came to Princeton in the 1930s when he left Germany, and the film people were making a fair amount of it on location - EXCEPT that, when they measured Einstein's house, they found it a little too small, so they moved into the house next door, which was larger, after altering the façade to look identical to Einstein's actual house! The stars and the cast ate lunch daily in Trinity's church hall - we were invited to join them. The food was delicious and very plentiful - it should be, for it was flown in every day from California!

Princeton is a pretty special place, for it's teeming with brainy world leaders. The Rector took the church staff to dinner in a nearby restaurant that night. A man and his wife were just leaving. "Do you know who that is?" asked the Rector. "No." "It's **Bruce Metzger!**" "Who's he?" I asked. "He chaired the panel which translated the New RSV Bible!" I also learned that **John Wheeler**, who coined the phrase **Black Hole** in 1967 following Einstein's equation of general relativity, was a Princeton Physicist. One keeps bumping into these folk!

The next day I sent off the proofed book #2 to **Carol Carver** at Augsburg. They'd come up with a title which I didn't really like - it sounded so boring: 'John Bertalot's Immediately Practical Hints for Choral Directors'. The contents are not boring! There must be a better title somewhere for the second printing - any suggestions?

By the way friends in various parts of the world have asked where they can get copies of my books and music: In America from Clifford Hill, University Store, University Avenue, Princeton NJ 08540. FAX 609-924-9651. In England the books can be ordered from the RSCM. Again, please 'scuse commercial - but you did ask!

12 Sun. To lunch with two wonderfully supportive former choir parents, **Aristides** and **Pat Georgantas** (whose photos appeared on page 1 of last year's Newsletter). This was a working lunch. Their daughter, **Susie**, was to be married in Trinity in the Fall and she and her parents wanted some special music. Dad, who is President of a NJ Bank, thinks big - and so, after 6 hours of planning aided by delicious cuisine and suitable liquids, we agreed that there would be three choirs, a professional orchestra, two organs and soloists. The music would include the whole of a Handel coronation anthem as well as other delights. Order your copy of next year's Newsletter to find out how it went!

Two days later **Ken Willy** arrived from Tasmania to stay with me for a couple of days. Ken is director of the chapel choir in the splendid school to which I have been invited for five weeks in 1995 and we were able to get a lot of preparatory work done. When I met him at the station the temperature was 100° and the air-conditioning in my car didn't work. In Princeton we certainly have Weather!

For nearly a year those of us who drive along the main road from Lawrenceville to Princeton had become increasingly frustrated by a set of traffic light which were clearly faulty. They took no notice of traffic flow and went through the whole gamut of changes at a cross-roads, including turn left/right only, every 2 minutes, day and night, regardless of how many cars were or were not waiting. This caused half-mile-long hold ups during the rush hour and also angered waiting motorists at night when there was no other traffic around. Every time I was held up at these lights, which was generally four times a day, going and coming, I made a mental note to contact a former choir parent who works in the traffic division of Lawrenceville town hall - but when I arrived at my office there were always so many other things to do I never remembered. However, this month I did remember. I wrote to him and explained the problem. The following week workman appeared, they dug up the road, repaired the faulty mechanism, re-paved the road and, lo and behold, the lights returned to being helpfully obedient to traffic flow, instead of blindly incorrigible. I really felt I had contributed, not a little, to the welfare of my fellow New Jerseyans!

18 Sat. My Princeton Singers gave a superb concert in the University Chapel of the special music they planned to sing at the Hereford Three Choirs Festival in August. It was incredibly hot and we felt that we would do well to attract an audience of 200, for there were a number of other major musical events in Princeton that evening. However there were well over 600 folk there who braved the humidity and the heat who gave us yet another standing ovation. One devotee

had driven from Virginia to be with us, and another from Boston, 6 hours away! We all felt enormously encouraged. England, here we come!

22 Wed. To NYC for lunch with **John Bednall**, headmaster of the Hutchins School, Tasmania, (my host for 5 weeks in 1995) to discuss details of my visit. Both of us were cheered by our face-to-face meeting, and eagerly looked forward to the fulfilment of what we had planned.

Afterwards I walked to the Church of the Holy Family next to the United Nations, where **Chris Babcock** is organist (See May 2). He, too, has electronic 32fts on his pedal, created by **Bob Walker**, who installed ours 8 years ago. But technology has improved by leaps and bounds since those days and I was excited by Chris's more recent additions. How good it would be to have ours updated, too! Chris then took me back to his fabulous apartment for a repeat performance of gin and tonics, in company with a couple of delightful young friends from LA who were staying with him. Chris is a most generous host but I don't remember too clearly how I got home after we had enjoyed a supa dinner together. (It was by train!)

24 Fri. Received an amazing letter of thanks from a choir parent whose kid (neuter gender to retain anonymity) had just graduated from Hi school in which she said that singing with us at Trinity had rescued (the kid) *'both spiritually and intellectually from the awful pit of [the kid's] first encounters here.'* Wow! It was a long letter and I dare not quote more lest my humility-count sinks to a new low! Two days later I went to the post-graduation party of another choir-teen whose mother told me that, singing with us at Trinity *'had kept [her kid] together when [kid] was falling apart'*. Little does one know the effect one has on people - this is such a privileged life.

At the final dinner of the MBG choir, which was attended by 150 singers and their families, two of my teens, who've been with me for ten years, mindful of my book #2 which had just been published in which their names appear, and in which I carefully say that everything one says to a choir must be constructive and helpful, decided to give me a booklet containing quotes

of what I've actually said during practices.

Zac Price & Brad Gleim had been taking down these bon mots for quite some time, unbeknown to me. They read out a few to the assembled throng and mirth ruled the day! *'You sound like a chimpanzee about to throw up! Never sound as though you've slept in a dustbin! Can you imagine that you were brought up to speak to old ladies so that they could understand you? This music can sound like an elephant with a weight problem! Would you look as if you are constantly looking forward instead of wondering what day it is!'*

The following three weeks were rather busy!

JULY

3 Sun. Flew to Atlanta to direct the RSCM girls' course. We had 70 girls there, plus choirmasters. 40 girls couldn't get in for there was no more room! I had a team of superb housemasters who taught notes to the girls, leaving me to add polish. Our organist was **David Fishburn**, sub-organist of Atlanta Cathedral who was splendid and who played for our two major services in his cathedral on the Sunday, and we were warmly welcomed by **Craig Cansler**, the new organist of the cathedral, who'd come hot-foot from Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, where he'd been **John Fenstermaker's** assistant. Everyone worked very hard, and I was delighted that the RSCM produced so many girls who showed that they really could concentrate for long periods.

That was a worthwhile week - made doubly so because one of Trinity's teens accompanied me. **Jesse Antin**, former head chorister and now accomplished 17-year old alto (who joined the Princeton Singers when he was only 15!) more than made his mark on the choirmasters who were there. *'He's fabulous! He can read the most difficult music immediately!'* Of course he can - that's what choirtraining is all about, isn't it? Jesse paid me a compliment which I appreciated greatly. After I had made a presentation to the choirmasters about how I teach singers to read music, he came up to me and said, "You actually do what you say you do!" Thank you, Jesse!



Zac Price reading, to the assembled MBGs and their families, some of the JB bon mots which he and **Brad Gleim** had collected over the years.

Behind is chairman **David Ruhf**, and on the right **Shelton Magee**, who appears, disguised as a new small boy, in JB's book #2.

I returned to Princeton the following week to lead a 5-day workshop for choirmasters who had come from all over the US of A: Florida, Utah, New York and even Canada! I demonstrated with some of Trinity's boys and girls how effective and simple it is to teach sight-singing - starting with my former 5 1/2 year-old, **Chuck Shafer**, who is now 6. He can read music, think intelligently and make a nice sound! My Book #2 was published at the end of that week, and all copies at WCC were snapped up! It looked rather good - apart from the title, for Music Secretary **Robbie Ellsworth** had taken a number of photos to illustrate the back cover.



An Ellsworth picture that wasn't printed in Book #2: JB with headboy **John Griffith** (Robbie's son) and **Charles Hagaman** (my doctor's son, whose younger brother, **William**, had been featured in my *'Five Wheels'* video.)

The following week I flew to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to take part in a choir course organised by the Choristers Guild with over 500 participants! This was my first experience with them which I found interesting for they have a somewhat different approach to training children.

The high-point of the week came for me when I was demonstrating to the vast number of choirmasters there how I teach sight-singing. I was making the point that the teaching of theory must always be 'married' to the practical application of actually singing. Searching in my mind for an example of how not to do it I remembered that I'd been staying with a certain internationally-known composer recently (I named him) who had a fine new electronic organ in his house. Several organists were visiting him that day and he asked the man who installed it to demonstrate its many superb features. For 20 minutes this man said, in effect, "This box is joined to this switch by this cable which is called so-and-so..." but we didn't actually hear what it could do until we were bored out of our mind. I said to the choirmasters, "That's a very good example of how not to teach." A lady in the front row stirred herself and said, "That was my husband!" The whole room collapsed in helpless laughter for fully two minutes!

AUGUST

1 Mon **Nancianne Parrella** came to see me in my office. "I've been offered the post of associate organist of St. Ignatius Loyala, New York," she told me, (see Oct 20), "but I don't want to leave you here at

Trinity. What should I do?" After five seconds' thought I said, "Of course you must go - it's a magnificent church with a superb director of music and the finest organ I have ever played. You are wholly right for it - but you must find us an organist to replace you here at Trinity!" Well, to cut a long story short, we did eventually find exactly the right organist to succeed fabulous Nanci, but there were many twists and turns en route - read on!

That evening I conducted a hymn-sing at WCC. The chapel was almost packed to the doors, thanks to some rather good publicity with photo (again) in the NY Times. Afterwards a father, wife and two daughters walked up to me and said, "We've just moved to Princeton and we all want to join a good church choir. May we join yours?" Yes!

Two days later I drove to Valley Forge Military Academy (where Washington won a great victory over the British in the days of our little misunderstanding!) to lecture at the RSCM course there which was being directed by **Paul Hale**, brilliant organist of Southwell Minster. (See March 28). He was incredibly kind and welcoming, and in his introductory remarks to the choirmasters he said that we'd first met when I had directed 2 RSCM courses at Westminster Abbey when he was a teen! The following day he wanted to visit Princeton, so I drove him here and showed him round - ending up at my house, where he saw, on a wall,



photographs of the two Abbey courses all those years ago, in which both of us appeared, looking considerably younger. That was a precious time of renewal of a cherished friendship.

The following day I had the final fitting of my 5 new crowns and, inci-dental-ly, paid the bill!

10 Wed. Flew to England, a couple of days ahead of the Singers, to prepare for our 2-week tour - which was fabulous! At 9.0 am the next day, after landing at Gatwick, I walked in to cousin **Dick & Sheila's** home in Reigate to find Sheila just going out to the dentist. This dentist business seems to be catching!

On my second day in England I went to dinner with **James & Alison Whitbourn** and their two young daughters in their delightful country cottage. James, BBC producer, took me for a walk thru the village and outlined delicious plans for broadcasts by both the Singers and also Trinity's MBG choir. I like walks like that!

Processing from the choir-room into the Abbey for Eucharist, wearing Trinity's choir robes!



by the beauty of holiness with which the clergy conducted the services. The residential canon's reading of the lessons almost had us in tears, especially when he read of the death of Absalom. We followed that reading by singing the same words set by Thos. Tomkins (I'd chosen this on purpose) and it was a fabulous experience for us all for we sang it wholly differently from the way we'd been rehearsing it because we all felt the spirit of the words come alive for us anew and every singer was watching me like a hawk! It was a particular delight to have cousins **Joan & Llewellyn** there for that most special service. **Tom Goeman**, (see March 20) accompanied us like a dream, and **John Baker** (see almost every page) recorded our every note. After our sixth service one of the canons told me that we were the finest visiting choir he'd heard during his time there, and that we must come again. Golly!

On the piano in St. Paul's choir room we noticed a cardboard box. We opened it and found inside something that every church choir should have - shoe-shining materials, little boys for the use of! **John Scott** (organist of St. Paul's) and **Jane** entertained me to a supa dinner in their lovely home one evening. John is one of the most talented and delightful of British Cathedral organists, and it was so good to bask in the Scotts' outgoing presence for a restful and refreshing evening.

We received a similar welcome at Westminster Abbey where we sang three services on a Sunday. They weren't too sure who we were to start off with, but they quickly changed their tune once the Singers opened their mouths and, at the end of the day, the dean himself came to thank us. "I don't usually do this," he told us, "but you are different from other visiting choirs. Please come again!"

It was a particular joy for me to meet, after almost every service and concert, friends from every part of England, and even from Scotland, who came to say 'hi'. Some of them went back to pre-historic times when I was first a student. I cannot begin to recount how much these re-encounters meant to me. My heart rejoiced with every friendship renewed. Thank you!

How can I adequately and succinctly describe what we all experienced during those fabulous two weeks (for this letter is over-long as it is)? No way! We'd been sent off with an autographed letter of good wishes from our friend Bill at the White House (which we happened to print in a pretty prominent place in our souvenir programs - well, wouldn't you?)

At St. Paul's Cathedral we were impressed beyond measure



Our concert in Hereford Cathedral for the Three Choirs Festival was one which we shall remember for the rest of our lives. We were told that we would be lucky if 600 came. Well, nearly 1,500 bought tickets in advance and there was hardly a spare seat. The mayors of Hereford and Princeton sat in the front row, but many had to watch us in the transepts on closed circuit TV because the nave was full. We were told that it was the largest audience they had ever had for such a concert - and the whole thing was recorded professionally on video for us. My cup ran over because **cousins Dick and Sheila** were there to enjoy it with me. Family means so very much to me, as do friendships, as this Newsletter to you demonstrates. Our host, **Roy Massey**, blew in to our rehearsal, before we changed into our supa concert clothes, and said a wonderful 'hi'. (See photo on p. 11: with **Grant Parker (p.6)**, 2nd on L, and **Stephen Jackson (p.7)**, 2nd front.R) It was entirely through Roy's encouraging initiative that our tour was arranged, for our Hereford concert was the catalyst from which all else flowed.

Having enjoyed an exhausting day at Hereford we were able to relax the next day at Gloucester where we were given a fabulous guided tour of that entrancingly beautiful cathedral by a guide, **Edna Jones**, who loved every stone and window, and who clearly loved every builder in centuries gone by who had created such a breath-taking masterpiece. We gave her a copy of our CD before we rehearsed for Evensong, and afterwards she told us that she had already listened to it in her car! **David Briggs**, the brilliantly gifted new organist of the cathedral welcomed us at our rehearsal. I'd met him first when he was only 14 and invited him to give an organ recital in Blackburn Cathedral - he did, and played the whole thing from memory. Shortly after that he won the King's organ scholarship and has never looked back. (King's organ scholars never look back!) He liked the setting of the canticles we sang there - by **Gerald Near** - so much so that he decided to order a set for his own choir.

Our visit to historic Tewkesbury was also restful, even though we gave a full-length concert there, which was, as ever, attended by so many friends from years past who had travelled long distances to say a loving 'hi'. It was a particular joy to meet again the Abbey sub-organist, **Andrew Sackett**, who had been a choir-training pupil of mine at the RNCM. His choir is one of the finest in the land - I'm proud of him!

And so, finally, to Blackburn - via Chester Cathedral where a few of us were given a fascinating tour of the cathedral, through the influence of two close friends there who know the Right People! It's perfectly possible to walk round these places with one's eyes open but the understanding shut - until someone opens it up for you. It's rather like the Gospel, I suppose!

At Blackburn we stayed with friends, wonderful friends, who opened not only their homes but their hearts to us. (After we'd returned to the US I asked one of the Singers which part of the tour he'd enjoyed most. "Blackburn", he said, "because of the wonderful people!! Hear, hear!) I'm not going to start naming names except **Frank Ashton**, organist of Mellor Parish Church who had arranged all our hospitality for us, and **Provoost David Frayne** who was our genial and generous host at the cathedral. We were surrounded at every turn by friends old and new, and I met so many dear former choristers of the cathedral that my cup ran over and made a norful mess on the floor! Thank you, all!

We sang a supa concert to a packed cathedral, which included the bishop and mayor, with friends from as far away as Norwich and two even from the USA! In the interval wine flowed like water (that's scriptural) but that didn't help our performance of Copland's 'In the beginning' which followed immediately, but as the audience had similarly imbibed, no-one noticed!

The next morning we were given an equally enthusiastic welcome by **Philip Duffy**, director of music of Liverpool's enormous RC Cathedral. He'd booked such a splendid lunch for us that we were 40 minutes late for our 45 minute-rehearsal before our final venue, Choral Evensong in Mellor Parish Church - the church in the village where I used to live, and where I planned to return in 2 years' time. Again, the church was packed with so many dear friends. It was hard to get away, but we had to for we had our own farewell dinner to get to that evening which was a riot. When our coach left Mellor for Heathrow the following morning, being waved off by our many Mellor friends, there was hardly a dry eye inside or outside the coach.

SEPTEMBER NEWS:

And so, back in the US to begin yet another packed season of music-making with all the wonderful folk who give so freely of their talents, their hearts, their friendships and their very selves. This is such a very special place that...

...well, the news is that, in December it was decided that I should stay at Trinity Church, for two further years past my originally planned retirement date - i.e until **Aug. 1998**. Whilst I am thrilled at the honor done me by so many friends on this side of the Atlantic, yet my heart yearns all the more to renew, permanently, my very many cherished friendships in England, some of whom go back to my very roots. My house which awaits me in Mellor speaks clearly of my commitment to return.

Which leads on to News #2. The Princeton Singers received so many pressing invitations to return to England that we have planned our next visit for the last 2 weeks in **August 1998**, when we shall be in London for a week (18-24, Abbey, St. Paul's) and then give concerts (25-Sept 1) at St. Alban's Abbey, King's College, Cambridge, Ely and Blackburn/Mellor. Please book these dates now for 1996!

News # 3: Trinity has appointed **Scott Dettra**, son of **Lee** (see Dec. 6) as our new assistant org. He is a student at WCC, only 19 and fabulously talented. Everyone is thrilled that he is here, for he can play the most difficult music at sight and make it sound easy, and he is the most delightful person. He's got a great future. His past isn't bad, either!

Dearest friends all round the world: please know that your friendship means so very much to me. Would that I could write to you individually, but, as I'm sending out 1,300 Newsletters this year this seems not possible, at least, not until I retire... in 1998! For those who pray, please keep me in your prayers, for this work is very demanding in every way and one is constantly running to try to keep up. For those who love, please keep me in your love, as I keep you in mine.

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6th January, 1995