



Friends of  
Blackburn  
Cathedral  
**MUSIC**

# BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL

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£3

**Blackburn  
Cathedral  
Old  
Choristers'  
Association**



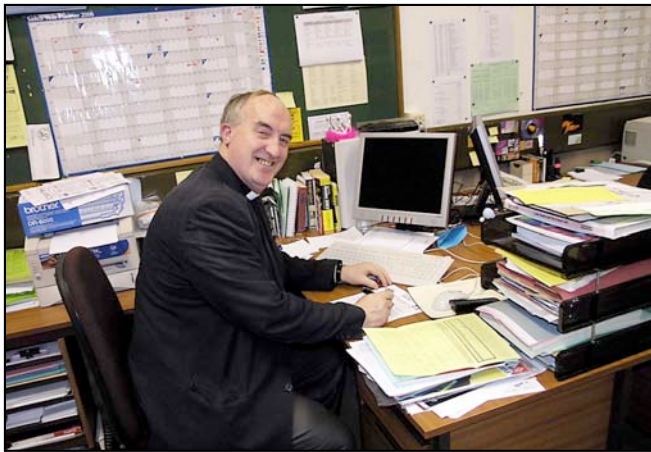
**Celebrating  
Mozart's  
250<sup>th</sup> !**

## OUR NEW ARCHDEACON

'Come into the office,' said Canon Residentiary **PETER BALLARD** who is Diocesan Director of Education. He led the way past the Diocesan Offices Receptionist **Debbie Johnson**, and down a short corridor. 'Now which desk would you like me to sit at for your photo?'

Your editor found himself in an enormous room, with seven desks piled high with papers; one wall was completely filled with neat filing boxes and the other walls were covered in charts and calendars. 'Why,' I exclaimed, 'this used to be the old Cathedral Room way back in 1964 when I came as Director of Music. Meetings were held here and endless cups of tea drunk!' I paused to take in this new scene of educational activity. 'Canon **Desmond Carroll** was Diocesan Director of Education in those days. But he had only one secretary!'

'Yes,' agreed Canon Peter as he sat at a desk, 'and he also became an Archdeacon – of Blackburn!'



'When will you become Archdeacon of Lancaster?'

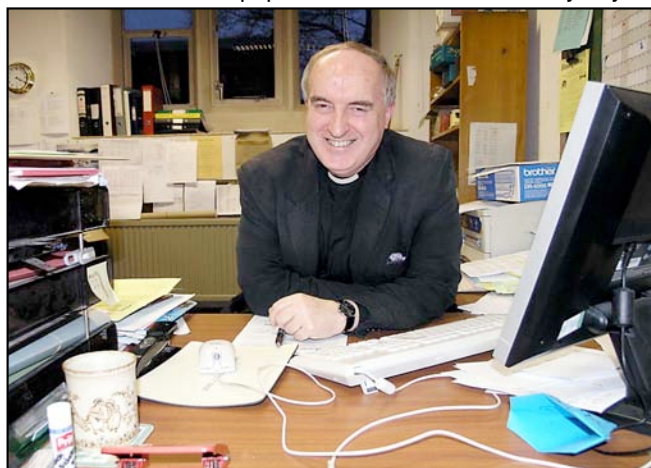
'I'll be collated on April 30th,' he replied jovially, 'however I begin my duties on February 1st, but I'll still retain my present job as Director of Education.'

'How will you be able to cope with two full-time jobs?'

'At the end of the day when the diary's full, the diary's full!'

'What are your responsibilities for Education?'

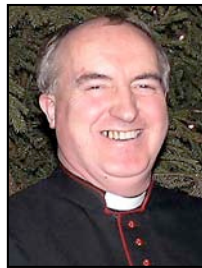
'Well, we have 200 church schools in the diocese, and 600 schools across the NorthWest. Our primary role is to pass on the Christian faith to all the pupils and we have lots of resources to do this. We encourage collective worship in schools (that used to be called morning assembly). In addition we look after the buildings as well as the staff and pupils – there's a lot to do every day!'



'And what will your responsibilities be as Archdeacon?'

'There are 100 parishes in that part of our diocese, and some 200 clergy. I want to get to know them all so I'll be asking them in groups to my home for lunch or supper and, of course,' he added as the interview came to an end, 'I'll be the bishop's legal representative installing new Incumbents and working with

Archdeacon John in Blackburn as members of the bishop's senior staff.'



Canon Peter was still smiling as he showed me out. May that smile and that joyful ebullience enable him to fulfill his heavy responsibilities in the years to come. He's an exceptional man.

**Bishop Nicholas** clearly made the right choice in elevating him to the Archidiaconate.

**Prefect!**

Heartiest congratulations to **ALEX LUND** who was appointed **Choir Prefect** at the end of last year, just in time for all the Christmas Festivities. *Well done, Alex!*



## TWO LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The first from Old Chorister, and international conductor **IVOR BOLTON** whose parents still live in Blackburn, although Ivor has homes in Cambridge, Paris and Munich!

Dear John,

This is sent hoping to find you well at Christmas time.

I was so pleased to get your letter when I got back home after a heavy summer's workload. I apologize for not having replied sooner – the fact is the autumn was just as busy with the result that I had one day at home every two and a half weeks on average.

I do hope we can see each other before too long.

I am now Music Director of the **Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra** (the orchestra I was about to work with when we met in your home in 1999).



This is a wonderful privilege for it's a world-class international orchestra.





I am the only Englishman to work at the **Salzburg Festival** every year and so my career has gone on quite a lot since we last saw each other.

I still work a lot in **Munich** and **Paris** etc, the result of course is that I have very little free time. These short times at home, however, I very much treasure.

**Sam** is now 14, and doing well, **Tess** still a fellow of Clare College here in Cambridge, and running the South Bank Early Music Festival as well as her many other activities.

Wishing you all the best for 2006. **Ivor**

P.S. I will never forget what you did for me as a choirboy at Blackburn, or what I learnt from you. I can never adequately thank you for this.

The Opera House in Munich is a world-premier theatre with the longest history and tradition of any company in Europe. Conductors there for last season included **Maestro Zubin Mehta** and our own **Ivor Bolton**!

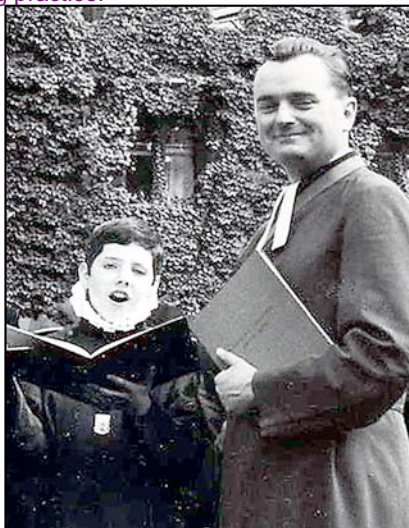


**Ivor was an outstanding chorister**, writes **JB**: he joined us at the age of 11 from QEGS and quickly demonstrated his many talents. He had (and no doubt still has) perfect pitch; so much so that when he sang on RSCM 2-week Cathedral courses which I directed at the Abbey (see below), Coventry and Canterbury, to form part of a hand-picked choir along with other Blackburn Choristers, I used to point to him, when an anthem was unaccompanied, and he'd give the choir the pitch of the first note!

The Blackburn boys sang three mid-week Choral Evensongs in those days; they could choose to come to any two. We sang SATB settings of the Canticles – Stanford, Walmisley etc, in two parts – the treble line sung by the firsts, and the tenor (an octave higher) by the seconds. Ivor usually sang the alto part by himself – making a three-part ensemble. That was great sight-singing practice!

I remember him singing the treble solo in 'O for the wings of a dove' (the whole work). He didn't need to be rehearsed at all, but just for appearance' sake, we ran through it once.

When he was 17 he played for a broadcast Choral Evensong – **Keith Bond** was unwell. Ivor was brilliant. He passed his FRCO whilst he was still a pupil at QEGS – studying organ playing with me, and paper-work with **Jack Longstaff**. He then went on to win the organ scholarship to Clare College, Cambridge where he studied with **John Rutter**.



*Ivor & JB at Westminster Abbey in 1971 for a 2-week choir course.*

*Ivor, we're inordinately proud of you here in Blackburn. Thank you so much for writing so generously. JB*

**Prefects' Board No. 2**



## No. 2 from OC ALLAN HOLDEN in Horwich "OC PETER FIELDING'S ¾ Century!"

Here's a photograph which might bring some amusement to our members. The occasion was **OC Peter Fielding's** 75<sup>th</sup> birthday party in the summer of last year at Holden Vale Hotel, Helmshore.

There were over 60 of us there, including all Peter's family. The surprise of the evening was the appearance, near the end of the party, of a Scottish piper who kept us all awake!



*Allan Holden, Peter & Gordon Fielding & Ralph Robinson*

As you can see it was indeed a happy night with the boy choristers of the 1940s trying unsuccessfully to keep in step, with **Ralph Robinson** (R) being the chief culprit.

However it was another example of friendship travelling down the years, which began with our being admitted to Blackburn Cathedral Choir by TLD (**Thomas Duerden**, 1939-64) as young boys in the early months of World War 2.

**Prefects' Board 1**

1943	Peter Fielding
1945	Alan D. Holden
1946	Gordon Fielding
	Ralph N. Robinson

May I also say what a privilege and pleasure it was for me to attend our **OCs' Reunion** in September. Big thanks to those responsible for arranging our Evensong. It was a super service and being able to share our annual act of worship with the other Cathedral Choirs made it very special.

The presentation of BCOCA Commemorative plates to new Old Choristers **Emily Crewe** and **Matthew Oglesby**, the enchanting singing of the **Girls' Choir** and the sheer joy of listening to the **Children's Choir** engulfed all our members and the congregation, too. It was pure delight just to be there.

How very satisfying it was to see so many folk in the congregation; surely the biggest attendance ever at one of our Reunion services.

Finally, John, many congratulations on the October edition of the Newsletter; it's positively one to treasure.

In Peace, Love and Friendship **Allan**.

*Sorry for the spelling mistake on the Prefects' Board! Ed.*

## CHICHESTER'S NEW HEAD VIRGER by Canon Michael Wedgeworth with Dean Christopher Armstrong

On 8<sup>th</sup> January 15 friends from the Cathedral witnessed the installation of **Howard Waddell** as Head Virger in Chichester Cathedral. Our Dean preached to a packed congregation, regaling them with stories about Howard's time in Blackburn, to underline especially his pastoral care for individuals as a key part of his work.



In his sermon at Howard's Installation at Chichester our Dean said: **"In the beginning" Genesis 1.1.**

'In the beginning we are grateful to the diocese of Chichester for sending to us **Nicholas Reade** as our bishop. We like his southern ways; we admire his Sussex friends, though he did begin his press conference in the heart of Lancashire by telling us that all he knew of the north was time spent in Yorkshire!

'In the beginning God chose strange heralds for his gospel – doorkeepers for his kingdom. In the beginning of our Lord's ministry it was John the Baptist and his radical preaching and ethics which ushered in Jesus' own ministry. In the beginning God still provides heralds to announce his Kingdom here on earth.

'When the gospel was first proclaimed, the mystery of God has been represented in human form, of which we ourselves are the most recent examples. Whilst clergy carry an often unreasonable responsibility for displaying God, so too do cathedral virgers. In Blackburn, with a staff of 12, the clergy are not always in the cathedral when needed. I guess the same is also true here in Chichester. **It thus falls upon the virgers to mirror Christ to the anxious, the lost, the confused.** They become the heralds, the forerunners of the kingdom. For many people, the virger provides the beginning of the journey of faith.

'Howard Waddell has been chosen by your Dean and Chapter to play that role of doorkeeper, forerunner of Christ and his Church here in Chichester.

'We all know that the Dean thinks it's his cathedral, the bishop assumes it's his Cathedral but the Head Virger *knows* it's his Cathedral! And why is this? It is because virgers are here **in the beginning** and virgers are here at the end of the day. They are identified with the building more closely than any other member of the community.

'At Blackburn, Howard has proved to be an excellent ambassador, forerunner and doorkeeper to the Kingdom of God. He will bring form out of fog; he will create order out of chaos; he will engineer light out of darkness.

'Sometimes there is a cost to this, for like John the Baptist, Howard can be an uncomfortable colleague. On a bad day he can dish out more red cards than even Blackburn Rovers have had all season, but such days are mercifully rare and I have only been yellow-carded once! Rather, the virgers' department under Howard has become renowned for making space and giving time to people who have no space or time or value to recognise in themselves, thus creating the wideness which the biblical tradition interprets as salvation.



'At Blackburn Cathedral, if we have any expertise it is in music, with over 100 young volunteers taking their place in the worship of Almighty God Sunday by Sunday.



'What we don't do well in any direct corporate sense is social care. We do have neighbours however and Howard always knows where to turn for expert help. He knows a man that can.

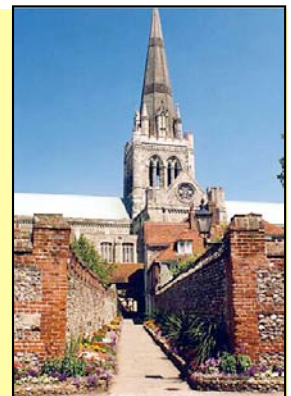


'At their best, the virgers provide the Church with that front-line social service which social workers can only dream about, emasculated as they are by bureaucracy. Of course they have to clean and to hump chairs and tend to vestments as well, but it is how they do these things which counts for so much.

'Virgers, like the clergy, can be distinguished by their dress. What the Anglican Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs however, is for all of us to be distinguished by that invisible cross on our foreheads placed there **'in the beginning'**. For all of us, including virgers, have to learn to move from the back foot to the front foot in terms of holiness of life. May God who, **in the beginning**, placed his nature among us, bring us to that glorious end, Amen.'

**Canon Wedgeworth continues:**

Having toured the Cathedral the previous evening, we were all invited to lunch after the service with Friends of Chichester Cathedral in the vast Deanery, which is approached down St. Richard's Walk, past the exquisite house where the organist, Dr. Alan Thurlow, lives.



We were all made really welcome in the Deanery, sharing experiences of two very different cathedrals. Already, there was evidence of Howard's impact, and we were thrilled for him to be living and working in such a beautiful place.

**Letter from America from Nancianne Parrella**, Associate Director of Music, St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Avenue, New York.

**Dear John, I have certainly been impressed with the wonderful music making at Blackburn Cathedral and the recordings being made there. Your Newsletter is also very impressive and informative and I**



**enjoy reading your articles on choirtraining in the Organists' Review.**

**Always, Nancianne**

*St. Ignatius Loyola is one of the leading RC churches in the USA and it's enormous! It has a fabulous four-manual tracker Mander organ and an adventurous and fully professional music program.*

*Nancianne rivals our own superb **Greg Morris** for the excellence and splendority of her organ voluntaries, her skill in accompanying, and brilliant recital work!* Ed.



# Yet Another Memorable Day in Blackburn Cathedral!

The Christmas and New Year festivities were barely over when our Cathedral got itself into top gear again (it had never really been out of gear!) to serve the Diocese and wider community on Jan.21st through meticulously prepared worship and music.

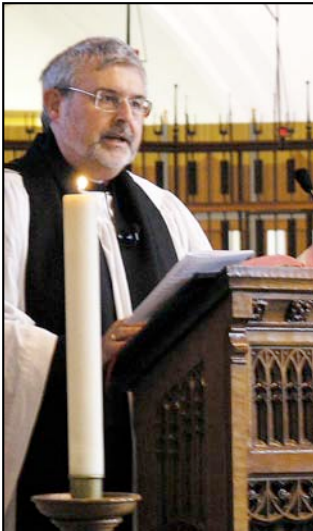
**RICHARD TANNER**, as usual, led our 30 boys in a 90-minute rehearsal in the Song School, which began at 8.30 am! **GREG MORRIS** (again, as usual) then spent an hour teaching some of our newer choristers the elements of music theory.

Then 40 boy- and girl-choristers from every corner of our diocese arrived to work with Richard and Greg to prepare for Choral Evensong, during which they would receive Awards for their Loyalty, Commitment, Faithfulness and Excellence in their choirs.



They had to work hard, for some of them were not used to taking full responsibility for leading the music in their churches – there were no adults to help them today! The music they prepared included Dr. **Simon Lindley's** lovely *Ave Maria*, Sir **George Dyson's** *Canticles in C minor*, *Brother James' Air*, as well as hymns, Responses and a psalm! But they all worked hard and made a lovely sound.

The Awards were sponsored by the Diocese of Blackburn and Lancashire Area of the Royal School of Church Music, whose chairman is **John Catterall**, Director of Music of St. John's Church, Broughton, where he has a choir of 40 boys and over 20 men!



When the **Archdeacon of Blackburn** presented his Awards to eight choristers, including Tom Hodson who sings in Mellor Church choir, son of our **OC Mark Hodson**, he said,

*"When I was ordained in York Minster many years ago, the preacher said that we should all be like Jesus! That was a real challenge, for Jesus showed loyalty, commitment and faithfulness to his Father in heaven.*

*"You young choristers have also shown loyalty, commitment and faithfulness in your singing of God's praises. May you, too, become like Jesus!"*

**Our Dean** then presented his Awards for Excellence to 21 choristers, including 16 girls and boys from our own cathedral choirs.

Here he is presenting his award to **Matthew Adelekan**, watched by the Revd. **Simon Aiken**, Rector of Longridge, who works so hard for our Diocesan RSCM Committee.



After the **Bishop of Burnley** had presented his Awards for Excellence and Long Service to 13 choristers and 6 adults, including four of our own choristers, members of the large congregation took photos of all the splendid Honorands with the Bishop, Dean, Archdeacon, Richard & Fr. Simon.

**But the day was not over yet!**



## Memorable Day, part 2!

At 6.00 pm **OC INDRA HUGHES**, who was a **David Cooper** chorister – a contemporary of **David Goodenough** (who was



Director of Music at Fettes College – where Tony Blair went to school – and is now a housemaster there), and of **Nigel Potts** (who is Director of Music of a fine church in Long Island, NY) came to give us an amazing evening devoted to Bach's **Art of Fugue**.

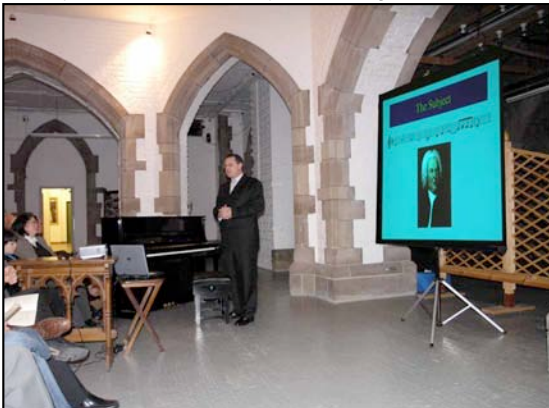
*It's a collection of 14 Fugues, all composed on the same subject ('tune') but written in the most complicated and amazing way. Three-dimensional chess doesn't begin to describe its intricacies!*

Indra now makes marvellous music in New Zealand, and is also studying for his Doctorate at the University of Auckland; this presentation was to be part of the completion of his thesis.

En route for Blackburn he'd stopped off in Germany where he'd bought a wine glass in Leipzig etched with Bach's initials, **JSB**; in Potsdam he'd almost touched the harpsichord that Bach had played to Frederick the Great, and he'd done some more research in Berlin for his thesis on **The Art of Fugue**, then flown to England to talk about it and to play it to us.



Some of us expected an audience of 20 or so for his talk in the crypt – but 100 turned up – they came from as far away as Liverpool, and beyond – and so extra chairs had to be found quickly. We relished every musical gem that he shared with us!



Indra was brilliant: he revealed Bach's last Masterpiece in fascinating detail so that everyone could follow what he said.

Indra illustrated his talk with carefully prepared illustrations projected onto a large screen and he also played extracts on the piano. Buoyant good humour and meticulous erudition, coupled with an easy flow of words, made the whole experience thoroughly enjoyable. Comments from the audience during the lavish refreshments afterwards included: *"I understood every word."* *"I can't talk, my head is spinning."*

Then we all made our way upstairs to hear Indra play this work – which lasts 90 minutes (with a short interval) – all in the key of D minor. But his playing, coupled with his imaginative use of our organ's vast resources of colour made it an almost overwhelming experience. The 150 music-lovers in the audience listened to this almost unbelievable music in rapt silence.

At the end (which is unexpected – it finishes abruptly in 'mid sentence' – for Bach died just before he'd finished it) there were

fully 30 seconds of silence before anyone dared to clap.

Afterwards the audience crowded round Indra to congratulate him. Comments included, *"I've learnt so much tonight."* *"That was one of the most profound performances I've ever heard."*

It was a particularly happy occasion too, for two of Indra's former QEGS music teachers – **Helen Whittaker** and **Jack Longstaff** – were there, with Indra's former QEGS headmaster, **Philip Johnston**. And also former BCOCA Chairman **Fred Dewhurst** who taught at QEGS, whose playing of the cathedral organ when Indra was a schoolboy (see our last edition for the full story) inspired Indra to make music his career.



Helen Whittaker, Jack Longstaff, Indra Hughes, Fred Dewhurst and Philip Johnston.

**OC Anthony Tattersall** recorded Indra's stunning performance brilliantly onto two CDs. If Indra gives his permission, these CDs could become collectors' items, for not only do they capture Indra's dazzling performance so thrillingly, but they also capture the magnificent sounds of our cathedral organ most faithfully.



*Indra, thank you for enriching us so amazingly; come back soon, hopefully as a fully qualified Doctor of Music!* Ed

## Our New Events Assistant Philip Hunwick



As your editor was about to go into the cathedral to listen to a Wednesday lunchtime recital he bumped into Cathedral choir tenor **PHIL HUNWICK** (husband of **Joan** and dad of OCs **Chris** and **Noel**). "Why are you looking so smart, Phil?" (He was wearing a suit – on a weekday!)

*"I've just been interviewed for the post of Cathedral Events' Assistant!"*

*"Did you get the job?"*

*"Yes! The post fell vacant following the retirement of **Brenda Tyrell**. [see p.13] It's very part time (14 hours a week). Its main purpose is "to ensure effective & efficient co-ordination of Cathedral events and to maintain the proposed Cathedral web site."* (I quote from the job description.)

"I'll be involved in the organisation of special Cathedral services and other events – sending out invitations and tickets, allocating seating etc. I'll also have the responsibility of managing the Cathedral's electronic diary and will report requests for bookings at the weekly diary meeting. Managing the web site when it happens should also be fun once I've learned how to do it.



"I've never liked being interviewed - in fact I never do myself justice in an interview situation. This one wasn't so bad, however – Canon Wedgeworth was very kind – perhaps partly attributable to the fact that I was the only candidate!!

"I'm looking forward to starting on Feb. 7th. A major bonus will be getting my own weekday parking space!!"  
*Heartiest congratulations, Phil! Another photo was called for!*



Phil joined the cathedral choir at the end of 1973, and he and Joan also joined the Renaissance Singers. Chris and Noel appeared a little later!

They're a real Cathedral family.

*Phil wrote to your editor:*

Joan and I moved to the Blackburn area shortly after getting married in 1973. It was in that year that we came to the Cathedral and asked **Provost Jackson** whether he knew of any good local choirs. "Come and meet **John Bertalot**", he said. **So began the long association of the Hunwick Family with Blackburn Cathedral and its music.**



We both auditioned for and gained admission to JB's **Blackburn Bach Choir** and almost immediately found ourselves



*Also in this 1980 photo are Owen Kennedy, David Rothwell, Lyndon Hills, Bernard West, Eileen Hemingway, Tony Murphy, Margaret Robinson and many more friends.*

singing our first (Christmas) concert with them on the stage of King George's Hall. **Being two of a choir of thirty voices in front of an audience of about 2000 people still ranks as one of the most terrifying experiences of our lives!**

Fortunately we got used to such exposure during an association with the choir lasting nearly thirty years. There were concerts too numerous to mention; tours to Cathedrals such as Wells, Hereford and Exeter; Sainsbury's '**Choir of the Year**' competition; a rich variety of music, both sacred and secular and the widely contrasting styles of **Bertalot, Cooper, Stewart and Tanner**. The Choir also became an important part of our social life and many long-lasting friendships began there.

**It didn't take JB long to persuade me to join the Cathedral Choir.** Helping to lead the worship in a cathedral church is an enormous privilege; being allowed to sing (mostly!) glorious music at the same time is almost too good to be true. Joan has never really forgiven me for joining a church choir of which she could not be a member, and I do feel guilty about it at times. Nevertheless, it drew both of us closer to the heart of Cathedral life and Joan, as much as I, appreciates a form of worship which is to be found in comparatively few parts of the C of E these days.

*Phil, Peter Eastham, Derek Crompton & Gordon Shaw in 1980*



John had no success in enticing his Godson, **Chris**, into the Cathedral Choir. Indeed, we had begun to think that Christopher, although musically talented on piano and violin, had no interest in singing. It was **David Cooper** who dragged him into the Choir by the scruff of the neck when he was almost eleven and **Noel**, not to be left out, joined shortly afterwards at the tender age of six.

**Both of our sons owe an enormous debt to the Choir** not only for the wonderful contribution it made to their musical education but also for what it taught them about the glories of the English language, about working as part of a team, taking responsibility, exercising leadership and good old fashioned moral values.

For Noel, of course, it was the beginning of a musical career which saw him become one of the Cathedral's longest serving choirboys and eventually Head Chorister and chief soloist.

He also owes a personal debt of gratitude to **Gordon Stewart** whose help and encouragement enabled him to appear on national television with **Patricia Routledge** in "Hetty Wainthropp Investigates, to do a solo spot on TV's "Songs of Praise" and to produce his own CD. There can be no doubt that without the Cathedral Choir he wouldn't have gained his Choral Scholarship at Magdalen College, Oxford.

**In short, when I told the Dean recently that one of the reasons why I had applied for the post of Events Assistant was because I liked the Cathedral, that may be regarded as an understatement!**  
**Phil, WELCOME!**

## “Instruments of salvation”

A Sermon preached by  
**CANON CHRIS CHIVERS**

on the 250th anniversary of the birth of Mozart  
and the Patronal Feast of Candlemas  
Sung Eucharist, 29 January 2006, 10.30 am  
Blackburn Cathedral

Music sung by the Cathedral Choir of Men and  
Boys with the Cathedral Girls' Chamber Choir.

**Philippa Hyde** (Soprano)

**James Twigg** (Counter-Tenor)

**Derek Crompton** (Tenor)

**Philip Wilson** (Bass)

**Greg Morris** (Organ)

The Northern Chamber Orchestra  
conducted by **RICHARD TANNER**

The **CORONATION MASS – Mozart**  
**Ave Verum Corpus – Mozart**

We are in a forest close to the Polish-German border. The year is 1945.

The Soviets are advancing on **Auschwitz**. The Nazis are retreating towards Germany, taking with them those prisoners who have escaped the gas chambers.

They have been marching for days as night falls and skeletal figures collapse on one another in a barn to the side of the forest path in order to rest or to die. From among a jumble of bodies a teenager somehow extracts himself and his violin to play a snatch of a well-known concerto.



Another teenager, who will later describe this moment in an autobiographical novel, recognises the music and the boy who plays. It is Juliek his closest childhood friend. But he cannot reach him. He doesn't even have the energy to shout out to him. Instead, he drifts off to sleep, the beautiful music ringing in his ears. When he wakes up the next morning he finds Juliek lying close to him ... dead ... his violin shattered in pieces alongside his corpse.



We are now in Jerusalem, in the early years of the first century. A mother and father have brought their infant son to the temple to give thanks for his birth by offering the standard gift – some pigeons and turtle-doves.

As they make their way slowly up the temple steps, with hoards of people pressing around them, an old man approaches them as if he has been waiting for years just for this moment.

His bearded face, furrowed brow and wrinkled skin make him seem ancient to these two young parents, but his eyes sparkle with life, so much so that the young mother and father are captivated by the look on his face.

As the old man reaches them he motions towards their baby. He would like to hold him. Lifting the boy from his mother's arms, he sings a song, which at first they do not understand, but which they will never forget:

*Lord, he asserts, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people. To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel.*



The Cathedral Choir of Men & Boys and the Girls' Chamber Choir with the Northern Chamber Orchestra conducted by Richard Tanner with Greg Morris at the chamber organ, singing Mozart's Coronation Mass as the sun poured through the cathedral windows.



Salzburg Cathedral

We are now in Salzburg in 1779, a city to which a twenty-three year old composer has returned – pretty reluctantly – after a brief but disastrous stay in Paris. The composer's home had previously been **Salzburg** – where he had worked for the Archbishop – which he had hated because the prelate – a man with absolute power as ruler in both church and city – was nothing short of a tyrant. So much so that when the young composer sought to be released from his contract – to experience the opportunities of the less

clerical and insular city of Paris – his archbishop-employer – Hieronymus Colleredo – saw the request as gross disloyalty. A cruel and heartless man, Archbishop Colleredo punished not the young composer but his father, who was also an employee of the Archbishop's, by summarily dismissing him from his position in the court.



To add insult to injury for the whole Mozart family, the Paris trip in fact proved disastrous for the composer – since no-one took much notice of his music – and fatal for his mother who had travelled with him – since she became so ill that she died there in 1778.



**Mozart with his Sister and Father in 1780 after his Mother had died.**

So this angry young man, this grief-stricken twenty-three year old had been forced home, to what he saw as the enslavement of the church, and to a Prince Archbishop who was now busy laying down the law about church music. It must, he commanded, be shorter and less extravagant than had hitherto been the case.

Mozart thought the archbishop to be an idiot. Indeed, he had used that word just the other day in a letter to a close friend. But, equally, he had written to another friend excited and enthusiastic at the task which the archbishop had given him, that of **writing a new Mass** within the constraints of brevity now laid upon all composers, a task in response to which he had been studying and pondering hard for some weeks.

He was busy scoring the work out, its pages lying on the desk before him. And he was pleased with the unity he had achieved across it: the beautiful ABA, 'sandwich' structure of the Kyrie, the way he had reused material from this **Kyrie** at the end of the **Agnus Dei**, the fact that he had set every single word of the **Creed** – unlike contemporaries of his who left bits out if they didn't care for them – and had actually turned it into a Rondo – a club sandwich, if you like, ordered around repeated material just like a movement in one of the composer's symphonies.

He was pleased too with the way in which the style of the whole work was so close to the lighter style of the operatic music he had tried, but failed, to popularise in Paris. It was melodic yet logical. It had beauty and shapeliness, solidity of structure: a strength and unity across its diverse movements.



**Mozart's Coronation Mass conducted by Richard Tanner**

Today, as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of the composer, **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**, of whom we've just caught a glimpse, completing his *Missa Brevis* in C major – the wonderful Coronation Mass being sung and played in this Eucharist – we also celebrate the Feast of Candlemas, which is the cathedral's patronal feast, as it is the day when we remember Mary the Virgin – in whose name this building is dedicated – coming to the temple in Jerusalem for the rites of purification following child-birth; as, in our Borough, on the steps of the Town Hall this afternoon, we commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the place that has come to symbolise all that is worst in human history and inhuman behaviour.

**AD 1** First century Jerusalem, eighteenth century Salzburg and a twentieth century death camp, may not at first sight seem to share much common ground, but in each of them the language of music plays a pivotal role, inspiring transformation and change, emerging, indeed, as the force for good which makes possible that vital dimension to life religious people call redemption.

**1779**

**1945**

The notes which Elie Wisel, the young Auschwitz prisoner hears from the violin of his friend Julie, are some of the most precious sounds he will ever hear. They keep him going when he's all but finished. They are quite literally life-giving and life-changing. They remind him that beyond the horrendousness of what he has suffered and is suffering there is another song, a song of hope, a song which asserts that this inhumanity must never happen again because life is meant to be beautiful, life – at its best – is beautiful.



**Soloists for Mozart's Vespers: Philippa Hyde, Joyce Tyndsley, Damien Trafford & Tony Robinson and behind are Edward McCullough, Chris Dawson, Owen Kennedy and Phil Wilson.**

Just as in the temple, the song which the aged Simeon sings is about a world changed and charged by divine light. A world from which one old man may now depart, safe in the knowledge that it is being mended, made more habitable and hospitable by the God who comes to dwell with his people, the vulnerable God whom Simeon holds in his arms.



Mozart was not a man perhaps of much moral rectitude. He wasn't an Elie Wiesel or a Simeon. He wasn't as they were to institutional religion. He'd seen the immorality, the idiocy, the corruption and hypocrisy of the Church at too close a quarter to be anything more than a rather disinterested employee.

But that's of course what makes him such an authentic human being and disciple: a man, like many of us, perhaps, sceptical of church structures and the games that church

people play, agnostic about life on the inside but passionate, nonetheless, about the gospel of love which flowed through his veins and into his music. A man who knew instinctively, like Elie Wiesel and like the aged Simeon, that music, the food of love, offers hope and light, because it is itself a parable in sound: a narrative in which we hear disparate elements being unified, a story through which we experience the dissimilar being harmonised, conflict being reconciled, a journey along the contours of which we are shown that order and peace may yet emerge from chaos and disorder, because it is a journey which gives us a sound and sense of what a new, better world could be like.

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250 years after the birth of a composer who died in his 30s, his gifts utterly burnt up in a burst of breathlessly creative genius, the like of which the world has rarely seen, and 2000 years after the symphony of salvation was first played on the strings, the stretched sinews of a man, who



also died in his 30s – his gifts likewise entirely spent in the service of his neighbours; his body made the very instrument of our redemption – the challenge for each and every one of us remains the same.

**This is what the wonderful, long-awaited, much hoped-for new world – the kingdom of God – sounds like. We've heard how beautiful it is. Will we now sing its song with our own lips, believe and show forth its unifying love in our lives?**

### PRAISE AND JOY

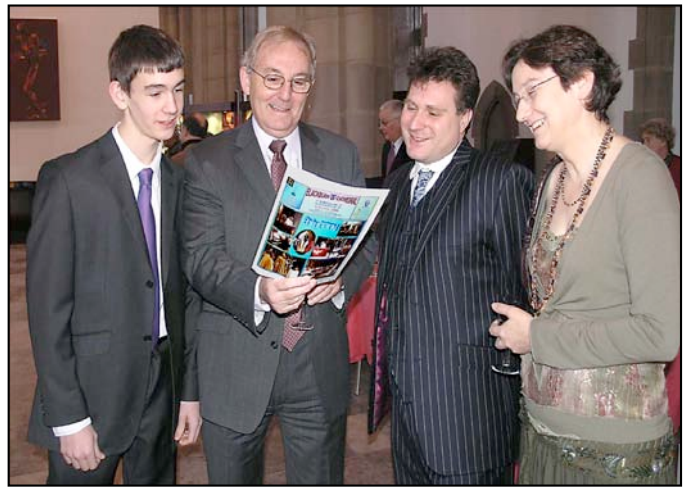
As the congregation streamed out of the cathedral (although many stayed for a reception in the North transept and lunch), your editor heard appreciative remarks such as,

*"That was the most memorable morning I've ever experienced!"*  
*"They were as good as the choir of St Paul's Cathedral!"*  
*"It was out of this world!"*

In the North transept the buzz of conversation and the chink of wine glasses provided a joyous coda to the morning's celebrations.



*Dr. Mary Tanner, Mother of Richard, was enjoying the company of Mary, Greg & Canon Chris Chivers, and soloist Philippa Hyde.*



*Junior Organ Scholar Joshua Abbott was peeking over his father's shoulder (Peter Abbott is chairman of the Friends of Blackburn Cathedral Music) as he, with Richard Tanner and Mrs. Abbott enjoyed reading the just-published Cathedral February Newsletter!*

The Dean, with Head Chorister Adam Whittaker, called for silence as he was about to make the draw for the Raffle.

First prize went to Dr. Mary Tanner!  
 The 2<sup>nd</sup> prize went to Peter Abbott!



There followed a delicious lunch in the Cathedral Crypt Café for guests and Friends of the cathedral music sponsored by Fraser Eagle.



*Fraser Eagle's table was full of joyful guests. L-R Ken Ingham (who is an Old Chorister of Worcester Cathedral), Alex Green, Eileen Fenerty-Lyons, Doreen Collinson and Christine Caladine.*

**We are so very grateful to all our Sponsors, Patrons and Friends for, without their practical and most generous support, music-making on the scale which we currently enjoy could not take place. Thank you!**

At Canon Andrew Hindley's table were (L-R)



**Russ Steele, Canon Hindley, Charlotte & Emma Booth** and their Dad, **Edwin Booth**, (Mr. Supermarket Booth) and Mrs. **Debbie Northin**, Headteacher of Westholme Lower School. Debbie's daughter, **Abigail**, is a member of the YPC and of our Girls' Choir.

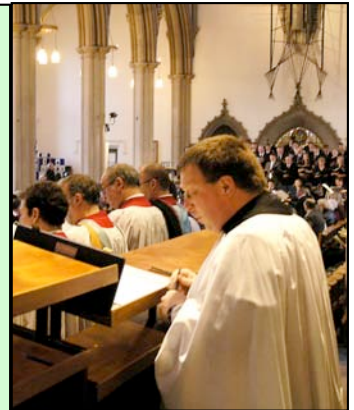


In the choirstalls were the **Cathedral Choirmen** conducted by **Richard Tanner** who sang the plainsong antiphons.

**Canon Chris Chivers** was the superlative Cantor. (Westminster Cathedral has nothing on us!)

There wasn't a spare seat – even Chairman of ForBCM **Peter Abbott** (below R) had to make do with a back seat.

The effect of the singing coming from West and East was almost overwhelming.



**Edwin Booth** had hailed your editor at the Reception, for he had been a near-founder member of the Blackburn Bach Choir almost 40 years ago. They hadn't seen each other for some 35 years. Mutual congratulations were in order for each was flourishing!

Then came the performance of Mozart's Vespers sung by the **Renaissance Singers** and YPC, with the **Northern Chamber Orchestra** and Organ Scholar **Jonathan Turner** at the Chamber Organ conducted by **Greg Morris**. (See photo, front cover.)



Mozart's Vespers



And if the incomparable singing weren't enough, the **Dean**, accompanied by **Canon Hindley**, Virger **Mark Pickering** and Head Server **Richard Robb**, censed the high altar (and almost everything else!) in the best high church manner! **'Twas magnificent!**



## TRANSFORMED CATHEDRAL



Mozart's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, AND the packed service the day before for the Blackburn Diocese Board of Ministry (which was attended by three bishops!) could not have taken place without the diligent, cheerful and faithful work of our two Virgers, **Mark Pickering** and **Sean Hellen**,

Their labours transformed our cathedral. They moved all our chairs into collegiate style, and erected the choir platform at the West end. And they re-formed it all afterwards!. **Thank you!**

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## GOLDEN WEDDING!

**Keith & Ruth Bond**

**Keith was Assistant Organist here during JB's time and Ruth was our most efficient music secretary.**

Dear John,

**Here is a report from rural Suffolk.** The Blythburgh Singers which I founded continue to flourish and last September we made a singing tour of Alsace with a nice chamber choir of 16 voices, including **Peter and Constance Heald**. We were staying at a town called Hagenau, near Strasbourg. We sang four concerts and a Mass – programmes of Tudor church music, but also a miscellaneous group of part-songs in three different languages – French, German and English. I played early English organ music and some pieces by Domenico Zippoli, on a rather mixed bag of organs.

Also in November, **Ruth and I celebrated our Golden Wedding with a family gathering of 14 in all** – we all met at a hotel overnight in Huntingdon. A good time was had by all and the champagne flowed ...

I sometimes feel that after over 60 years of being an organist the time has almost come to retire – especially as my left hand little finger is limiting my ability to stretch an octave.

We both send our best wishes to all those at the Cathedral.

**Keith and Ruth.**



Ruth & Keith moved to Pleasington when Keith was appointed Sub Organist of our Cathedral way back in the 1960s.

He and JB were also colleagues on the full-time staff of the Royal Northern College of Music – they'd also been organ scholars of the same Cambridge College – Corpus – although Keith was three years ahead of JB and had done his National Service as a Captain in the army – studying Russian!

Because Keith & Ruth had two daughters who wanted to sing, Keith introduced young ladies into the (then) all-male YPC which his predecessor, RONALD FROST had set up! (Ronnie was also on the fulltime staff at the RNCM)

This has benefited us all **enormously** and several in-house YPC weddings came about, including **the Goodenoughs!**

**Heartiest congratulations, Keith & Ruth!**

## Brenda Tyrrell

was given a great send-off when she retired from the cathedral in February. She had been secretary to two Deans, and latterly has been our most efficient Events Assistant – keeping our cathedral diary up to date and spreading calm joy wherever she went.

Dean David Frayne and Liz made a special journey from their home in the Deep South to be with Brenda when she was given a farewell party in the cathedral offices. See below.

Brenda was given another presentation by Dean Christopher the following Sunday, Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> in the salubrious surroundings of



the Crypt Café. We shall miss her – for we have all been enriched by her warm friendship and her ministry to us during these most happy and fruitful years.

*Thank you, Brenda.*

## DAVID & LIZ FRAYNE

It's always so good to see Dean David & Liz, for they are so tremendously cheerful and they share their happiness in bucketsful wherever they go!

After they had said farewell to Brenda Tyrrell they popped in to ebullientize your editor who was about to make two hymn arrangements for Richard Tanner and the BBC for their upcoming TV *Songs of Praise*. (See page 21)

The Fraynes are enjoying retirement in their lovely home in Gillingham (Dorset, not Kent; hard 'G' not soft!). David keeps busy preaching here and there and goes round the diocese looking after clergy widows. Nice!

He and Liz play duets for cello and piano. Is there a vacant slot for them in our Wednesday lunchtime recitals?



**OCs: We'd love to hear your news** – especially if you have moved from Blackburn. We can only print the news we receive, so e-mail JB (with JPEG photos) so we may know what you're doing! [john@bertalot.demon.co.uk](mailto:john@bertalot.demon.co.uk)

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## So many choristers!

Thanks to the energetic recruitment programme of our hard-working music staff and our rewarding music schedule, we have a real problem these days fitting all our choristers into the Song School for rehearsals!



The Song School is so full of singers for our Friday night practices that sometimes our 18 men aren't able to find room for their music on our new music desks! So we are ordering four more! (...music desks, not men!)

We are so grateful to donors whose generosity enabled the 8 new music desks to be made. They will last at least 100 years, and names of donors are proudly inscribed on each desk!

Currently we have 30 boys, 40 girls and 20 young children in our choirs, plus 30 adults in the Renaissance Singers!

Letter from **OC BRYAN LAMB** near Cambridge.

Dear John,

Thanks for the latest Newsletter. It gets better all the time. I thought the photograph of young **William Fielding** on the back page was brilliant.

**Stanley Roccoft** wearing his Coronation Medal evoked some memories. I got one too, a name-out-of-the-hat thing at my University Air Squadron (Leeds) where I was learning the rudiments of aviation at the time.



During my first days in the Air Force, I got an immense amount of stick from my drill sergeant on account of it. He had been in the parade on Coronation day, got soaking wet, (it rained hard that afternoon), but he didn't get a medal. I was constantly asked how I had acquired mine, so I made up a porkie about having been in the choir. Well, Blackburn had sent Stanley, so why not a tenor as well? It was almost plausible, but only suckers believed it, I'm sure.

In the light of all this year's Mozart business, you will be glad to hear that after more than 60 years, I have at last read the second-hand book about his life that **TLD** gave me when my voice broke in September 1945. It was quite interesting, but having been written in 1928, it contains none of the expletives from Mozart's extensive vocabulary of rude words!

Hope all is well,

Yours ever, **Bryan**

## THE CATHEDRAL ANNUAL DINNER

...on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February was attended not only by a barrage of Cathedral Canons (is that the right collective adjective?) and members of our enthusiastic congregation, but also by our distinguished guest speaker, **DR. RICHARD SHEPHARD**.

Dr. Shephard is well-known in church music circles for he is a prolific composer of anthems and canticles. He once told your editor that he composed in ink, for he didn't need to correct anything once he'd written it down. *Aye me, talent!*

He is also a great friend of the Dean, for they were at York Minster together when the Dean was Archbishop's Chaplain and he was Headmaster of the Choir School.



*Dr. Shephard, with the Dean, meeting our organ scholar, Jonathan Turner.*

Dr. Shephard's career began when he was a chorister in the choir of Gloucester Cathedral. He told us that, in those days, the six choirmen had tenure. i.e. they could remain in the choir for as long as they liked however badly they sang. 'There was one alto who was quite awful,' he told us. 'In fact he was so bad that folk used to come from long distances to hear him!

'I sat in front of another choirmen who, when the Precentor said, 'I believe in God', said, 'I believe in God, too!' – and from his pocket he handed me a sweet which was usually covered in fluff!'

Dr. Shephard is now Chamberlain of York Minster. 'I'm responsible for raising £30 million for the Minster.'

Our response was unfeigned awe!

*But he certainly raised our spirits. It was a hilarious evening!*

## WEDNESDAY DELIGHTS

**Our Wednesday lunchtime recitals have continued to amaze us** – not only because of the delight of the music played (with much captivating Mozart) but also because of the amazingly high standards reached week after week after week by a galaxy of talent, both 'imported' and 'resident'. **Every recital would have graced BBC Radio 3.**



On March 1<sup>st</sup>, for example, **Ruth Longmead** (above) joined our own **Greg Morris** in a superlative recital of sonatas for violin and piano by Mozart and Beethoven. It was unalloyed joy to hear them – their scales were brilliant (and there were a lot of them – Mozart liked his musicians to exercise their fingers rapidly in horizontal directions!), their meditative playing was gracious and their ensemble playing was immaculate. So thrilled was the audience by their performance in the North transept, that they received three curtain calls!

The following week we enjoyed a breathtaking recital for oboe and piano, and the week after that we relished a return visit by **OC Peter Fielding** who was joined by his son **Mark**: Peter had already dazzled us in January with his sparkling technique – and he's only 75! (*See p. 3*)

And so if you haven't experienced a Cathedral lunchtime concert, it's about time you did – AND a delicious lunch is awaiting you in our Café-in-the-Crypt, before and after each recital. They'll be starting again in the autumn.

## THE AMERICAN ORGANIST

FEBRUARY 2006

*The American Organist* (a monthly glossy magazine sent to over 3,000 organists in the USA and around the world) has again lauded our Blackburn Cathedral organ in a review, in its February 2006 edition, of a new CD called **SOUNDS SPONTANEOUS**. This is a CD of improvisations (music created on the spur of the moment) by **MALCOLM ARCHER** (St. Paul's Cathedral) and **DAVID BEDNALL** (Wells Cathedral).

*'They combine their expertise, and exercise it on the **EXTRAVAGANT** (our capitals!) **Blackburn Walker**.*

*'This organ is quickly becoming a favorite of Lammas Records, and deservedly so ... The reeds are strong, the strings plangent, and the flues cool.*

[*'plangent'* means resonating with a mournful sound! Ed]



*'There are large and small pieces, fast and slow, major and minor, rhythmic and still, grave and triumphant, calm and agitated.*

*'Innovative' is far too limited a word for these performances ... this entire recording is a bounteous treasure ...*

*Heartily recommended.'*

David Bednall & Malcolm Archer in the middle of making this CD. Phone Lammas records for your copy: 01904-624-132

## THE DEAN'S NEW VIRGER

Great joy greeted the announcement in February that our very own **MARK PICKERING** is to be the Dean's new Virger.

Mark was until recently our Canons' Virger, but he had taken over the duties of acting Dean's Virger with the willing assistance of **Sean Hellen** so splendidly, so efficiently and so joyfully since the departure of **Howard Waddell** to Chichester, that the Dean and Canons were unanimous in their choice of Mark from a strong field of applicants.



### Mark writes:

'I was born in Blackburn in 1978 and grew up near Ewood Park football club. My father was born in Blackburn and my mother is from Tipperary in Ireland. I have a younger sister who is currently at the University of Central Lancashire studying for a Master's degree in Social Work.

'I attended Our Lady & St. John High School in Blackburn, and then I studied art at Blackburn College, for I am a keen artist.

'I've nearly finished a portrait of my predecessor, **Howard Waddell**! I've also made sculptures in tin of some of the Star Wars characters!



'After finishing college I applied for the post of assistant virger at Blackburn Cathedral. After a period of three years working alongside the head virger, Mr. Waddell, I learnt many skills that have equipped me for the role of head virger.

'I have always felt God's presence in my life. I discovered my Christian path through volunteering at my local church, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, in Blackburn. I am now a committed Christian and feel that as head virger I can continue to serve the church and fulfill my ministry.'

*Heartiest congratulations, Mark – we believe that you are the youngest Cathedral Head Virger in this country! Ed.*

## Former organ scholar **NIGEL POTTS**

is continuing to do great things at his church on **Long Island, New York**. He gave the entire proceeds of his organ concert in April to his local Rotary's **Gift of Life** program. He writes: "As a member of the Bay Shore Rotary Club, my goal is to **raise \$4,000** which will pay for a child to travel from a third world country in Central America to have crucial open heart surgery at Long Island's Stony Brook Hospital."

**Well done, Nigel!**

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# There's never been a concert like this in Blackburn Cathedral !

On Saturday evening, 11<sup>th</sup> February, a capacity audience was treated to a concert which exceeded even the high standards that our talented music team had reached in recent months.

Mozart's re-orchestrated version of Handel's *Messiah* was performed with period instruments (including trumpets, trombones and clarinets) with the orchestra, soloists and conductor gorgeously dressed in period costume.

Our two young lady soloists set the mood of the evening as they emerged from the Dean's Vestry (which was their dressing room) arrayed in finery the like of which few of us had ever beheld!



*Philippa Hyde & Jeanette Ager*

But before the musical joys there was our customary Reception in the North Transept where our generous Sponsors and Friends gathered to chat, over delicious refreshments provided, as ever, by our splendid Cathedral Café staff.



*(L) Cathedral Architect, James Sanderson & Alan Rowntree, (3<sup>rd</sup> from L) Cathedral Bursar with more guests of Fraser Eagle. who said afterwards that everybody had had a wonderful time and thought that the costumes, orchestra, singing and the whole atmosphere was brilliant! Thank you!*



*It was a special joy to welcome back to the cathedral Old Chorister **Tom Wilkinson** (L) who was a treble and then tenor in TLD's time, and JB's early years, and his son **David** (R) who was head boy here 16 years ago. Centre of this happy quartet are David's young lady, **Joanna**, and Mrs. **Joy Wilkinson**.*

*Tom is Managing Director of TSW Quality Consultancy Ltd in Bolton. He is kept busy in health and safety, environmental standards and risk assessment. All four seem to be flourishing. More news later!*

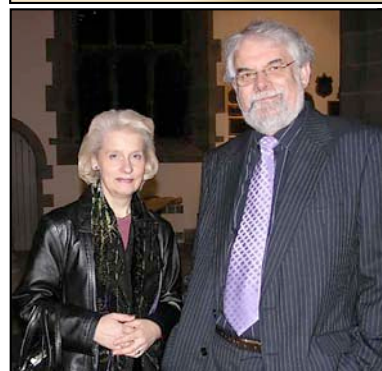
**Right: Choir parents Krystina and Derek Adams.** →  
*Derek is a strong member of Friends of Blackburn Cathedral Council.*



*Canon Hindley greeted Mr. **Tim Smith** and Mrs. **Jean Dyson**, wife of Fraser Eagle Group Chairman, **Alan Dyson** whilst the **Dean**. and **Geraldine Armstrong** (below L) enjoyed the company of the Revd. Fr. **Andrew Sage** and Mrs. **Helen Sage** (R), from St. Stephen on the Cliffs, Blackpool.*



*A happy trio: Mr. **Mike Newby** and Mrs. **Newby** with Fraser Eagle Financial Director, Mr. **Richard Nolan**.*



No words of praise are too high for the dedication of our **Virgers and helpers** who set up the stage and moved all the chairs the previous day (AND put them back that night!) even though our lift had gone wrong. So everything has to be brought up from the crypt by hand! **Thank you!**





(L) **Linda and Andy Bruce**, with their son, **Matthew**, who's in the YPC, with junior organ scholar **Josh Abbott**. Much of the super efficiency of the evening's arrangements is due to Linda, who is our Music Administrator.

(R) **Canon Chris Chivers** greets two more enthusiastic guests who enjoy and appreciate our music so much.



(Left) Also enjoying our hospitality were Dr. **John Moses** (no relation to the Dean of St. Paul's!) and **Jay Hutson** – both of whom are from the USA but now working here in Lancs. They are co-sponsors of the Briggs Concert here in June. As readers will know, another generous American is sponsoring the Briggs organ concerto – Dr. **Charles Magee** from Princeton!

(Right) It was the greatest joy to welcome back to the cathedral former Senior Old Chorister **Bob Keen**, and **Pauline**. Bob has been in our prayers during many months of chemo and is now well on the way to a complete recovery. Hallelujah!



**And so to our concert.** Cries of glee greeted the orchestra and soloists as they appeared, arrayed in their elegant period costumes. Nothing like it has been seen in our cathedral before – their visual impact set the tone for the whole evening, which was one of unalloyed delight.





Our four soloists, **Philippa Hyde, Jeanette Ager, Joseph Cornwall** and **Stephen Varcoe**, were joined by the **Men and Boys of Blackburn Cathedral Choir**, our **Girls' Chamber Choir** and the **Renaissance Singers**, all of whom sang superbly.

The Orchestra, **'The 18<sup>th</sup> Century Orchestra'**, lived up to its name not only by their dress, but also how they played on their period instruments.

Their performance was riveting.



The sounds coming from the orchestra, through Mozart's embellishments, were amazing.

Descants for the flutes decorated well-known arias; sugary fillings to formerly transparent chords were added by the clarinets, and as for *The Trumpet shall sound* – the horns played much of the well-known trumpet part down an octave, leaving the first trumpeter to embellish it with trills which, so he told your editor, he created through movement of his lips.

Neither brass instrument has valves – they had to be played on natural harmonics like a bugle!



**Greg Morris**, playing organ continuo, was almost unrecognizable, as his face was hidden beneath an outsize wig.



**Richard Tanner** directed the whole performance with musicianship and panache – conducting at a cracking pace in fast sections and expressively in gentler arias and choruses.



The cathedral was packed and the whole evening was a triumph not only for the musicians, but also for those who had worked so hard to ensure the smooth running of the concert – office staff, ushers, our caterers (who provided refreshments on two floors!) publicity, programme designers, and of course our **Virgers** who cleared up for Sunday services and didn't get home till **2.00 am!**

Our special thanks to the **Dean and Canons** for their enthusiastic practical encouragement which enabled this dream to be fulfilled.

We are greatly indebted to our generous sponsors, **Fraser Eagle Group Company**, who sponsored not only this concert but also our other Mozart concerts during this 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration year.

**Mr. Kevin Dean**, the Group Managing Director of Fraser Eagle wrote, *'Music lifts us up ... we delight in the Cathedral's young people's education programme. 120 children sing in choirs here. The Fraser Eagle Mozart Festival emphasizes youth opportunity.'*



**CO-SPONSORS:**



And we are equally grateful to our co-sponsors, **DH Associates** and **Francis B. Roberts, Chartered Architects**, without whom it would not have been possible to stage this remarkable performance.

And our gratitude to the growing number of **Friends of Blackburn Cathedral Music** who support us not only financially but also by their presence at concerts and in so many other ways.

And after the concert was over, there was one more photograph of the **soloists** (*Who's got handsome legs, then?*), with **Richard Tanner** ...

... and one of the head chorister, **Adam Whittaker**, who had sung so well with his fellow choristers for the concert and who'd borrowed Richard's wig to see if it suited him. It did!



And one more photo: of Richard & Pippa's son, **James**, who wore his own 18<sup>th</sup> century costume and posed proudly with his **grandfather!**



**Yet another CD on our 'Extravagant' organ**

Lammas Records came to our Cathedral on St. Valentine's evening to record **DAVID GIBBS & GREG MORRIS** in David's superb arrangements (for organ duet) of **Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony** (which they played to an enthusiastic lunchtime audience here a year ago) and **Schubert's fifth**.



David has had a distinguished career – he was organ scholar

of Oriel College, Oxford, then of York Minster, and was then appointed Assistant Director of Music of Carlisle Cathedral. (He brought his Young People's Choir to Blackburn to join with our YPC for a splendid concert a year ago.) He's now Assistant Director of Music at Kimbolton School where he conducts the school orchestra and chamber choir, as well, of course, as imparting his musical skills to the school's 600 pupils.

And of course, we know all about **Greg's** virtuoso playing! How exceedingly fortunate we are to have him in our midst!

**Watch this space to discover when this exciting CD (which Richard Tanner produced) will be available!**

**STOP PRESS: 'Sounds Thrilling'**

Our supercalifragilistic organ has received yet another accolade from the USA: the monthly journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians (the American equivalent of the Cathedral Organists' Association – but with over 600 members!) has just reviewed **Stephen Farr's** latest recording made on our organ.

He plays 'our' **David Briggs'** Symphony *'Missa pro defunctis'* (*Mass for the dead*) and Duruflé's *Suite Opus 5*.

The reviewer says: *The Briggs composition should become one of the major virtuoso vehicles of our concert programs! [The organ has] an enormous dynamic range... this recording is simply not to be missed!*



**Phone Lammas for your copy: 01904-624-132**

David Briggs

## From the Ever Amazingly Effervescent OC FRANK HARE in a village near Malvern

A bit of news - as if I haven't enough to do, I find myself forming a sports club here and developing the village's new £1.5m sports field into a centre that will include facilities for disabled folk to play sport too.

It started on the back of a fag packet but has since developed into a full blown scheme and needs £465,000 to complete !!

I must be mad as I am now the Chairman.



I persuaded our MP Bill Wiggan to be Patron and behold he turned up last weekend to watch our first matches - under 9's! (one was only six).

The sports club is aimed at the disabled as well as the 'abled'. We intend it to be a "centre of sporting excellence". So into the fray again - but what else would I do?

Frank also publishes a quarterly glossy magazine (rather like this Newsletter only 4 times as big) called **INSITE** with **5000** copies sent free of charge to 26 countries around the world, including China!



Frank told your editor, 'It's supported entirely by advertising. It's aimed at what we call "the downstream petroleum market" and those involved in building and servicing fueling stations, e.g. forecourts and supermarkets and other private sites like the Royal Mail.'

Look at their impressive website: [www.peimf.com](http://www.peimf.com)

When Frank was a chairman at Blackburn during your editor's time, he used to take off his shoes during sermons and put them back on for the final hymn. One Sunday his fellow choir members hid a shoe, and so he practised limping as the hymn drew near. But, just in time he spotted the shoe sticking out from under Derek Crompton's arm - so all was well!

Here is Frank's wife, Chris, watched by Frank, working on one of her Christmas cards. (Chris suffered a serious stroke a few years ago but is fighting hard to recover.)

Frank said, 'Chris entered a card for the Stroke Association National Award for ART in 2002 and won first prize! She won it against over 700 nominations.



'The ceremony was at Church House Westminster and the prize was presented to her by the **Duke of Kent**; we had lunch there with him and other VIPs.

'We also had an all expenses paid trip / hotel / rail etc - great.

'Chris's cards have made over **£9000** for charity in 7 years of publishing.

'I'm enormously proud of her.'

Our tireless BCOCA Chairman, **GORDON SHAW**, has recently updated the 3<sup>rd</sup> Prefects' Board in the Song School (with the exception of newest Prefect, **Alex Lund** - see page 2).

What pride our Prefects take, of all generations, who have had their names inscribed in perpetuity (that's a good word!) in our Cathedral Song School!

## CHOIR PREFECTS

### 1990 -

- 1990 Robert Caffrey  
\* Simon Fuller  
Christopher Hunwick  
Gavin Norris  
Johnathan Turney
- 1991 Kevin Feeney  
Alexander Stansfield  
Alasdair Barnes
- 1992 David Claydon  
James Robinson
- 1993 \* Noel Hunwick  
Robert Jackson  
Noel Murphy
- 1994 David Bowler. John Ennew  
Daniel Prowse
- 1995 Philip Johnson  
Simon Robinson  
Alexander Barnes
- 1996 Kurt Russell  
Daniel Holmes
- 1997 \* Antony Barnes  
Alex Hailey  
Daniel Feeney  
\* Christopher Pettigrew  
Adam Crewe  
\* Edward Seymour  
Daniel Hunt
- 1998 \* James D. B. Twigg
- 1999 \* Joseph Twigg  
\* Matthew Oglesby  
Christopher West  
Matthew Parkington  
Nicholas Lord
- 2000 \* Oliver Blacklock
- 2001 Francis Hills  
James Holding  
Jonathan Swales  
Paul Varley  
William Sanderson
- 2002 Simon Holding  
\* Alasdair Grishakow
- 2003 Phillip Rowbottom  
Joshua Abbott  
\* Michael Carr  
\* Thomas Croxson  
Daniel Grimshaw  
\* Christopher Dawson
- 2004 Edward Sanderson  
Matthew Bruce  
\* Adam Whittaker
- 2005 Arthur Geldard  
Charles Forshaw



\* = also holder of The Dots Bertalot Medal

## FIVE DAYS AFTER BEWIGGED MOZART...

... **Richard Tanner** and **Greg Morris** were making yet more music in Preston Minster with members of our **YPC** and the **Renaissance Singers**. (*Do they never stop?*)

This was for a BBCTV **Songs of Praise** which was broadcast on Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> March. There were three recording sessions:

- (1) A four-hour rehearsal and recording of six hymns on the Thursday night along with **Manchester Chamber Choir**.
- (2) A three-hour session with cameras the next evening, whilst our two choirs mimed their singing to the edited recording made the previous evening.
- (3) And another three-hour session of miming by all three choirs in front of cameras on the Saturday afternoon!

The first sound-only session, in informal dress, went very well, but our producer, **Claire Campbell-Smith**, was insistent that everything was perfect and so there seemed to be at least a dozen takes of every hymn! We were there from 6.45-10.45pm!



All the chairs had been moved out of the Minster Nave to help the acoustic (it's always beneficial to have a bit of an echo!) and also to make room for the multitude of mikes and cables.

The placing of the choir on platforms – at a distance from the organ (which was out of sight in the chancel) didn't make life easy for **Greg**. And, even worse, because the organ was a semitone sharp he had to transpose everything down a semitone!



And as some of the music strayed into obscure keys (especially your editor's arrangements of *I heard the voice of Jesus*, and *Wonderful Love*)

**Greg's performance was nothing short of heroic.**

At 10.45 pm we left Claire C-S and her sound engineer in their mobile studio, going through every note of the recording, so that everything would be ready for the cameras the next day.

They didn't stop either!



The miming of hymns on Friday evening (recorded the previous evening) was fascinating – and **L O N G !**

The Renaissance Singers and YPC members who had sung so well 24 hours earlier arrived looking very smart – all in black (as instructed by producer Claire Campbell-Smith) – and they were directed to stand around the Nave altar so that the two cameras (one on a movable stand, the other at the end of a long boom) could televise everyone – both individually and corporately.



The recording which the singers made the previous evening sounded glorious as they mimed their performance in short snippets (the first hymn, *We will lay our burden down*, had some 40 takes, the second, *I heard the voice of Jesus*, had only 21 !) Richard had to conduct all the time – trying to make himself seen as the boom wafted to and fro in front of him.



After tele-recording the first hymn (which took 2 hours for 4 verses!) the choir moved to the choirstalls for the second.

**Anna Cooper's** playing on the **oboe** (she plays with the BBC & Liverpool Phil Orchestras) added much to the beauty of JB's music.

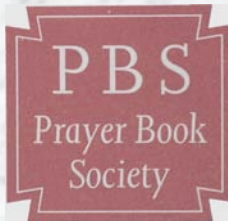
Claire Campbell-Smith wanted every shot to look perfect, and every singer to look thoroughly alert. (That was hard after two hours standing for 40 takes of the first short hymn!)

Heartiest congratulations & thanks to our **two choirs**, and to **Richard** and to **Greg** for creating the music so beautifully.



No doubt the broadcast on March 19<sup>th</sup> was recorded by us all! It was a programme to be proud of.

## Prayer Book Society



“O Lord, open thou our lips.”

How many church musicians cut their teeth on the Book of Common Prayer, and love it still!

Bedrock theology; stirring memorable language; the familiar Calendar. “Every Englishman’s birthright” which we should hand on to succeeding generations.

Help us to stop the BCP being sidelined. Use it or you’ll lose it!

Join the PBS



Write or phone the Blackburn Diocese Branch  
Hon. Secretary,  
**Neil Inkley,**  
6 Knot Lane,  
Walton-le-Dale,  
Preston, PR5 4BQ  
**01772-821-676**

## YET ANOTHER STUNNING REVIEW OF YET ANOTHER STUNNING CD

From the Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians, USA  
**LOVING SHEPHERD.** *Hymns from Blackburn Cathedral sung by the Choirs and Congregation with Northern Festival Brass; Richard Tanner, director; Greg Morris, organist. (Lammas #180D; www.lammas.co.uk).*

What a delight it is to find a recording of hymns that is not just the most egregious chestnuts of all time! Some of the 24 selections, to be sure, are familiar to all, but even these are heard in refreshing arrangements. I can heartily recommend this disc for various purposes: ideas for a hymn festival, suggestions to expand the repertory of a choir and/or congregation, careful listening, or even as I have gratefully used it to help to pass the tedium of a long and all-too-familiar auto drive.

The program opens with **Tanner’s** own tune for Jane Beeson’s text *Loving Shepherd of thy sheep*, his tune written for the Baptism of his son **James**. When I first put on the CD, I immediately said, ‘Aha! More John Rutter!’ which I did not mean as a criticism.

A gem is *Close thine eyes*, an evening hymn of King Charles I, with a touching tune by Mary Plumstead, said to have been sung by the beloved contralto **Kathleen Ferrier**.

There are some old standbys here, but in appealing arrangements. The two American selections, *Amazing Grace* and *Steal away to Jesus* have magnificent re-workings by our AAM colleague **John Bertalot**. **Philippa Hyde** adds a sumptuous solo to the latter.

Finally, we have three concerted hymns for choir, congregation, organ, brass, and percussion. The creativity and excitement of **Tanner’s** arrangements of *Crown Him with many crowns* and *Ye watchers and ye holy ones* I greatly admire.

**Buy this CD, turn down the lights, sit back in your armchair, and let some glorious music wash over you. Then use it for good ideas. And put it in your car to release tension the next time you’re stuck in traffic!**

## Heartiest Congratulations

...to **Rob & Liz Marles**, and young **Daniel**, who have just added twins to their family. They were born on 10<sup>th</sup> January; **Abigail** weighed 6 lb and **Thomas** 5 lb 10

*Liz wrote:* We are still desperately trying to keep up with our singing commitments with the St George’s Occasional Singers (directed by **Howard Seymour**) and we are performing the Bach Cantata *Jesu Priceless Treasure* on the 19th March at St John’s Preston. I’m doing some of the solo bits so hope my voice is OK post-pregnancy!



Liz [nee Cannings] was a member of the YPC for 5 years with **David Goodenough**. She met Rob at Bangor University where she was studying for her Bachelor of Music degree. They now live in Leeds.

*Liz added:* Blackburn Cathedral is a place very close to my heart, not only because of the music, but also because it is where my husband Rob and I were married’

## POSTCARD TO THE EDITOR

from **Derek & Marilyn Crompton**

*who’ve just been halfway round the world, and back!*



Whilst we were in Melbourne we popped into the cathedral and what should be on the menu for Choral Evensong but Bertalot Fauxbourdon – spooky or what? Well, we just had to stay and listen, didn’t we?

*Welcome back D & M!*

## E-MAIL FROM DR JUNE NIXON

Director of Music, Melbourne Anglican Cathedral

Dear John,  
Lovely to hear from you!

Your Fauxbourdon setting has been in the repertoire for about 20 years now. They are SO handy, as they require very little rehearsal, especially for the boys, and this saves me much rehearsal time.

As you would understand, we keep certain pieces for ever because of this factor (the Balfour Gardiner and Stanford in C come to mind as falling into this category –once the choir knows it they know it for ever) but I would never hold onto these pieces just for this reason, as they must be popular with both choir and listeners as well. My Dean recently heard your

setting and described it as beautiful, and my new tenor has fallen in love with it also. I should have written & told you all this long ago!

I didn't meet your friends; we have a lot of visitors. It's salutary to be reminded that you never know who's listening, as there are some days I wish a hole would appear in the floor & swallow me up during evensong.

Hope to see you back here some day,  
All best wishes,  
June

## LETTER FROM ROBERT COSTIN

**Former Assistant Director of Music, Blackburn Cathedral,  
now Assistant Director of Music at Bedford School.**

Dear John,  
I hope all is well with you. I've just sent off a cheque to Gordon Fielding for the next series of excellent Newsletters - it's very good to hear about things at Blackburn.

Things are busy here, too. We had our new 3 million £ music school opened last Friday by the composer **Peter Maxwell Davies!**

I'm off to New Zealand again next month - some concerts and a CD of Howells on the organ of Dunedin Town Hall. I'll catch up with **Indra Hughes** when I'm out there, of course.

I don't know whether you follow cricket but a former music scholar at Bedford and head of chapel choir, one Alastair Cook, scored a century on his debut against India on Saturday...

All best,  
**Robert**



remain in our ghettos. From these ignorance breeds mistrust and ultimately conflict."



He and Anjum were delighted that so many young people from Blackburn College were present – over fifty took part in the conversation, and the College videoed the whole riveting encounter.



This initiative is part of the work of exchange, the emerging community cohesion, education, outreach and development agency for the cathedral.

**Canon Chivers directs this, and has, in partnership with Canon Wedgeworth, raised £42,000 to carry forward its programme in the coming year.** The Faith Community Capacity Building Fund at the Home Office have provided £28,500 of funding. We think that this is the first time that an English Cathedral has been honoured with a grant of this kind to further inter-faith and cross-cultural work.

### We are so grateful

to generous readers who are contributing **£15-00 or more annually** to help pay for the cost of our Newsletters.

Recent gracious donors include a Right Revd and a Very Revd! Thank you!

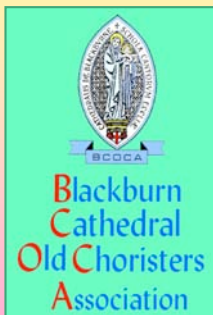
**Every edition costs over £1,000 to print and to mail!**

One well-known member of our congregation wrote to the BCOCA Treasurer: *'I enjoy reading the Newsletters and of course worshipping with such a wonderful choir.'*

If you'd like to make an annual donation to the Cathedral Old Choristers' Association, and have your Newsletters mailed to you, please send your cheque (made out to **'BCOCA'**) to

Gordon Fielding, Greenacre,  
Parkfield Rd. Knutsford, WA16 8NP

The Old Choristers' Association supports our choirs in so many ways – your gift will help this fine work. Thank you!



## Cross and Crescent: clash of civilizations or a chance to co-operate?

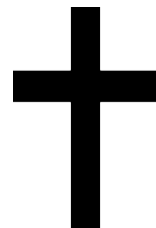
On Tuesday 7 March, **Canon Chris Chivers** and his close colleague and friend **Anjum Anwar MBE**, the education officer of the Lancashire Council of Mosques, engaged in the first of four dialogues on Tuesdays during Lent.

To an audience of some 150 people they engaged in 50 minutes of conversation, discussion and questions in the nave. The aim, in Canon Chivers' words, was "to model the kind of conversation that needs to be happening at all levels of society. The only way to avoid misunderstanding is to expose differences and to celebrate points of intersection. There is no future if we



**T**he Crescent, star, and the colour green are symbols often associated with Islam. The star represents knowledge and light, and the crescent represents progress. These symbols are found on the flags of many Muslim nations.

**T**he Cross represents not only the death of Jesus, the Son of God, who 'died that we might be forgiven', but the empty cross represents His rising 'on the third day', so that we might share in His resurrected life.



**Heartiest congratulations to Chris for his splendid initiative in arranging such encounters.**  
**There will be more!**

## PLANNING FOR OCTOBER 2007 !



Readers will have seen in our last edition how thrilled your editor was to have taken part in helping to lead a spectacular day of worship in Exeter Cathedral, when a wide range of music was offered by a team of national and international musicians.

Music ranged from plainsong to 'trad', from songs with guitars to African drums!

The day was attended by 400 clergy and church musicians who were invigorated by all they saw and heard and sang. **We want to organize a similar day here!**

**So we had a meeting to see if it could be done!** Seated (L-R) **Andrew Maries**, worship co-ordinator for the Diocese of Exeter who organized that day at Exeter Cathedral and who came to tell us how he did it. **Sue Witts**, our Diocesan Children's Officer – and also music leader at St. Gabriel's Church, Blackburn. **Dean Christopher Armstrong**, **Richard Tanner** – Director of Music who chaired the meeting, and **Canon Chris Chivers**. **Canon Andrew Hindley** took the photo!

Standing (L-R) Fr. **Simon Aiken**, Vicar of Longridge and a member of the Diocesan Liturgical Committee, **Canon Andrew Clitherow**, Diocesan Director of Training, **Philip Hunwick**, our new Cathedral Events Coordinator, **John Catterall MBE**, Chairman of the Diocesan RSCM Committee, and your **Editor**, who'd been there – done that!

**Andrew Maries'** enthusiasm and expertise galvanized us all, and it looks as though we may be going ahead with a comprehensive worship day, with international leaders, in Blackburn Cathedral in October, 2007. **Watch this space!**

### THE CATHEDRAL SHOP HAS MOVED... ...to the crypt, opposite our café!

Frenzied (but well-ordered!) activity was very evident on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> March, when all the books, cards, desks, gifts and I-don't-know-what were moved from their former home in the South Transept, to the specially designed crypt shop.



Strong men were refitting the glass display cases, whilst **Sheila Walker** busied herself with dusters and polish. 'The cases look so much better now that they've been cleaned,' said Sheila!



Shop manager **Julie Grimshaw** (mother of chorister **Bradley**) was busy unpacking boxes of cards to get everything ship-shape (*shop-shape?*) for the grand re-opening.

'We expect to do much more business now that we're so near to the Café-in-the-Crypt,' said Julie.

The space vacated in the South Transept will become an **Educational Resource Centre** for the Diocese, with a Cathedral Education Officer. **Things are really humming in Blackburn Cathedral these days!**

From **Dr. JOHN MOREHEN**, JP, MA (Oxford), PhD (Cambridge), DLitt (Nottingham) FRCO(CHM) etc. Emeritus Professor of Music of Nottingham University. Director of Studies for the Fellowship programme of the Guild of Church Musicians.

Dear John,

This is a very belated note to thank you most warmly for sending me the February edition of the 'Blackburn News' (if I may call it that for brevity!). It is a most impressive journal, and I frankly do not know how you find the time to put it all together. It is wonderfully informative, is full of first-rate photographs, and is beautifully laid out.

I look forward to seeing you at the Guild of Church Musicians AGM in Blackburn at the end of April.

With all good wishes. **John**





**E-mail from OC 'Woody' Seymour, who lives near Hereford.  
He's now a student at Durham University.**



Thank you for your regular updates on the Cathedral music at Blackburn. I must apologize for my lack of contact with you and the Blackburn crowd, Durham continues to be very busy.

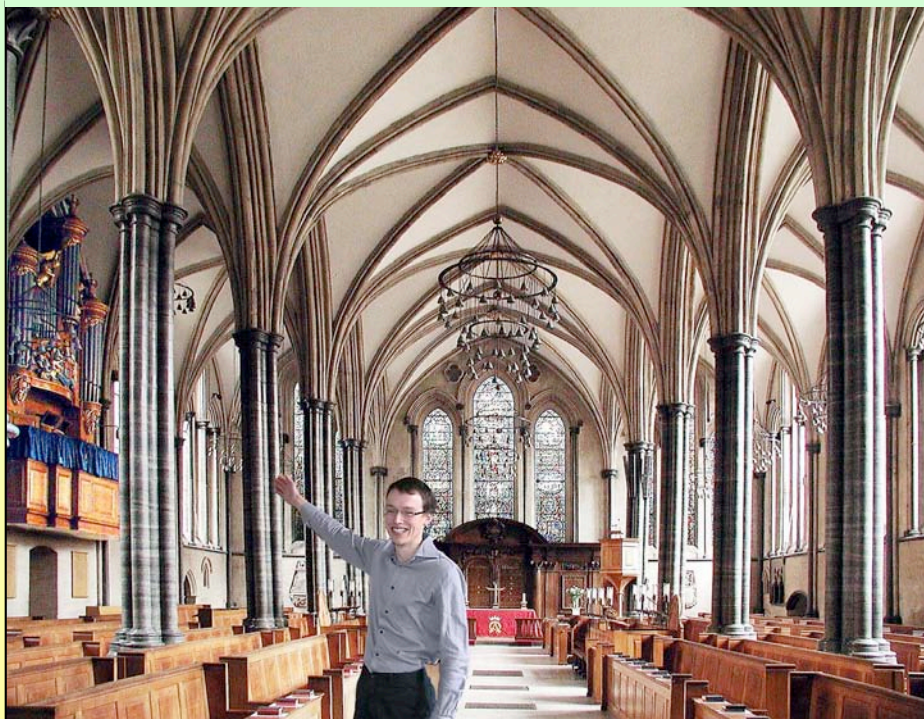
I do have some good news to share. **I have been appointed Director of Music to the chapel of the Venerable Bede within the College of St. Hilda and St. Bede.** I shall begin my new role in the college in October. It has not really sunk in yet as there are plenty of other things on my mind. However, come Easter I can sit down and plan my year out. I hope to see you in the not too distant future.

I'm singing with the YPC on their concert tour to Vienna and very much looking forward to it. Take care and best wishes, **Woody.**

**Heartiest congratulations, Woody! What a lovely chapel. JB**



**Overflowing congratulations to our Assistant Director of Music, GREG MORRIS who has just been appointed Associate Organist of the TEMPLE CHURCH, LONDON.**



**Greg** told your editor how greatly he was looking forward to returning to London (for, before coming to Blackburn in 2000 he was organ scholar of St. Martin in the Fields!) 'But I shall miss my many friends here in Blackburn, and the YPC and, of course, our magnificent organ. But,' he added, 'there's a marvellous organ in the Temple Church with two real 32fts, and a superb professional choir!'

**Rachel and Anna** will be joining him shortly. "Rachel is Registrar Neurologist at Preston and she will seek a comparable job in London."

During Greg's 6 years here he's seen the rebuilding of our organ, played for live broadcasts and TV, given recitals in King's College, Cambridge, many cathedrals & Westminster Abbey and, with **Richard**, helped to build up our music programme so that it is envied the world over. **Thank you!**

**This is a most prestigious post.**

The Temple Church is set in the peaceful oasis of Legal London. **In fiction** it was to this church that **Horace Rumpole** was brought by Ballard from their chambers in Equity Court. It was in this church that a dramatic scene was played out in **The Da Vinci Code**.

**In real life** the Church was built by the Knights Templar, the order of crusading monks founded to protect pilgrims on their way to and from Jerusalem in the 12th century.

**The Church is in two parts: the Round and the Chancel.**

**The Round Church** was consecrated in 1185 by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. It was designed to recall the holiest place in the Crusaders' world: the circular Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. It has a wonderful acoustic for singing.

In the Round Church you will find the life-size stone effigies of nine knights. The most famous of these knights was William the Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, the most important mediator between **King John and the Barons in 1215**. John was in the Temple in January 1215 when the barons demanded that he



confirm the rights enshrined in the Coronation Charter of his predecessor;.

**The Chancel** was built in 1240. You can see that the dark marble columns in the chancel 'lean'. They are replicas of the 13th century columns that stood until the War; they leant outwards too. The church was bombed in 1941: the columns cracked in the heat, and after the War they had to be replaced. The architects considered building the new columns upright. But as the 'leaning' columns had done such good work for 700 years, it was decided that their replacements should lean too - so they do!

The church has a superb musical tradition. **Handel** played here, and it has had a most distinguished line of organists, including, recently **Sir George Thalben-Ball** who never played a wrong note! (Just like Greg!)

The choir of the Temple Church has eighteen singing boys and twelve professional choirmen. In a recent review, *The Times* commented that the choir was 'the finest in London'. **James Vivian**, the current organist, will be the new Director of Music; his brother, **Simon**, produced our highly successful Radio 3 *Choral Evensong* last year.

Greg will now be numbered with the most distinguished organists in London. We shall hear of him playing here, there and everywhere. He has done a wonderful work with us during these past so-fruitful 6 years, and we salute him and wish him, Rachel and Anna, very well in their new life.

## GREG'S FAREWELL CONCERT

will be on Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> August at 7.30 pm



when he, with the YPC, will perform music they have prepared for their visit to Vienna.

It's essential that everyone, who has benefited from Greg's outstanding ministry in Blackburn Cathedral, makes every effort to be there that evening to pay tribute to his creative ministry and remarkable gifts, and to thank him for his warm friendship which has blessed so very many.

...And also, of course, to relish the music which he and the YPC have prepared for their tour!



It was fascinating to see and hear these young people making such joyful music together. Well done!

**Blackburn with Darwen Music & Performing Arts Service**

- Curriculum Support
- I.N.S.E.T.
- Instrumental Tuition
- Out of Hours Music Activities
- Resource Centre
- Support for Learning Through the Performing Arts

**Out of Hours Music Activities include:**

- training orchestra • wind bands • big bands • steel bands • samba band • choirs •
- ICT workshops • song writing •

### The Cathedral's SOUTH TRANSEPT was filled with joyful music on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> March

when members of Blackburn and Darwen Music & Performing Arts Service staged a lunchtime concert.

Proud parents and other supporters filled every seat, and the cathedral reverberated with the sounds of drums, trombones, guitars and many sets of tuned gongs – Gamelan – which originate in Indonesia.

This was part of the Cathedral's adventurous Education Programme, generously sponsored by The Fraser Eagle Group.



## WE WERE SO SORRY...

...to say 'Goodbye' to stalwart bass, **Judge James Prowse**, who sang his last service with us on Easter Day.



'I've been in the choir for nearly 15 years,' the judge told your editor, 'our sons, Daniel & Dave, were choristers here and as they're following their own careers I want to spend more time at home with my wife.'

But it won't be a final farewell, for Judge James will be back when Richard needs an extra bass, and as this seems to happen quite often, the Judge's robes should be kept warm for him.

Thanks you, James, for all you have done for us.

Our music has been enhanced by your singing and our fellowship enriched by your delightful and distinguished presence.

**WHILST YOU'VE GOT YOUR DIARY OUT you'd better note the following concert dates!**

Our concerts are attracting capacity audiences. Seats were sold out for our last two concerts!  
So book your seats now for the next two! ❁

**Saturday May 13<sup>th</sup>, 7.30 pm**  
**Cathedral Crypt**

**A NIGHT AT THE OPERA ❁**  
with the Renaissance Singers & supper!

**Thursday May 25<sup>th</sup> at 9.15 pm (Free!)**  
**L'ASCENSION**  
by Olivier Messiaen  
played by our brilliant GREG MORRIS

**Thursday May 15<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm (Free!)**  
**LIVRE DU SAINT SACRAMENT**  
by Olivier Messiaen  
played by the brilliant DAVID BEDNALL  
from Wells Cathedral.

**Saturday June 24<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm**  
**World Premiere of**  
**DAVID BRIGGS ORGAN CONCERTO ❁**  
with Duruflé's *Requiem*. Pre concert talk with David Briggs and Chris Chivers, 6.00 pm

**Book your tickets now by calling 01254-50-30-91**

# YET ANOTHER AMAZING DAY IN BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL

## Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2006

**1** At 1.00 pm that day **music, art and poetry combined to lead a large congregation on *The Journey for Holy Week.***

Canon **CHRIS CHIVERS**, with Renaissance Singers' Chairman **EILEEN HEMINGWAY**, read poems on the 14 Stations of the Cross by the Revd. Harry Wiggett – a former colleague of Chris at St. George's Cathedral, Cape Town. He had written these poems to illustrate in words, what Marcel Dupré had conceived musically. They read these moving poems standing before the paintings by Penny Worden which had been hung in our Cathedral exactly a year ago.

In between each reading **GREG MORRIS** played Dupré's fiendishly difficult *Stations of the Cross*.

The impact of music, words and paintings, and the deep devotion of readers and the musicianship of our brilliant organist made this an unforgettable experience for us all.



**2** At 6.15 Canon **CHRIS CHIVERS** gave a mind-blowing talk to an almost full Nave on Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 27 which we were to hear later that evening.

His approach was, to many of us, unique, for he thought of music in theological terms. For example, he had us sing the tonic triad (the three notes of the basic key of this concerto) to demonstrate the mystery of God being three-in-one. 'These three notes are independent, but they combine to make one beautiful chord,' he explained.



Similarly, he described how Mozart's reluctance to return to the home key towards the end of the orchestral introduction could be an illustration of the Prodigal son's reluctance to return home. 'This is true for all of us,' he said, 'for however far we wander from God we shall eventually return home. This,' he concluded, 'enables me to experience the nearness of God however far I stray!'

We were enraptured and many perceptive questions followed which he answered in his own good-humoured and brilliantly gifted way.

**3** At 8.00 pm **RICHARD TANNER** conducted a superb concert of music by Mozart before a capacity audience. The Renaissance Singers, accompanied by the Northern Chamber Orchestra, began by singing his *Ave Verum Corpus*.

This was followed by a brilliant performance by **MARTIN ROSCOE** of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 27, to which Canon Chivers had so helpfully introduced us earlier.

Martin (who had been a harmony student of your editor at the RNCM many years ago) was in top form and his playing was greeted by rapturous applause. He generously shared this ovation with Richard and the orchestra, who had accompanied him so beautifully.



During the interval a wine reception was held in the North Transept. Guests included not only **Philippa Hyde**, but also BBC producer **Simon Vivian**, whose brother, **James**, is organist of the Temple Church in London (see p. 25). His companion was also from the BBC – **Charlotte Kirby**, who sings with the Manchester Chamber Choir; she took part in the highly successful TV *Songs of Praise* in March which was conducted by Richard Tanner.



**Geraldine Armstrong** welcomed Old Chorister Secretary and Cathedral Choir bass **Alec Stuttard**, and **Pat**.



The second half of the programme was devoted to a superb performance of Mozart's *Requiem Mass* by Renaissance Singers, Orchestra and four delightful soloists.



This was listened to by one of the largest audiences ever seen in our cathedral. Heartiest congratulations, not only to our talented musicians, but also to all who had worked so hard to make this possible.



And at 10.00 pm, after it was all over, a hot supper was served in the crypt café for Patrons and Friends.

Mozart's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday has indeed been fully celebrated in Blackburn Cathedral!

## **STOPPE PRESSE!**

**RICHARD TANNER** has been invited by the BBC to conduct their annual major service for Ascension Day, which will be broadcast live from **St. Martin in the Fields!** This is a great honour for Richard and thoroughly well deserved.

'I'm excited at the prospect of conducting a professional choir and orchestra in the Queen's Parish Church (although she will be in Blackburn that day!), and specially glad that **Pippa** will be singing Mozart's *Alleluia* with us.'

**Make sure that your radio is tuned to BBC on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May!**

**In our next edition: read all about Condoleezza Rice's visit to the Cathedral (which hit the world headlines) and the very special evening of music given for the High Sheriffs of our County, and give a warm welcome to our new Canons' Virger!**

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