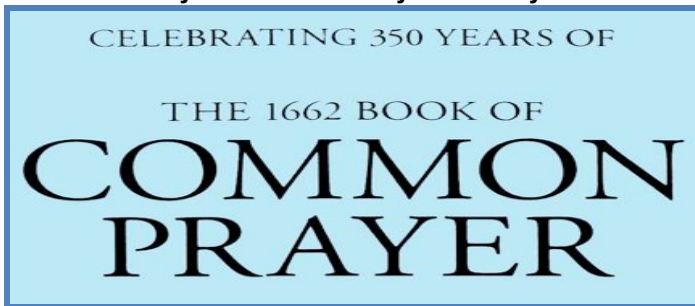


Extract from Blackburn Cathedral's Music & More Magazine 2012

PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY FESTIVAL by Branch Secretary Neil Inkley



On Saturday 19th May the Prayer Book Society held its annual festival in the Cathedral. But this was no ordinary annual festival for it marked the 350th Anniversary of the Book of Common Prayer and it was on the exact anniversary of the passing of the Act of Uniformity (which gave us our Prayer Book) on 19th May 1662.

For the 11.00 am Eucharist, I had put together a service in which all the words and all the music would have 'been about' in the second half of the seventeenth century, and all the dates in the printed order of service were there to prove it!

So the service began with *I was glad* – not the Parry setting but that composed by Henry Purcell for the coronation of James II. It made a challenging but wonderful introit – and it was sung by OC **Anthony Tattersall's OCTAVIUS CHOIR**, with **David Scott-Thomas** at the organ.



Then came the procession which included a reader, two priests, two residentiary canons, two archdeacons, a diocesan bishop and a retired archbishop!

The service was sung to the setting by Merbecke (1510-1585) and the **Bishop of Blackburn** celebrated.

The hymns included one I had discovered – by Sir Philip Howard, 20th Earl of Arundel and second cousin to Elizabeth I, written in the Tower of London where he was incarcerated 1585-1595 until his death 'from natural causes' (I wonder!). The anthem was Byrd's *O Magnum Mysterium*. (c.1539-1623)



The sermon was preached by the retired Archbishop of York, The Rt. Revd. and Rt. Hon. **Lord Hope**, KCVO. His sermon was enthusiastically received by the large congregation and it will be published in the P. B. Society's magazine *Faith and Worship*.

When, at one point in his sermon, the archbishop quoted from the Preface to the Prayer Book: *It hath been the wisdom of the Church of England ever since the compiling of her Publick Liturgy, to keep the mean between the two extremes, of too much*

stiffness in refusing and in too much easiness in admitting any variation from it... There was a feeling of a sort of neo-electronic buzz of agreement from the congregation when he added, '**The time has come for a bit more stiffness and a bit less easiness!**'



Following a good lunch provided by **Paul Flowers** and his team, some well-chosen words were spoken by President **Judge Duckworth**, and Vice-President **Bishop Nicholas**.

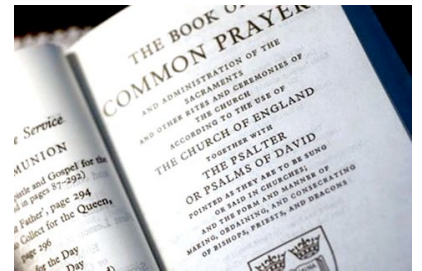
Following a brief AGM the afternoon speaker was the Revd. Norman Taylor, author of the book, *For Services Rendered*. He later signed copies for eager purchasers.

OCTAVIUS sang Choral Evensong beautifully – Morley *Fauxbourdons*, (1557-1602), Tallis *If ye love me*, (1505-1585) and (as a change from the 16th century) the splendid 20th century anthem by Gerald Finzi, *God is gone up*.

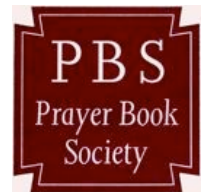
Members of our congregation summed up the festival as 'splendid', 'memorable' and 'historic'. It was a very good day.

WEDDING GIFT

Whilst the PBS were at lunch there was a wedding in the cathedral – of Erin Higgins and Kyle Shepherd. And because it was such a special anniversary day the PBS Branch gave the bride a surprise gift of a suitably inscribed white 1662 Prayer Book which was presented to her during the ceremony by Canon Andrew Hindley.



THE NEXT DAY the **Friends of Blackburn Cathedral** assembled for their Choral Evensong sung by the Cathedral choir (Blow's *short service* and his *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem*.) The preacher was the former Bishop of Lincoln, the Rt. Revd. **Robert Hardy**, who preached about the Prayer Book's 350th anniversary. This was another powerful sermon which I pounced upon for publication.



Remarkably both David Hope and Robert Hardy had been choirboys together at Wakefield Cathedral! *What further evidence is needed for the power of choir training to change lives?*



Please contact me, **Neil Inkley**, for details of future PBS activities in Blackburn diocese: 01772-821-676.

'Google' **Bertalot.org** for much more news from Blackburn Cathedral – and over 30 articles on choir-training!