

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL

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Friends of Blackburn Cathedral Music Newsletter No. 11

and

Blackburn Cathedral Old Choristers' Association Newsletter No. 20

September, 2004

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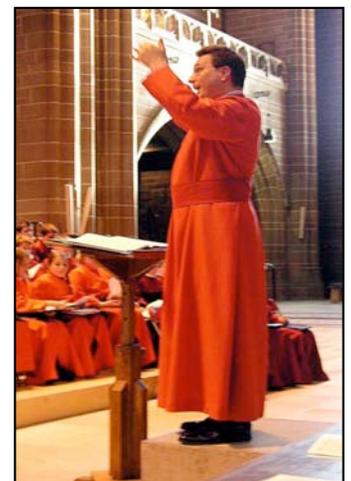
FIVE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS' FESTIVAL, LIVERPOOL

A capacity audience of over 1,000 was excited, uplifted, moved and thrilled by the amazing sounds that were produced by five superb cathedral choirs which sang a thrilling concert in Liverpool Cathedral on July 4th to celebrate the Cathedral's centenary. **Our choir (on the extreme left of the photo)** was joined by the choirs of Liverpool Anglican and RC Cathedrals, and Chester and Manchester Cathedrals.

The choirs combined, under the direction of Professor **IAN TRACEY** (above), in auld favourites such as Parry's *I was glad* (of course), Handel's *Zadok* and Wood's *Hail, gladdening light*. The climax of the concert (which was almost unbearable in its powerful impact) was Howells' *Te Deum*. Ian Tracey wrote to your editor: *'It was a fabulous night and I was so pleased that it all went so smoothly. I nearly lost it in the closing pages of the Howells - it was so hard to hang on emotionally, but what a climax to it all! (Hear, hear! Ed)*

Each choir also sang two items on their own: it was good to hear how very well our wholly voluntary choir compared with the singing of some of the excellent professional singers in our sister choirs. Blackburn choir excelled under **RICHARD TANNER'S** sensitive direction in singing Byrd's delicate 4-part *Agnus Dei*, and Chilcott's exciting *Nova! Nova!*

It was a very special evening for all of us who were privileged to be there, and it was so good to see so many choir parents who came to support their musical offspring.



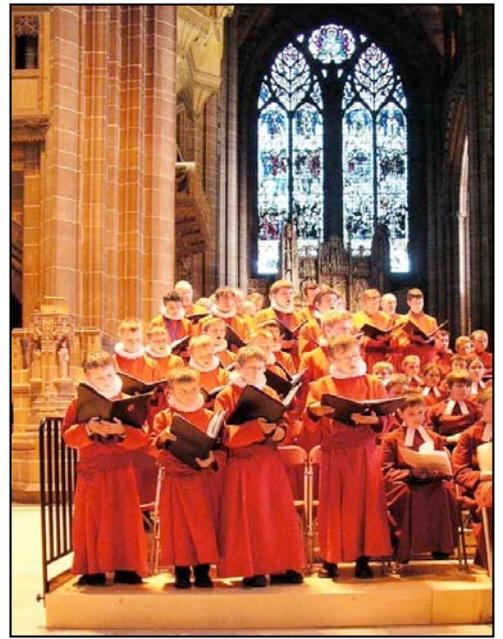
**Richard conducting
Blackburn choir**



LIVERPOOL 4th July, 2004 – continued.

Not only was the singing superb, but all the arrangements were highly efficient. The choirs processed in from the far West end (quite a walk!) absolutely together and found their seats so easily. They stood up and sat down together, and their singing was inspired.

It was good to see **OC CHRIS HUNWICK** singing with Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir, and his Father, **PHIL**, singing with Blackburn Choir while his Mother, **JOAN** and Grandfather, **BILL**, sat in the audience.

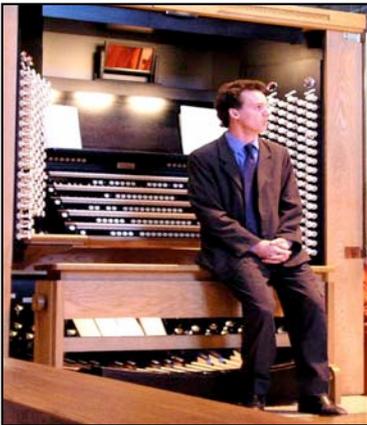


Blackburn Choir singing their two solo items. → Everyone worked very hard – it was a long day!



The capacity audience ←

included **Canon HINDLEY** and **Mrs. Julie Grimshaw** – Mother of Deputy Head Chorister **Daniel** and probationer **Bradley**. →



ALEX DAVIES had the thrill of playing the monster organ – albeit very briefly, to give the notes for our choir's two unaccompanied items!

It was a special thrill to see so many distinguished musicians in the appreciative audience, including **TERRY and Moya Duffy**, (below, left) - Terry was the first organist of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral (his brother, **Philip**, was the first director of music – they made a terrific team!);

RONALD & Doreen WOAN (below, centre) Ron was choirmaster at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral for well over 30 years – it was such a privilege to meet him at last; and former Blackburn organist **GORDON STEWART** (below right), talking to Manchester Cathedral's Director of Music, **CHRIS STOKES**.



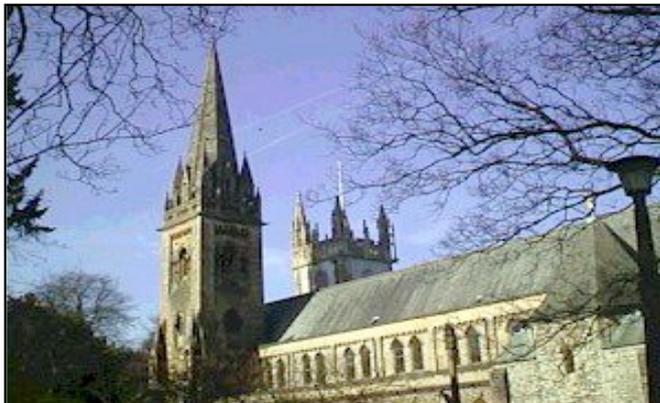
Gordon Stewart wrote to your editor: Was that not a great thrill? It took me back to a three choirs' concert in Liverpool Met (with Blackburn & Manchester choirs) in the early 70s which you, **Philip Duffy** and **Derrick Cantrell** conducted!

Liverpool Cathedral, the building and the organ, really come into their own for concerts like last night's. I thought that all the organists did a great job with that monster instrument, and that the end of the Te Deum was almost too much to take!

It was good to see you there. I know how much Richard appreciates the support you give to him and the choirs. With best wishes, Gordon

THE ARCHBISHOP OF WALES The Most Reverend Barry Morgan . . .

. . . gave an inspiring after dinner speech to some 40 members of the Cathedral Organists' Association at our meeting in Llandaff Cathedral in May. I asked him if I may include it in this edition of our Newsletter: he graciously said 'Yes'.



Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff

If you look at the Bible there is a strong link between music and God in its imagery. In the Old Testament the Temple of God, where God resides, is full of music. Just look at Psalm 150: "Praise God in his sanctuary, praise him with the sound of the trumpet, praise him with the lute and harp . . .".

In the New Testament the vision of heaven presented by the Apocalypse is profoundly and fundamentally musical. The elect sing, and play musical instruments. No mention of clergy, or painting, or poetry. Music has the prime place – indeed the only place.

In fact, in the Apocalypse's vision of heaven people don't play football, or poker, or go swimming, or read novels or play golf – a bit unfortunate that! – and certainly do not garden. Insofar as we see them do anything, they make music and cast down their crowns. Perhaps heaven is a musical republic!



The
Majestas
(*Christ in Majesty*)
by Sir
Joseph
Epstein
on the
organ case
in Llandaff
Cathedral

So there is a strong link between music and God. This is a link the church has emphasised in its liturgy throughout the centuries. God is a God of music. It therefore follows that if heaven is full of music then the music of the earth needs to point towards that heavenly vision, and what the book of Revelation says is that this music is transfigured by the presence of God, which is precisely what we attempt to do in worship – singing and praising God.

In the book of Revelation of John people sing before God's throne and in homage to him. They render music to the source of all music; and that's what worship is at its best – giving worth to God with all that we have and are, and music is integral to it.

So your contribution to the liturgy of the church is not an incidental extra, the icing on the cake, but belongs to the very essence of what worship is all about, and it seems to me that our cathedrals and great churches remind us of that truth, for here we often have the very best music that human beings are capable of, and that is as it should be, for only the very best ought to be offered to God.

For your very crucial part in all that I want to thank you profoundly, for I can give you countless examples of people who have told me that they were drawn into the life of faith, either by being a member of a choir, or being moved by wonderful church music which touched part of their souls beyond the reach of words.

As the inscription above one organ puts is – "The music was felt in their hearts long after it was heard no more".

Music rather than words converted them. And if it was only one person who was affected in this way, your work would be worth it, but there have been countless millions.

In Santa Maria Maggiore Church in Rome there is



always a great cheer and a clap for the choir and the organist at the end of every service. The Italians are not afraid to show their feelings, and that is how it should be.

So when you are feeling down and undervalued and underpaid, remember that. And remember that in heaven, according to the Bible, musicians will be the only profession actually needed!

Heartiest congratulations to OC GODFREY MCGOWAN who is taking a degree in German and achieved 85% in his written paper and a staggering 97% in the aural! Needless to say he's been awarded a First.

YPC's 30th ANNIVERSARY

Our *Young People's Choir* (of which we should be so very proud) celebrated the 30th anniversary of their founding on July 10th. At least, the 30th anniversary of **KEITH BOND** (who was Assistant Organist at that time) introducing young ladies into the then all male choir.

The choir really began its life three or four years before that under the direction of Keith's predecessor, **RONALD FROST** (See pp 5 & 9). Our debt to them both is enormous. Alas, neither could be with us for our celebrations; Ronald had been booked to give an organ recital, and Keith had a big service in Aldeburgh Parish Church (Britten's church) the next day. They sent their warmest good wishes to us all.



Back row left to right: Daniel Adams, Francis Hills, Jonathan Swales, Simon Holding, James Holding, William Sanderson, Matthew Parkinson
Next Row - Standing: Alex Davis, Daniel Prowse, Andrew Barnes, David Prowse, Matthew Ogelsby, Christopher Pettigrew, Edward 'Woody' Seymour, Adam Crewe, Joseph Twigg, Dr. John Bertalot
Next Row Standing: Naomi Crewe, Emma Pearson, Carly Bett, Laura Mitchell, Liz Marles, Claire Metcalf, Claire Wilson, Dean Christopher Armstrong
Front Row Seated: Nicola Mills, Rebecca Hutchinson, Abigail Northin, Emily Crewe, Claire Marsden, Rachel Smedley, Ruth Turner (*nee Livesey*), Amy Venables, Greg Morris

Before the concert and supper, a group photograph was taken of us all. (Above)

At the pre-concert supper in the crypt, **ALEX DAVIES** was presented with the first of his farewell presents by **MATTHEW PARKINGTON ('Parky')** and **EMILY CREWE** with **GREG MORRIS** looking on.

Organ scholar Alex has done such a wonderful job with us for the last year. His playing has been so musical, sensitive and so reliably accurate: and he excelled himself in his accompaniments for the concert. We shall miss him so very much – not only for his playing, but also for the joy that his delightful personality shed amongst us all.

He told us that he has no firm plans as yet; he will be returning to Lyme Regis where his parents run a successful B&B (it was good to see them there for that most memorable concert). Then – who knows what he might do?



Alex: the world of church music needs you, for you are so talented and you have such a lot to give. We send you our very best wishes for all that you will achieve in music in the years to come.

Then came the concert – in the North transept. So many folk came that **Jane Jeal** had to put out extra chairs!

The first half was an exquisite performance of Fauré's *Requiem*, with our own **Nicola Mills** as the lovely soprano soloist. The tone of the choir sopranos was so pure and sounded effortless – and the young men's voices blended wonderfully. It was a privilege to hear singing of such high quality..

After refreshments in the crypt, the choir tackled a demanding programme of anthems, starting with the fiendishly difficult *Let all the world* by Kenneth Leighton (written for the choir of St. Matthew's, Northampton – commissioned by JB's successor there 40 years ago!).



'In addition to welcoming distinguished recitalists (**Francis Jackson** – our Consultant, **Harold Darke** who taught me at the RCM, **Flor Peeters**, and many others), we began a series of Saturday morning popular recitals (which continue now on Wednesdays). Ronald and I shared the bulk of the playing to begin with, but the fame of the Blackburn organ quickly spread and distinguished organists from all over the country asked if they could play it for us – for free. Yes!

'We also encouraged the younger generation – one of the first was a teenager from St. Anne's – who gave us two recitals during his schoolboy years. He's now the new organist of St. Paul's Cathedral! (**Malcolm Archer**.) Another was a 14-year old boy from Birmingham who played his whole programme from memory. That was **David Briggs** who was Consultant for our recent rebuild, and who has been rated as one of the most gifted organists in the world.

'Almost immediately after the new organ was installed we had a real problem with our singers, for so many teen ex-choristers were joining the men's choir that there was barely room for the men themselves! What should we do?

'After talking it over with Ronald and the clergy, it was agreed that the young men should form their own choir (called the YMC, eh!) to sing Mattins on Sunday mornings. Ronald conducted this choir and it was a major success.

'But in 1972 Ronald experienced some heart problems and told me that he had to leave us. What a blow! Who could ever replace him?

'After our Friday choir practice that week I asked the men to stay behind so that I could make an announcement. As I was telling them the sad news about Ronald, the door of the Song School opened and in walked **Keith Bond!** (He was giving our lunchtime recital the next day and had come to practise.) I think the word 'Providential' is appropriate!

'Keith was also a full-time member of staff of the RMCM with Ronald and me and had been my predecessor-but-one as organ scholar of Corpus, Cambridge, so we had known each other for very many years. He and **Ruth** had two daughters and; he wanted them to join a choir, and so it was agreed that young ladies should join the young men and so the YMC became the YPC!

'During Keith's happy and fruitful years with us (which continued until after JB went to the USA at the end of 1982) the YPC flourished exceedingly – having well over 30 members for his 10th anniversary conceit in February, 1982. And it has flourished ever since, as tonight's concert shows us all so well.

'Heartiest congratulations to **GREG MORRIS** and his predecessors on their leadership and to **RICHARD TANNER** and his predecessors for 'supplying' such a wealth of talented young men and women for this very fine choir. Let's give them all a hearty round of applause!'



Greg then generously invited **JB** to address the throng, before the YPC and Alums sang the first performance of his *Bring us, O Lord God*, which the YPC had commissioned.

JB, who was about to celebrate the 40th anniversary of his coming to Blackburn Cathedral, told everyone how the YPC came to birth.

'We had a temporary organ for my first 5 years – while the Nave, and then the transepts, Lantern tower and East end were restored, built and beautified. The new organ was due at the end of 1969 and I told the Provost and Canons that we needed a sub organist to help me to enlarge the music programme. **FRED DEWHURST**, our assistant organist, was also organist of St. Gabriel's Church, and therefore unable to play for our regular services.

'Whom do you suggest?' they asked. 'A graduate student from the Royal Manchester College of Music,' I replied. (I was on the staff of the RMCM, as it was called in those days.) 'If he were appointed music master at a Blackburn school, he would be the ideal person for us.' 'See whom you could find for us,' they replied.

'And so, the next day, in the College cafeteria, I asked the senior organ Professor, **Ronald Frost**, if he had a suitable student who could be our new sub organist. 'What about me' replied Ron! I was staggered at our good fortune.

'And so Ronald came to us. His playing, of course, was brilliant, and his long experience of choir training enhanced our music-making enormously.

Sunday, July 11th, 2004

The next morning the YPC sang their last Eucharist for this season in the North transept. What an ideal place that is for such a service, and how deeply the faithful members of the congregation appreciate their lovely singing.



At Choral Evensong that afternoon there were two moving choir ceremonies.

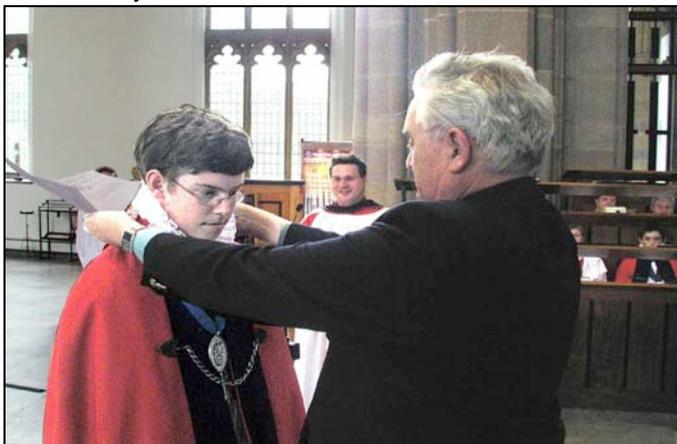
1. The Dean introduced **Prefect Michael Carr** who, being the longest serving member of the boys' choir, was to be invested with the **Dots Bertalot Memorial Medallion**.

JB said, as he presented his Mother's medallion to Michael: "Michael, it gives me special delight to present this medallion to you, which was given to the Cathedral in memory of my Mother (who was mother to the choir for so many years), for she knew your father when he was your age as a chorister in this cathedral choir.

Wear it with pride

Wear it with honour,

that it may bring honour to you,
as you will add honour to it."



2. The Dean then said Farewell and Thank-you to Head Chorister **Alasdair Grishakow**, who had been in the boys' choir for eight years (and had preciously worn

the DMB Medallion). Alasdair would be joining the men's choir in September as an alto.

Old Choristers' Chairman **GORDON SHAW** presented him with his Old Chorister's tie as he welcomed him into the fellowship of BCOCA. At the end of the service, after blessing Alasdair, the Dean and Alasdair processed down the Nave together, led by Virger **Jane Jeal**. It was a moving service which many will long remember.



We were sad to say farewell to **Jane Jeal** who has served the cathedral so faithfully as Virger for so many years. Her cheerful presence and dignified demeanor have added so much to our life and worship. We shall miss her. But she told us that she is expecting to be a grandmother again very soon – so that will keep her busy!

And if that weren't enough, **Richard, Pippa and James** threw an end-of-season party in their spacious home on West Park Drive for choir members and their families.

Choir cars were parked on both sides of the road, but one chorister, **Francis Hills**, following in his father's footsteps, turned up swathed in black and red leather, on his motor bike. This was greatly admired by his fellow teens! (**William Sanderson (L) & Matthew Oglesby.**)



The following week Francis set out to cycle from Land's End to John O'G to raise money for charity. Wow!



The younger generation were well represented – including **Adam Whittaker's** two younger brothers, **Daniel** (left) & **Ryan** who are not yet in the choir – but, who knows, one day they might be!

Yet another well-deserved presentation was made to departing organ scholar **ALEX DAVIES**, in Pippa's kitchen by chairman **GORDON SHAW**.



A good time was had by all. Well done and thank you!

A member of the Preston and District Organists' Association, who recently lost her husband, wrote a marvellous article for the Association's Newsletter, which she has given me permission to reproduce. May it help others who have lost their life's partners.

I'M GLAD I DON'T PLAY THE ORGAN!

I have two hands, one at the end of each arm. They are tools, servants, shields, protectors; they are partners with each other, but as in all relationships, one is dominant - the right one. As partners they work perfectly together, although it must be said that occasionally one doesn't always know what the other is up to. However, generally speaking they co-ordinate with remarkable consistency, in agreement, fluent and controlled.

Somewhere back a long number of years, in obedience to some primeval urge, they acquired skills at which one became a professional, the other an amateur. The right hand became proficient with a pair of scissors a bread knife, a paint brush (art and household), a pen and pencil; it developed strength and skill at opening lids and caps, ironing, turning keys and handles, winding clocks, peeling, pouring, pruning, using knitting and sewing needles, tying and knotting, measuring. The left hand was indeed left, behind.

But this being a working marriage, there were many things they grew accustomed to and skilled at doing together. They could carry, support, lift, wash, dress and undress, fold, hold, cycle, swim, climb, make beds, type, open and close a newspaper, and a million other movements and commissions, the success of which could not be assured without each other.

On Boxing Day I broke my right arm. The hand was now *hors de combat*.

The left hand, the amateur, was now faced with it all to do, to take the place of the professional. Of necessity it had to think for itself. Holding pen or key, it had to decide which way to turn (literally). With dishes to wash, kettle to fill, owner to wash and

dress (underwear could be tricky here), bread to butter and jam to spread, life was a formidable new experience.

Each task had to be analysed in advance, as to which movement came in which order; for instance, a door had to be opened before going through, balancing a not-too-full tray. No partner now to help to carry, lift, fold, support or straighten. Now it was taking double the length of time expected of both in tandem. It sometimes cheated, calling upon other resources – the injured partner's elbow, the owner's rear (that was a good one for closing doors while it carried something). It abandoned the iron, the owner's transport, bread knife, shoe polish, wash leather, Scissors and secateurs, and put them on a list of New Year Resolutions.

It found to its surprise that there were certain things it actually could do. It could type and was inclined to think it was rather better at this without the partner, because it had to go more slowly and there weren't as many mistakes to correct (better keep that one quiet);

it could manage the crossword, although the writing was reminiscent of much earlier years; it could pour tea from the teapot, water from the kettle and the watering can (for the Christmas bulbs), milk from a bottle into a jug (no need to abandon the niceties of life altogether). A fork for food was fairly easy, as was the wrapper off a Christmas chocolate. It could manage screw-caps, if they were left loose.

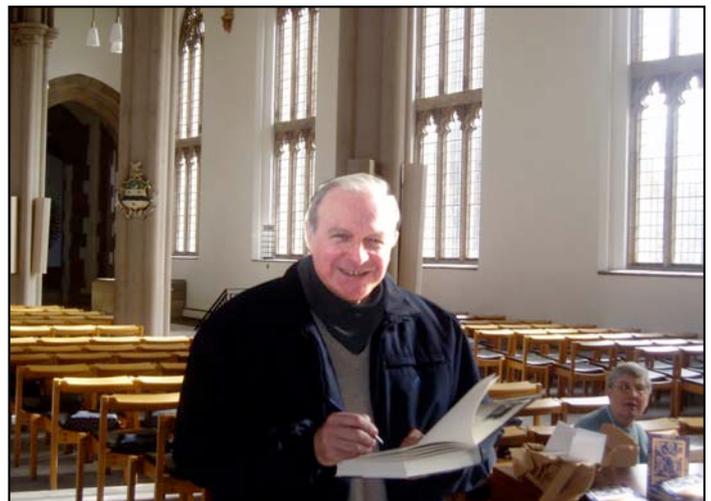
On the whole, it decided, things had gone fairly well, but the enthusiastic, now rather weary amateur wasn't impressed with any highfalutin' ambidexterity theories. The eventual reunion of the partners was much of a relief, and time and patience were needed to readjust and regain control.

And now I surrender the humble talents of the amateur left hand to the Lord, and thank Him with all my heart for the inestimable gift of two hands - I'm just glad I don't play the organ.

Hallelujah, Dorothy! And thank you so much. Ed

LAY BLACKBURN CANON JIMMY ARMFIELD

Jimmy Armfield played 626 games for Blackpool. He made 43 appearances for England. 15 as captain, and was voted the best right-back in the world after the 1962 World Cup in Chile. He was a member of England's World Cup-winning squad in 1966. He managed Bolton and guided Leeds United to the 1975 final of the European Cup.



Jimmy Armfield signing his autobiography in the Cathedral

These days Jimmy is one of the leading football commentators for the BBC and he is organist at St Peter's Church, Blackpool. He is also a lay Canon and member of the

Cathedral Council at Blackburn. In his recent autobiography he writes about his role at Blackburn Cathedral:

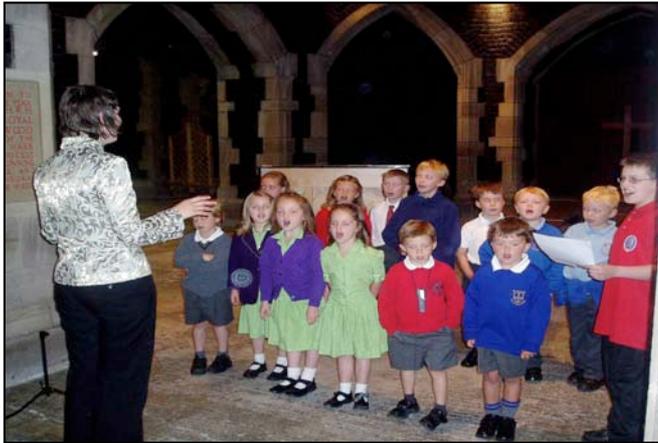
"It is a role that enables me to attend services and hear how an organ really should be played and how marvellous a high-class choir can sound. I believe the Blackburn choir, currently conducted by Richard Tanner, is as good as any in the north of England".

Jimmy has made a most generous donation to our music programme so it's going to the Friends of Blackburn Cathedral's Music.

We are so very grateful.

OUR CHILDREN'S CHOIR

On Sunday, June 20th (Father's Day) the Children's choir, with the help of chorister **Adam Whittaker** and under the direction of **NICOLA MILLS**, sang three songs at coffee time, following the 10.30am Eucharist.



Back row:

Emily Buckman, Alice Gregory, Richard Wilson, Daniel Day, Daniel Anderson, Nicholas Day, Elliott Day

Front row:

Henry Hacking, Sofia Talbot, Grace Daley, May Daley, Daniel Gregory, William Fielding, with Adam Whittaker.

Many people commented on the exquisite sound that the children made, singing "Lovely summer's day", "Father's Day song" and "Daddy's got a face like a ping pong ball".

The children were accompanied by **GREG MORRIS** on the brand new Crypt piano which has kindly been donated by the Friends of Blackburn Cathedral and supplied at a knock-down price by **EDWARD HAYTHORNWHITE** who owns the music shop on Preston New Road, **Time and Tune. 01254-697-460**



Edward admiring Greg's playing of our shiny new piano. We are so very grateful.

In September Nicola will be embarking on a tour of primary schools in Blackburn to lead some workshops aimed at recruiting lots of new children into the choir. These are exciting times for our choirs!

OC ANTHONY & KERRY TATTERSALL made the following great announcement in June!

For your information, we have been blessed with a baby girl last Wednesday lunchtime 18th June, **Charlotte Louise** weighing 8 lbs 12oz everybody is doing well and we are expecting Kerry home either Sunday or Monday.

Heartiest congratulations from us all! Ed

From OC PETER FIELDING: CORREXIONS!

Dear John,

Thank you so much for including my article about my 9 generations of Fielding forebears, and congratulations on another splendid Newsletter. But there were two errors which I feel I should mention.

First, George Ferrier was Kathleen Ferrier's Uncle and William was her Father.

Secondly, it was my son Mark who played the Brahms with me; son John turned the pages.

On a different subject, I wonder if anyone has spotted the mistakes in the Crossword? I refer to 10 & 12 across, and 43 down. I think Father-in-law should read Brother-in-law! Sorry to be picky.

Thanks again, Peter.

Whoops, Thanx! Ed.

From former Assistant Organist IAN PATTINSON in Lancaster.

Dear John,

I have just received your latest edition of the Friends & BCOCA Newsletter, which as always makes for great reading!

For the past two years my mother has been busily organizing a performance by her own Cumbria Baroque Choir of **BACH'S magnificent and monumental** (any other suitable words beginning with 'm'?) **MASS IN B MINOR** on Sat 2nd Oct 2004 at 7:30pm in Kendal Parish Church.

The choir of 50 'selected' singers from around Cumbria and Lancs include some who also sing in the B'burn Renaissance Singers. They are accompanied by the Northern Chamber Orchestra (often to be heard at B'burn Cathedral concerts) and the soloists include **Pippa Hyde**. The conductor is **Hugh Davies**, DoM at Kendal Parish Church, and I am playing organ continuo. The tickets are £10, but accompanied school children are free and group discounts are also available. To find out more, phone 015395 60338 or email pattinson@pinedale.fslife.co.uk.

Please do come and enjoy a day and evening in the beautiful Lakes and hear some familiar voices sing some magical music: Kendal is only an hour away by car from B'burn area!

I really do hope this isn't too cheeky!

I continue to be well occupied with concerts, having done a concert in Cartmel Priory accompanying the Kendal South Choir and playing solos and an organ recital at Lancaster Town Hall, and a concert in St Andrew's Church, Penrith accompanying The Penrith Singers in July. The next concert on the horizon is one I'm organizing (& accompanying for) at the Priory (Lancaster) for some of our older girls and young men in the Priory Choirs (plus some other young singers from the area) to perform vocal or instrumental solos later in July. This is part of a series of Sunday Evening Recitals I've arranged for various Sundays through the May to October season.

With very best wishes,
Ian.

From former Assistant Organist **RONALD FROST** in Bury:

It is now 35 years since I started work at Blackburn cathedral (July 1969) and I am delighted that the YPC (which I helped to found) goes from strength to strength.

Sadly, **Barbara** and I cannot be with you on July 10th for the YPC's celebratory concert, as I promised (months ago) to give an organ recital at All Saints, Hesse on the re-built organ there. Andrew Leach, a former student of ours at the RNCM, is organist there.

But our thoughts will be with you and we hope that the celebration will be a splendid event.

Thank you for the dedication to **KEITH BOND** and myself of the anthem you wrote for the YPC. It is effective and very well written (not that I would expect anything else!). May I have your permission to sing the anthem at my church – St. Anne's, Manchester!

With every good wish.
Ronald

Thanks and 'Yes!' Ed

THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL ORGAN

Your editor was privileged (because he booked his ticket well in advance!) to attend the opening, at the end of June, of the extensively restored organ in the Royal Albert Hall. (It cost £1.7 million!)

Whatta noccasion it was! A capacity audience of 6000 including many of the Great and Good. (JB bumped in to two long-time friends who are leading organists in America – they were sitting right in front of him!) The three chosen soloists were our own **DAVID BRIGGS** (who was the consultant for our Blackburn rebuild 3 years ago), **Tom Trotter** (Organist of Birmingham Symphony Hall) and **John Scott** (St. Paul's Cathedral).



All three soloists dazzled us with their superlative technique and unsurpassed musicianship – with Poulenc's Organ Concerto, Liszt's 'BACH' and much more.

But the highlight for many of us (after he had played the Bach Sinfonia from his 29th Cantata – and told us that it would be played at his wedding in two days' time – *applause!*) was **David Briggs'** improvisation on the Purcell theme which Britten used for his 'Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra'. This was, as David told us, 'The Young Organists' Guide to the Albert Hall Organ'. He used every stop on this, the largest organ in the UK, displaying not only its myriad delicate colours and overwhelming majesty, but also his own unparalleled brilliance.

Our enjoyment was greatly enhanced by being able to see the soloists close up on two giant video screens on either side of the organ.

This concert was recorded and broadcast in July on BBC Radio 3. Did you hear it?

JB's programme for this historic event is now archived in Blackburn Cathedral Song School Library.

BLACKBURN ORGAN ON RADIO 3 AGAIN

Our Blackburn organ really is hitting the musical headlines. **Wayne Marshal** (Organist of the Bridgewater Hall) was featured on BBC Radio 3 in July in a series of four programmes called 'Getting Organised' (Ugh!). Wayne demonstrated the innovations which were developed by organ builders in 19th & 20th Century France – Franck, Widor Dupré and Messiaen. But did he play on one of the world-famous historic organs in Paris? No, he chose BLACKBURN!

Did you hear those broadcasts?

A recent reviewer of new organ records on BBC Radio 3 (again, again!) said that **David Briggs'** latest CD '**Sounds French**' made the organ in Blackburn Cathedral sound more French than French organs! David's improvisation at the end of this CD was the most brilliant playing the reviewer had ever heard.

Have you gotta copy? Ask for one in our cathedral bookshop, or phone **Time & Tune 01254-697-460**



Wayne Marshall and David Briggs
before their joint recital in our cathedral last year

Letter to the editor from DAVID BRIGGS

Dear John

Thanks so much for your good wishes. Yes, we had a fantastic time on June 28 and subsequently in South of France! Now Madge is back in NYC (for 10 days) and I'm teaching at Salisbury and doing one of two other concerts – finishing the Blackburn Concerto etc.

We're both living in Manhattan from September - July and thereafter in London for a year (initially). We're making quite

frequent trips back to UK to see my girls (plus concerts etc!), and I'm looking forward to introducing them to Manhattan next February (although it'll be cold!)

It's very encouraging that **Sounds French** has been so well received. Glad you liked the RAH - quite a beast...!

All best DB

The Editor saw (and heard!) David Briggs at the recent Three Cathedral Choirs' Festival at Gloucester: 'I finished the Blackburn Organ Concerto yesterday!' he said with great glee as he went to the cathedral to give a stunning performance of Saint Saens Organ Symphony with the Philharmonia Orchestra. "It will be premiered at Blackburn in November, 2005!" Watch this space for more details!

EDWARD & ANITRA HAYTHORNWHITE

are holding another scrumptious luncheon party at their beautiful home in Beardwood for choir members and their families and friends. – in aid of the **Girls' Choir funds**.

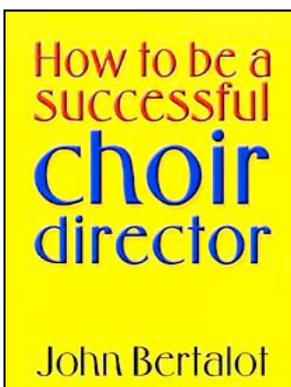
Date: Sunday 12th September, 12.30pm
Hurry! only 50 tickets available!



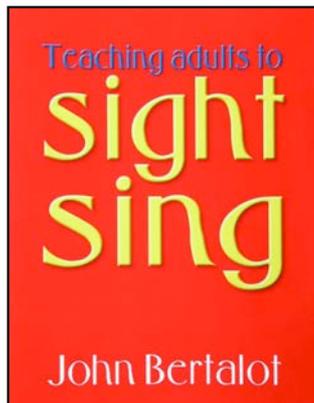
**Last year they sold out of tickets very quickly,
 So, if you want to enjoy lavish hospitality
 in beautiful surroundings
 in aid of a great cause,
 phone Edward & Anita right now at
 01254-68-99-24
 Or Debbie in the Cathedral Office 01254-51491
 Tickets only £12.50 each.**

By the way, Edward tells your editor that he now has JB's two most recent best-selling books in stock:

"How to be a Successful Choir Director"



& "TEACHING ADULTS TO SIGHT SING"



The RSCM said of JB's first book: 'If we all acted on the advice therein, our choirs would be flourishing and undoubtedly the best in the world!'

Colin Mawby, former Director of Music of Westminster Cathedral, said of the second book: 'This book is superbly structured, practical, down to earth and amusing – essential reading for both choirmasters and singers. I highly recommend it. The book is beautifully written; a good read and destined to become a classic.'

Phone Edward Haythornwhite at **Time and Tune**, for your copies and all your other musical needs.:
01254-697-460

ANOTHER 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Thirty years ago this October our Song School was extensively redecorated by the cathedral choirmen, led by **DAVID ROTHWELL & DEREK CROMPTON**.

OC PETER HOLROYD's Dad, **Ron**, (who was our verger and also a professional builder) knocked the door into the choir vestries from the Song School with a massive hammer.

David found some unused bricks and blocked in the archway (on the South side of the boys' vestry) to separate us from the rest of the cathedral. Paint brushes were used liberally by the choirmen, both in the Song School and the vestries.



David Rothwell 30 years later

David and Derek pinched part of the men's vestry to build a wall to create the present choir library. They also, with JB, put the whole of the choir library on computer – we believe that we were the first cathedral choir in the world to have our library computerized!

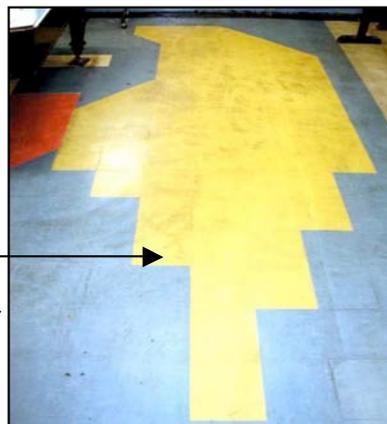
JB designed the patterns for the new floor: the cathedral coat of arms for the practice room, (which D & D laid most efficiently) and an enormous treble clef and bass clef for the boys' and men's vestries, respectively. (These latter are now hidden beneath a carpet.) We thought of submitting them to *The Guinness Book of Records* as the largest musical signs in the world, but never quite got round to it.

But you can still see the cathedral coat of arms on the floor in the practice room, which has worn wonderfully well during the last 30 years. (It's a pierced heart with a wing on either side, because our cathedral is dedicated to the Virgin – representing Mary's heart which was pierced when Jesus was crucified.)



Right wing

Song School floor

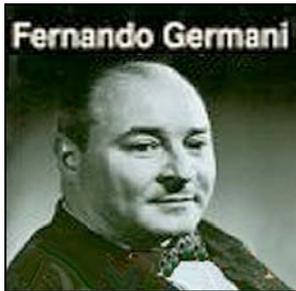


Also, JB thought it would be a good idea to mark where the boys should line up before services neatly, so he placed white squares in the passageway on the red-tiled floor.

These, too, are still clearly visible, although the choir now lines up in the 'builder's yard' crypt next door. (Plans are in the pipeline, we believe, to do something about that!)

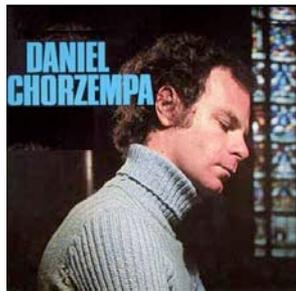


OC FRANK HARE, who was an outstanding choirman here 30 years ago both musically and socially, and now lives near Malvern, tells the story of what happened on the evening that the Song School was re-opened:



'We wanted an eminent musician to perform the ceremony, so JB invited **Fernando Germani**, who at that time was the world's leading organist, having been organist of St. Peter's, Rome.

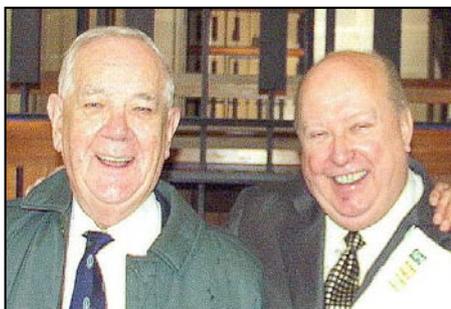
'He was due to give a celebrity recital in the cathedral in October 1974, and so the plaque was duly inscribed and screwed to the wall.



'Unfortunately, Germani fell sick and couldn't make it, so John, knowing a number of distinguished organists, invited **Daniel Chorzempa**, a young and most brilliant American organist who lived in Cologne, to come instead.

Unfortunately (again) the plaque with Fernando Germani's name was already in place, so my fellow bass, **BERNARD WEST** quickly whipped it back

Bernard West (L) and Frank Hare at a recent BCOCA Reunion weekend.



to the printer to which he'd originally taken it, and had it re-inscribed on the back, with Daniel Chorzempa's name on it.



'So, in future years, when the Song School is redecorated again and the plaque is taken down, they won't know which way round to put it back!

'But Daniel Chorzempa did come to perform the opening ceremony. The senior choirman at that time was **JIM SMITH** who'd been in the choir all his life – God rest his soul. He was a wonderful character – the local pharmacist, or as he would say, chemist. (He once got into trouble for supplying some penicillin for a sick cow!)



Jim as prefect in 1929 and as Sr. Choirman in 1974

(When he celebrated his 50th anniversary in the choir, we presented him with a *This is your life, Jim Smith*. This historic book is now in the Song School library.)

'He had to make the introductory speech which John led into. But Jim could not remember Daniel Chorzempa's name for love nor money. He had a very strong Blackburn accent, and so he said, 'Thank you very much, Mr. Bertalot. It's very nice to see you all here today, and I ask Mr. Daniel *Chorzinski* to open the Song School.'

'And John jumped in, quick as a flash and said, Thank you, Mr. Brown!

'It was one of the funniest things I've ever seen. I'll never forget it as long as live!' *Thanks, Frank! Ed*

MUSIC SCHOLAR

Heartiest congratulations to Head Girl **EMILY CREWE** who has just been appointed the cathedral's Music Scholar for the coming year.



Emily succeeds organ scholar **Alex Davies**, but her duties will be administrative – getting our vast choir library into pristine order, keeping the Song School tidy and organising this and that. She's already begun her duties by being the efficient secretary at a Cathedral Music Staff meeting. Well done, and congratulations

NOSTALGIA TYME

To mark the 40th anniversary of JB's appointment as Organist and Master of the Choristers of Blackburn Cathedral (the actual day will be celebrated at our next **Old Choristers' Annual Reunion, Saturday 25th September**), here are two historic photos taken in 1965 and 1966.

The Nave had been rehallowed in the presence of **Princess Margaret**, after major, **MAJOR** restoration by architect Laurence King in October, 1965 (a year after JB had arrived).

A hardboard screen had been erected between Nave and Transepts (where the choir steps now are) and we worshipped in the Nave for four years with a small 4-rank extension organ until December 1969. when the East end of the Cathedral had

been transformed with Lantern Tower and brand new organ.



(A full sized version of this photograph is in the Cathedral Song School.)

But here's **JB's** choir as it was in 1965 shortly after the Nave Rehallowing – looking East towards the hardboard wall!



Back row of men: Stephen Holmes (A), **John Sutcliffe** (B), Bob Anderson RIP (A), Billy Bradley RIP (T, from Clayton le Moors choir) **Peter Heald** (T. co-founder of BCOCA), **Bernard West** (B), John Wilkinson (B),

Next row of men: Andrew Wilson (A. Phil's younger brother), Barry Hughes RIP (T. College lecturer; diminutive), **Fred Green RIP** (A. then Manager of the Blackburn Times), **Peter Eastham** (he hasn't changed at all and is still singing bass with us!), Jack Thornton (B. glasses – also from Clayton le Moors), Tom Wilkinson (T. John's brother), **David Metcalf** (T), **David Robinson** (B. now in Cornwall), Jim Smith RIP (B. see previous page), and **Norman Eccleston RIP** (B. co-founder of BCOCA)

Rows of boys: George Nicholson (he's still around the cathedral), Brian Ingleby, **Grenville Robinson** (now living in California), Prefect Jimmy Chambers, Graham Beaumont, Prefect **Charlie Hopwood**, **Leigh Harding** (tall – he's organist of St. Barnabas Church, Morecambe), Head Prefect **Ian Harrison**, now at St. Stephen's Church, Bournemouth – see our last edition), **Derek Crompton** (instantly recognizable! – now retired), **Bernard Hargreaves**, (also in California), Alec Simpson (now a policeman in the Midlands) Stephen Hartley (in shadow), Stephen Walker and Colin Eastham (Peter's brother).

JB & Probationers: We need some help here. Third is John Harrison, Ian's brother, then two choirboys; Harold Ranson, and Russell Hargreaves, Bernard's brother. Extreme right is **Philip Crozier** who is now an internationally famed organist, living in Montreal and married to an equally gifted French Canadian organist!

Photo taken by the Blackburn Times to illustrate an interview with JB by reporter Valerie Green (Fred & Dorothy's daughter).

*Names of current OCs are **highlighted**.*

Note the temporary choirstalls, which we used from 1965-69 (with the temporary organ), and which are now in the YPC vestry.

WEDNESDAY LUNCHTIME RECITALS
begin on September 15th at 1.00 pm

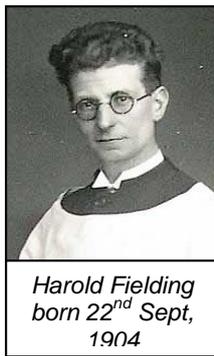
with Derek Crompton (Tenor)
and John Bertalot (Organ)

This special concert will celebrate the
64th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain
and also JB's 73rd birthday!



Music will include,
The Dam Busters' March, The Spitfire Prelude and
Land of Hope and Glory *and more!*
LUNCH is available in the Cathedral Crypt Café
before and after each recital.

22nd SEPTEMBER PETER FIELDING (piano)



Harold Fielding
born 22nd Sept,
1904

Peter's programme will include. Bach – *Prelude and Fugue in B flat minor.* (How many flats is that?) Paradies - *Toccata.* Brahms - *Waltzes.* York Bowen - *Nocturne* (composed in 1904 !). and one of his sister Ruth's favourite songs arranged for piano by Liszt.

What a coincidence that Greg picked this particular date which would have been Peter's Dad's 100th birthday!

29th THOMAS MOORE (Wakefield Cathedral)



6th OCTOBER
NIGEL
SPOONER

Former member of
the cathedral choir
and most brilliant
organist.

NOT TO BE
MISSED!

13th BIRGIT WILDEMAN (Föhr, Germany)

20th ANDREW DEAN (Manchester)

27th GREG MORRIS



Greg is one of the most brilliant resident organists we have ever had. He's given recitals in many leading cathedrals.

So don't miss him here!

3rd NOVEMBER

DAVID LEIGH (St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin)

10th MELANIE JONES (cello - Manchester)

17th JAMES VIVIEN (Temple Church, London)

24th PHILIPPA HYDE & RICHARD TANNER

Pippa and Richard always attract large and very appreciative audiences!

So be sure to hear them give us another hour of supreme delight.



Letter from DAVID POULTER,
Director of Music, Chester Cathedral

Dear John

It was very good to see you at the Five Choirs' concert in Liverpool Cathedral a few weeks ago. Our choristers will remember the experience for many years to come.

I simply LOVE that building: the acoustic, the organ, and the sheer scale of everything! I think we all benefit from these occasions; I think of them as part of my own in-service training as I learn so much from seeing and hearing different choirs and choirmasters in action.

The choristers here really enjoy singing your Johannesburg Eucharist service. I think it deserves to be better known. I asked the Bishop if we could teach parts of it to the congregation for our two recent Ordinations - in the hope that parishes and incumbents would be

switched on by it and would purchase copies for use in their own churches. As a further plug, it was also used at the recent Diocesan Clergy conference. So, I hope you will benefit in the long run by commission from increased sales!



David Poulter

Organist & Director of Music, Chester Cathedral

Thank you for the copy of the Blackburn choir Newsletter. I have enjoyed reading through it, and I am glad that **BISHOP ALAN CHESTERS** is enjoying his time here in Chester; he is certainly very good value as a member of Chapter, and speaks a lot of good, sound common-sense.

I was also interested to read the snippet from **INDRA HUGHES** whom Veronica and I met when he was organist at Holy Trinity, Coventry. We were involved in a performance of MESSIAH which he conducted; it was the most exciting, moving and memorable performance of the work that I have ever been involved in - Indra struck me as very gifted.

With all best wishes and renewed thanks for your kind letter.
David

RSCM's MILLENNIUM YOUTH CHOIR

GORDON STEWART conducted his last concerts and services with the MYC last month: including a staggeringly polished Choral Evensong from Hexham Abbey on Radio 3,

Tim Byrom-Wigfield - his accompanist and recently appointed director of music of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, wrote to the Editor: *Gordon has done a terrific job with his young singers. We had a very enjoyable week, in Durham, then singing the Sunday services at St Paul's in London, then down to Hastings for the last concert. We covered the country! It was also quite emotional, since it's the last time that Gordon and I will be working with the Choir. I've really had a terrific time with them over the last 4 years, and it's been good to contribute a little to the cause of the RSCM.*

The Director-General of the RSCM wrote: *I spent yesterday with the choir in St Paul's, where they sang stunningly. Gordon and Tim have done a wonderful job.* (Well done! Ed)

**BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL
OLD CHORISTERS'
ANNUAL REUNION**

You are coming to our Annual Reunion on Saturday-Sunday, 25-26th September aren't you? We'd love to have you with us.

Saturday: Lunch – singing Choral Evensong (when we shall welcome new OCs into our Fellowship, as you were welcomed) – **PHOTO** for your archives, and Supa Annual Dinner. when we shall welcome our new Senior Old Chorister, **NIGEL CHEW** who, with his brother **PHILIP**, was Prefect in 1975.



BCOCA Reunion 2001

And on Sunday singing at the 10.30 Eucharist with the Cathedral Choir.

Also, it's the exact 40th Anniversary of JB taking up his appointment as Organist and Master of the Choristers of our Cathedral!

Please fill in the enclosed form right away and return it to Gordon Fielding. If you've lost it, give him a ring: 01565-652-691

PS from OC GORDON FIELDING

Sorry we can't sing Parry's *I was glad'* at the September Reunion [because many of the senior 2nd trebles will have graduated to BCOCA by then – we'll sing Wesley's *Blessed be* instead] for I was looking forward to the organ part.

The Fieldings are invading the Isles of Scilly for two weeks starting this Saturday. There will be 18 of us going, but not more than 14 at any one time. Paul and family will be with us for the second week.

We rent a couple of places on St Mary's, and the grocery order is quite something. We have quite a few acres of land and the nearest house is several hundred yards away so we won't be disturbing the natives too much. Any singing will be of dubious quality, with no basses in the family.

Best wishes, Gordon

ANSWERS

to Senior Old Chorister Bob Keen's Crossword Puzzle in our last edition. The winner was **Mrs. Isobel Galilee**. Well done!

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. First name of English 17th century composer who was a chorister at the Chapel Royal and later organist at Westminster Abbey. (5) **Henry**
- 4. (and 51 across) Closely connected with BCOCA (9.9) **Blackburn Cathedral**

7. Mnemonic used in connection with Premium Savings Bonds draws. (5) **ERNIE**
10. What in BCOCA is 12 across responsible for? (8) **Archives**
12. Surname of person responsible for looking after BCOCA's 10 across. (8) **Fielding**
13. Stop filming or recording. Make an opening with a sharp tool. (3) **Cut**
14. Type of heavy heat retaining cooking stove (3) **AGA**
15. A low four-wheeled open carriage of a kind formerly used in Russia. (6) **Drosky**
17. A person who enjoys seeing the pain and distress of others. (6) **Voyeur**
18. Separating compartments in a burial chamber. (6) **Septal**
19. An artistic dance form performed to music. (6) **Ballet**
22. 1978 work by Estonian composer born in 1935. (5) **Summa**
24. An incidental remark. Placed out of the way. (5) **Aside**
26. A meeting place for Mormon worship. (10) **Tabernacle**
27. Verse by Max Ehrmann commencing "Go placidly" (10) **Desiderata**
28. Oxford college. (5.5) **Oriel (or Osler) House**
32. Salvador Dali practised this type of painting. (10) **Surrealist**
35. Democrat candidate for the 2004 USA presidential election. (5) **Kerry**
36. Source of illumination. Of little weight. (5) **Light**
40. A member of staff immediately below professorial rank in some US universities. (6) **Docent**
41. Adjective describing a person regarded as a representative symbol or worthy of veneration. (6) **Iconic**
43. A drink made of hot milk curdled with ale or wine and typically flavoured with spices. (6) **Posset**
44. What politicians are afraid of being ruled by! (3.3) **The mob**
46. A cleared space on a golf course from which the ball is struck at the beginning of play for each hole. (3) **Tee**
47. An outstanding person. A precious or semi-precious stone. (3) **Gem**
48. A shop selling cooked food for consumption elsewhere. (8) **Takeaway**
49. A predecessor of 2 down. (8) **Baddeley (See. Page 8)**
50. French composer born in 1875. (5) **Ravel**
51. (see 4 across) **Cathedral**
52. Chemical element of atomic number 86. (5) **Radon**

CLUES DOWN

1. Surname of Old Chorister who wrote recent article on Provost Kay. (5) **Heald**
2. Married to Christine, his parish church is at Salesbury but his seat is elsewhere. (8) **Nicholas**
3. Exclamation used by fox hunters to urge on the hounds. (6) **Yoicks**
5. French composer and contemporary of Vaughan Williams known for his folk song arrangements. (10) **Canteloube**
6. Kitchen utensil. Also a board used in electronics for making an experimental model or an electric circuit. (10) **Breadboard**
7. Surname of female member of The Renaissance Singers whose photograph appeared in a recent Newsletter. (6) **Elliot (See. Page 8)**
8. A chocolate made with hazelnuts. (8) **Noisette**
9. English composer born at Broadheath in 1857. (5) **Elgar**
11. Cathedral organist leaving English Cathedral in 2004 to take up appointment in New York. (5) **Scott**

12. Composer born in 1876 in Cadiz (5) **Falla**
16. A servant in a royal or noble household ranking between a sergeant and a groom. (6) **Yeoman**
17. Experienced, skilled, proficient. (6) **Versed**
20. Great composer born in Bonn in 1770. (9) **Beethoven**
21. A Christian name of great composer born in 1685. (9) **Sebastian (of J S Bach)**
23. Consume or expend something. (3) **Use**
25. Abbreviation of German Democratic Republic. (3) **DDR**
29. Manage to make a living with difficulty. (3) **Eke**
30. Rahab is described as this in the Old Testament. (6) **Harlot**
31. Last hole on a golf course. (10) **Eighteenth**
32. A major battle in the 2nd World War, started in 1942. (10) **Stalingrad**
33. Evoke or draw out (a response or answer). (6) **Elicit**
34. Note in Tonic-sol-fa system. (3) **Lah**
35. Second part of Russian composer's hyphenated name. Born 1844. (8) **Korsakov**
37. What the earth did according to the Psalmist. (8) **Trembled**
38. A god. Divine status. (5) **Deity**
39. A short valley or hollow on a hillside. (5) **Coomb**
40. Distribution of orders of the day. Dealing with things item by item. (6) **Detail**
42. A large piece of dark coloured cloth wrapped around the head and upper body of Muslim women, leaving only the face exposed. (6) **Chador (Chadar)**
43. Father-in law of 12 across. Christian name of 1 down. (5) **Peter (See. Page 8)**
45. Christian name of Old Chorister who has researched the heroic exploits of 49 across. (5) **Bryan**

That was hard, wasn't it!

**But Bob Keen's next puzzle is much easier
– and everyone can have a go.
There's a prize of £5-00 to be won!**

Quiz No. 4

Anagrams about the cathedral, its people, and . . .

. . . well known hymns, composers of church music, etc.
Words in italics provide the answers in jumbled up order. Unjumble them to find the right names.

For example look at clue No. 11 – the choir sees this Canon regularly! And No. 19 is even easier!

Don't spend too much time wondering about some of the remaining rubbish in the clues. Apologies to all concerned – no intention to offend! RK.



1. **Miss you Pearl**, You always sang that hymn so well.

2. How many **Pastors reborn** on hearing this man's Ave Maria?

3. **Rev Sty** gets changed here.

4. No! **Johns brash amen** does not belong to JB, nor for that matter this German requiem composer.

5. Did **Regal Edward** have a famous dream?

6. I'm sure **Tom sat all his** exams before becoming father of English cathedral music.

7. **God arrest mann** if he doesn't run the cathedral properly!

8. **Deck tenor romp** could end up in Balderstone!

9. **Violet catch spiky hiker** before he gets to this Russian composer's home

10. Except for common letters, **Anabels asylum sweeties** have nothing whatsoever to do with this former organist of St Mary's Church, Blackburn.

11. This canon must **handle dry wine** carefully.

12. You won't get a **magic tan if** you sing this regularly.

13. **Assist Glenda** while she views the Lantern Tower. What might she see?

14. This **darn thin racer** is a successor to No.10 (above).

15. This tenor choir man comes from parts of Lancashire **which linkup** with Blackburn via the A666.

16. **Margo tongue flaws Mazda** many years after death of this prolific German composer.

17. **Jeans famous teeth** would help her pronounce the words of this well known hymn.

18. **Geoff debated thiner honey** before singing this hymn at evensong.

19. **Grim Rogers** is a great organist.

20. This 20th century English composer probably never wore a **widowers tabard**.

Entry costs £1. To save on unnecessary bank charges, please pay your entry fees by way of **5 x Second Class Postage stamps attached, BUT NOT STUCK to the entry form.**

Rules

1. **Entries to be sent to Bob Keen, BCOCA, "Grasmere", 44 Woodlands Road, Handforth, WILMSLOW, Cheshire, SK9 3AU - WITH ENTRY FEE OF £1.in stamps**
2. Closing date: 26 September 2004
3. In the event that there is more than one correct entry, all the correct entries will be put into a draw and the prize will be awarded to the first entry drawn by Bob Keen, whose decision will be final.
4. Winner to receive a prize of a £5 W H Smith token.
5. Winner's name to be published in the next Newsletter.
6. Except for members of the Keen family, entry is open to anyone, not just Old Choristers.

Name:

Address:
.....
.....

Post Code.....

Colour copies of most photos in this edition
 may be available. £5-00 for A5, £10-00 for A4.
 (plus 50p post and packing.) All profits go to BCOCA.
 Write to Dr. John Bertalot, Cathedral Close,
 Blackburn BB1 5AA stating
PAGE and DESCRIPTION of photo, and SIZE.
 With your name and address clearly **PRINTED**.
 Cheques make out to **BCOCA** Thanks.