

Blackburn Cathedral, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

## Music & More online Supplement No. 45 THE ROYAL MAUNDY

The day dawned bright though overcast. Those of us who were to receive Maundy Money put on our Sunday best and made our way to the Cathedral, as per instructions, to arrive at least 90 minutes before Her Majesty!

We were given special stickers for our cars which enabled us to park, free of charge, in the public car parks near the cathedral. It's amazing what the right sticker will do, for we were waved through check points and parked with the greatest of ease.



Outside the cathedral crowds were beginning to gather very early, and there was a tangible air of excitement in the air!

We all brought a companion to look after us – it was a joy to share this Royal visit with a close friend or relation.



Your editor met **Lord Tom Taylor** as we entered the Cathedral Close. He asked me to escort him to the Cathedral West door (where VIPs would be admitted). Happy to oblige.

Recipients and their companions entered by the Song School door where our tickets were inspected, our names checked and then we were given a name label decorated with a gold **EiR** logo. That was a keep-sake!



L-R: Recipient **Sheila Walker** and son, former chorister **Michael**. The Revd. **Philip Chew** (JB's guest) and Recipient **Sheila Shaw**, who had her elder son, former chorister **David**, as her companion.

Philip Chew was JB's guest – for he was Senior Old Chorister that year, and was an outstanding chorister during JB's time at Blackburn.

Ecumenical Canon, The Very Revd **Kevin Kenny** in his RC robes, shook hands with fellow Recipient **Jim Holden**.



Ladies' hats were much in evidence – adding especial grace to that morning. Here are Recipient **Diana Swarbrick** with equally graciously bedecked **Susan Hughes JP DL**.



And whilst this happy socializing was going on (aided by cups of tea) **Samuel Hudson**, in the Song School, was putting the finishing touches to the Maundy music with the cathedral choir, our Girls' choir and the choir of HM Chapel Royal, whose boys wore glorious Tudor uniforms! (Our thanks to acting Virger, choir parent and choir wife **Rachel Fielding**, for this unique photo!)





The assembled throng in the crypt were called to order by the Lord High Almoner, the Bishop of Worcester, who was in charge of the day's Royal ceremonies.



He told us that, when our names had been called, we should make our way up to the cathedral through the Assembly Area, and find our seats which had been arranged in alphabetical order.

Although we had been told that no photographs were allowed, it was quite clear that folk were taking photographs, and so, when Phil and I reached the Assembly Area, the sight that met us had to be recorded!



There were some 30 Yeomen Warders in all who stood guard in the cathedral and carried the Maundy money on gold salvers during that ever-memorable service.



It was good to see **Alma Nicholls** on the other side of the Nave.



Cathedral Crucifer **Richard Robb**, with our cathedral acolytes, took up their positions fully 20 minutes before the service was due to begin.



Whilst downstairs, the choirs were lined up ready to take their places before the arrival of the Royal party. *Photos by Rachel Fielding*



*L-R: Samuel Hudson, Acolyte Emily Kennedy, Crucifer Bethen Shaw and Acolyte Paul Malloy-Robinson.* (5 minutes later it would be Philip Malloy-Robinson's pen that Her Majesty would borrow to sign the cathedral's Visitors' book! That pen has now been framed!)



At which point those of us upstairs were told, in ringing tones by Canon Andrew Hindley, **'NO MORE PHOTOGRAPHS!'**

**And so here's what we found on the web and from BBCTV:**

Five minutes before 11.00am the Royal car drew up outside the cathedral, and The Dean and Bishop Julian welcomed Her Majesty and His Royal Highness.





The processional hymn was announced by a fanfare from three trumpets, *Praise to the holiest in the height*, and those of us in the front rows of the Nave (i.e. the Recipients) had a superb view of Her Majesty and His Royal Highness as they walked directly in front of us. I confess that it gave me a thrill to bow to my Sovereign as she passed by.



When all were in their places, after the Rose Responses, cantored by **Canon Hindley**, the choirs sang Psalm 138, which echoed the humility shown by The Queen in coming to her subjects: *'For though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly...'*

After the first lesson, *John 13:1-15 (Jesus washing his disciples' feet)* which was read by The Dean, **The Distribution of Maundy Gifts to Recipients on the South Side of the Cathedral** began.

We all stood as Her Majesty gave to 44 men and 44 women their two purses of Maundy money in white and red leather: 88 pence in specially minted silver coins in one purse and a new silver 50p and silver £5 in the other.



Yeomen Warders carried enormous gold salvers piled high with the pairs of purses, which were taken, one at a time by the Sub-Almoner, the Revd. William Scott, who handed them to the Lord High Almoner, the Rt. Revd. Dr John Inge, Bishop of Worcester, who handed them at the right time to The Queen, who gave them to each Recipient, with a gracious smile. It all went very smoothly as the choirs sang Stainer's *God so loved the world*, Farrant's *Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake*, and S.S. Wesley's *Wash me thoroughly*.

The Queen walked down the length of the Nave, then, at the West end, she walked up the south Nave aisle where more Recipients were placed, and then, passing by 8 probationers (what a thrill for them!) she did the same for a double row of Recipients in the South Transept.



3 of the 8 probationers: XX  
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And all the while, the choirs were singing their anthems. But the instant that The Queen returned her chair by the altar, the choirs were singing the last chord of Wesley's anthem. Wow – what timing! Could they achieve such perfect timing for the second Distribution?

**The Rt Hon. Jack Straw**, Blackburn's MP, read the second lesson which again echoed The Queen's ministry to her people at this service: Matthew 25:31-46 *'... anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me.'*

And then came the second Distribution to 88 more Recipients on the North side of the Nave and in the North Transept, as the choirs sang Paul Mealor's exquisite setting of *Ubi caritas*, which he had composed for the wedding of the Duke & Duchess of Cambridge. It was magical. And this was followed by Handel's triumphant coronation anthem, *Zadok the priest*.



Occasionally the Bishop of Worcester would single out a Recipient for special mention to Her Majesty.

There was a press photographer in the North Transept who caught the moment when former Blackburn Cathedral chorister and choirman **Alec Stuttard** received his Maundy money. (He had been chosen to sing in the choir at her Coronation but contracted laryngitis. He said that he had been 'gutted' as a boy when he had to pull out 61 years ago!)



But later that day Alec said, 'It was brilliant. The funny thing is that as she came to give me the money, the choir started to sing *Zadok the priest*, which is what I would have sung at the Coronation. I was shaking!'

Those of us in the Nave couldn't see what was going on in the Transepts, but we realized that *Zadok the priest* was coming to an end but there were no signs of the return of The Queen to her seat. But as the final 8 bars were being sung, the Royal procession appeared, and The Queen reached her seat as the last chord was being sung. **That timing blew us away!**

Afterwards, the **Duke of Edinburgh** told **Samuel Hudson** that that was the best timing of a Maundy service that they had ever experienced. Well done, Blackburn!

There were prayers led by our cathedral clergy, followed by the General Thanksgiving, the hymn *My song is love unknown*, and then the National Anthem: *God save our gracious Queen, long live our noble Duke...* which we sang with joyous fervour. (The Queen is Duke of Lancaster.)

After Bishop Julian had blessed us, the Royal party and clergy recessed as **Shaun Turnbull** played Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C (BWV 547).





Outside the cathedral this historic photograph was taken.  
 Whilst inside, happy formality was transfigured into relaxed informality as we all began to talk to one another...

In the Song school the three trumpeters were about to depart, having gilded the Maundy music with their magnificent fanfares.



...whilst Shaun Turnbull, assisted by Karen Au, concluded his Bach Postlude.



*Trumpeters Anthony Thompson, Peter Mainwaring and Helen Quale*  
 Members of the cathedral key staff, especially those who had worked so hard to bring this service into being, were dashing off to an informal Reception to meet The Queen at The Rovers HQ. They were told that 15 minutes had been allocated for this, but the Royal party chatted with the staff for 50 minutes, so pleased were they with today's service.



After the Royal party had departed, members of the congregation poured out into the Cathedral Close – to be interviewed by BBCTV



**Peter Jelley**, a member of the Cathedral Chapter, said, 'It was fantastic – the timing, the music, everything. It's a day I shall look back on for many years to come.'



The 176 Recipients and their Companions were treated to a slap-up Civic Luncheon in King George's Hall, with music provided by children's choirs.



*Philip Chew, John Bertalot, Michael & Sheila Walker enjoying lunch*



*Bell-ringer Recipient **Gary Wignall** could be seen (extreme right) at an adjoining table.*

The Recipients and their Companions were certainly given the red carpet treatment, both going into the hall and coming out!



And that evening **Canon Andrew Hindley**, who had borne the heat of the day for the 8 months of meticulous planning which resulted in such a triumphant day, was interviewed on BBCTV.

*Notice, below, that the Virgers had moved all the chairs back into their usual positions by that early evening! Without the Virgers' dedicated and most faithful work, this day would not have been possible.*



Canon Hindley said, 'It was 8 months in the planning and 55 minutes in delivery! I'm a bit sad that it's all over.'

'It was great to do and such an honour to have our Monarch in Lancashire's Cathedral.'

'The Queen takes the Maundy Service very seriously; many of the Recipients were emotional – surprisingly emotional, for The Queen reflected our Lord's own humility when He washed His disciples' feet on the first Maundy Thursday.'

Canon Hindley added, 'There'll be millions of pounds of new buildings about to begin just behind the cathedral, and that's really a good sign for Blackburn – it's going to be the capital of East Lancashire and, of course, the Cathedral is the jewel in the crown!'



***Vivat Regina!***