

# Blackburn Cathedral Music & More online Supplement No. 14

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## CATHEDRAL ORGANISTS AT EXETER CATHEDRAL



When the Directors of Music of British Cathedrals met at Exeter Cathedral for their annual Conference in May, Blackburn Cathedral was represented by no fewer than 5 of its musicians – more than any other cathedral!



L-R: **John Bertalot** (Organist Emeritus), **James Davy** (our former Assistant DoM, now at Chelmsford), **Richard Tanner** (our former DoM, now at Rugby School), **Samuel Hudson** (our current DoM) and **James Thomas** (our former Assistant DoM, now at Bury St Edmunds).

We enjoyed three gloriously sun-filled days which were packed with lectures and workshops in the spacious Cathedral Chapter House...



...ranging from (i) **how the voice works** (it was fascinating to hear how the 'vocal folds' need the mouth and lips to 'make sense' of the basic sounds that are produced in the voice-box); (ii) **the work of the RSCM** by its new director, **Andrew Reid**; (iii) **understanding the Psalms**, (iv) how to sing **Brahms' Requiem** in German by **Simon Halsey** (who was a contemporary of our **Ivor Bolton** at Cambridge), plus business and legal matters.



Your editor was privileged to lead a demonstration of how easy it is to teach children to sight-sing.

The Director of Music of Exeter Cathedral, **Andrew Millington**, provided four highly talented probationers who were a delight to work with, and there was much positive feed-back from the assembled distinguished musicians.

The Director of Music of Westminster Cathedral, **Martin Baker**, rehearsed the Directors in the singing of some Plainsong for two fine Choral Evensongs.

*Next to Martin Baker is James O'Donnell from Westminster Abbey, and in the back row (left) is David*

*Flood from Canterbury. James Davy is above the second lamp.*



It was a particular delight to enjoy the ebullient company of **Dr June Nixon** and her husband, **Neville**. June has just retired after directing the music of Melbourne Cathedral for 40 years – to a standard which rivalled the best of British Cathedral music. They sang daily services, and all singers were volunteers! June is the recipient of a very well-earned Lambeth doctorate of music.



The superb hospitality we received ranged from receptions by the Dean and Precentor, to magnificent dinners in nearby restaurants.

*Dining one evening were (L-R) Andrew Millington (Exeter) Matthew Owens (Wells) and Tim Hone (Salisbury).*



**Our cup ran over, for we were all richly blessed. Thank you!**