

Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations



ONCE A CHORISTER

Year 2021

Version 1.0

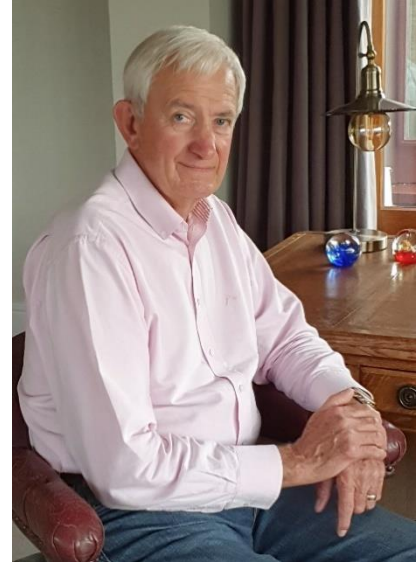
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Welcome from the FCOCA Chair

Looking Forward

In my report to the Annual General Meeting, held on Zoom in October, I suggested that, given what we have all been through and everything we have not been able to do since March 2020 as a result of the COVID pandemic, one might be forgiven for expecting a “nothing to report” statement from me, but that is, very much, not the case. Much has been achieved in the last 12 months and good groundwork has been laid towards the three primary long-term goals agreed by the Executive Committee of survive, expand and diversify.

In my on-line meetings with our affiliated member associations, I have been surprised by how varied they are in their organisational structure. Our members comprise associations that represent old boys of choir schools to those that embrace all who have or have had a relationship the choir or choirs, including parents and friends as well as music staff, lay clerks and clergy. I think they all have one thing in common, a recognition that being a chorister – choristership – is something special and worth celebrating. Though our member associations may be different in many ways, they share common challenges. How do we attract new members? How do we maintain contact? How do we manage personal data? How do we encourage people to take an active role?



It would seem that, organisations that succeed in the longer term are those that are forward looking and embrace change. Some of our most successful members are those who include present choristers and capture their interest long before they leave the choir. For some, changing the name from Old Chorister Association to, simply, Choir Association, has resulted in a profound renewal of interest. Above all, communication is key. If you fail to talk to people, they will lose interest and drift away. Of course it is lovely to receive a letter through the post box but surface mail is labour intensive and comes at a cost. Most people have an email address, these days and they change it less frequently than their residential address, meaning it is much easier to maintain up-to-date contact data. Some associations conduct the majority of their communication through Facebook and other social media platforms. It is not to everyone's taste but, ignoring it means not reaching a part of your target audience.

The very nature of the Federation suggests that it is bound to be more retrospective than prospective but that should not stop us from being forward looking or from embracing change. In my lead article in 2020 *Once a Chorister* I set out where I thought change needed to take place. Though the pandemic has slowed the progress of change, as I said in my opening paragraph, much has been achieved and good groundwork has been laid. We have discovered and are in communication with choral foundations that have or are forming Associations that we hope will affiliate to the Federation. We have increased our regular newsletter from 3 to 6 each year in which we can discuss and air views on some of the challenges facing our members as well as share the good news that abounds from so many sources. We have continued our engagement with Cathedral Music Trust (CMT) who, through our Vice Chair, Arnold Wills, arranged a meeting with their newly appointed Choral Ambassador, Alexander Armstrong and we have opened the door for further engagement with the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) and the Choir

Schools Association (CSA). I am delighted that both CMT and RSCM have articles in this issue of Once a Chorister.

I said in last year's article that I would like to see the Federation change its name but, having given the matter a considerable amount of thought and with much discussion at both Executive Committee and in my meetings with Associations, I have concluded that a name change, per se, is not necessary. A rebranding, is, I believe, overdue. I am grateful to Geoffrey Mitchell, Vice President and former Chairman of the Federation and long-term supporter of all that the Federation stands for, for his suggestion of using the name of this magazine, Once a Chorister as the organisation's name. We can do so, without changing the formal name, by using Once a Chorister as our brand. When this was suggested to Alexander Armstrong in our meeting earlier this year, his immediate response was, "I like it. It says precisely who you are and connotes Always a Chorister". Thank you Alexander. I'll settle for that as an endorsement. We are currently working on finessing the rebranding and hope to implement it during the coming year.

The Federation must have a purpose. Our constitution, revised at this year's AGM, states that we exist, not only to bring former chorister associations in closer contact with one another, but also to support the maintenance of choral music in religious worship, wherever it can. In 2022, we will return to in-person gatherings with the Festival in Ely in September where we also plan for the AGM to take place. I hope some of you will be able to join me at Coventry Cathedral in May to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the consecration of the new cathedral, details of which can be found elsewhere in this edition. I believe that our engagement with CMT, RSCM and CSA, brings together four organisations, which, collectively, can become a very strong voice in support of Choral Music and make very positive steps towards ensuring that the very highest standards of choral music in worship are maintained.

There's a lot to look forward to. Personally, I am looking forward to the launch of the new branding of the Federation, which, I hope, will demonstrate our willingness and ability to adopt change. I am looking forward to increased contact with CMT, RSCM and CSA and finding ways in which we can work together to our mutual benefit and the benefit of choral music. I am looking forward to attending the Festival in Ely in 2022. I had the very great pleasure of singing the daily services there for a week in August and can assure you that we will have the very warmest of welcomes from the cathedral staff, Dean and Chapter and the music department. I am looking forward to joining with former choristers who sang at the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral 60 years ago at their gathering in May. I am looking forward with pride (it being my choir) to the 900th anniversary of the establishment of the Collegiate Church in Warwick and its choral foundation and where Festival will be held in 2023. I am looking forward to receiving invitations from affiliated Associations to join them at their gatherings and, hopefully, welcoming new Associations to our midst. Above all, I am looking forward to celebrating choristership, in all its forms and wherever it may occur in the next 12 months and for many years in the future.

*[Nick Hodges - Chair]
October 2021*

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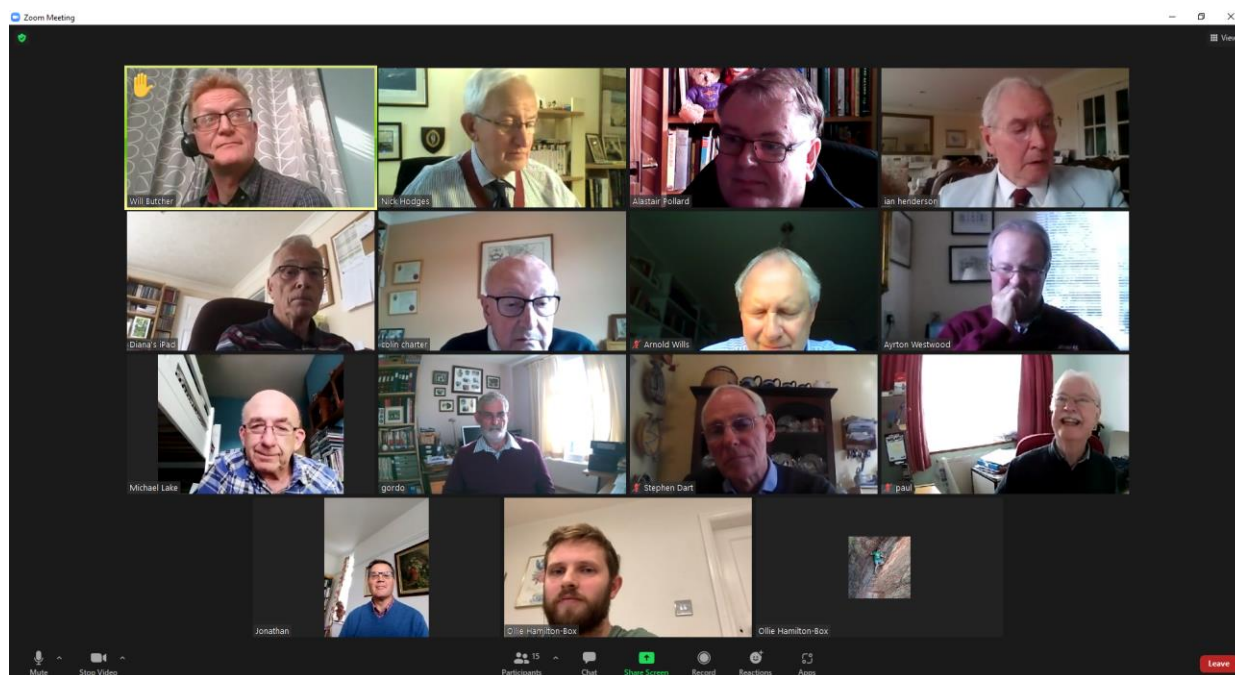
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2021 Federation AGM

The 2021 Festival and Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations was due to be held in Ely this year. The 2021 Festival was cancelled due to the Covid 19 pandemic, but we hope to hold the 2022 Festival in Ely instead. The AGM was held using a video conference in early October, on the same day as originally planned.

Report 11th October via Zoom

The turnout for the 2021 AGM was a little less than last year, but an average of 14 people attended. Reports were circulated a few days prior to the meeting and are included here in Once a Chorister, so we managed to get through all the business in about 70 minutes including time for questions and a short discussion on the updated Constitution, revised Festival Advice and potential rebranding. There were no major changes to the committee, but we would like to reduce the average age and invite some ladies to join us. However, Carl Jackson, Director of Music at the Royal Palace of Hampton Court was invited to become a Vice-President of The Federation. A full list of the executive committee can be found towards the end of Once a Chorister.



The agenda commenced with a Welcome, Federation prayer and apologies for absence; followed by submission of Minutes and Reports.

Statement from The Chair

I would like to start by thanking my fellow Executive Committee members for their support and guidance during my first year as Chairman.

Given that we are still affected by the COVID pandemic and, for the second year, the Federation has not met in the physical sense again this year, for either the annual general meeting or Festival, one might be forgiven for expecting a “nothing to report” statement from me, but that is, very much, not the case. Much has been achieved in the last 12 months and good groundwork has been laid towards the three primary long-term goals of survive, expand and diversify.

I made a commitment on taking the Chair to speak with every one of our member Associations during my first year in office. I regret that it has not been possible to complete this commitment but I am very pleased to have spoken with over half of our members. Unfortunately, not everyone that I have invited to meet with me has responded and I think some of our members have organisational issues. Over the coming months I will keep on trying to reach those with whom I have not yet made contact. The meetings I have had with member Associations have been very interesting and instructive but, above all, thoroughly enjoyable. It has been great to meet up with friends and acquaintances who I have not seen for some time and to meet new contacts. The discussions have been wide-ranging based around a set of questions related to the Association and how it operates, the challenges it faces and what the Federation can do to help. Some of the common themes have included keeping in touch with the membership, attracting new members, maintaining data, making it relevant to today's society, what sort of event to hold, working with other Associations. An often repeated theme was communication both from Associations to their membership and from the Federation to the Associations. Once a Chorister magazine in its printed format is sadly missed though I am very grateful to Richard Belton (Leicester) who again made available printed copies of last year's on-line version. In May I introduced a new Chairman's Update which I intend to produce three times a year and, together with the news sheet sent by our Honorary Secretary means we will be communicating with our membership six times each year to keep them informed of what the Federation is doing.

I believe that the Federation must have a purpose and it is clearly stated in our constitution from its earliest versions that we exist, not only to bring former chorister associations in closer contact with one another, but also to support the maintenance of choral music in religious worship, wherever it can. I was very grateful to my Vice-Chairman, Arnold Wills for organising through Cathedral Music Trust a meeting with their recently appointed Choral Ambassador, Alexander Armstrong. We discussed how the Federation could support his campaign to promote the importance of choral music and the benefits it brings to those who are engaged in it. We discussed the plans we have, if only in their infancy, to bring the Federation into the 21st century, expand and diversify our reach and renew our brand. Alexander was very supportive of the concept of the Federation being known as Once a Chorister, which, in his words, says exactly what we're stand for. In July I had a Zoom meeting with Royal School of Church Music Director, Hugh Morris and the RSCM's Executive Officer, Fiona Wright. As far as I am aware, there has been little, if any contact between our organisations in the past. Certainly, Hugh was not aware of any. As with our meetings with CMT, the purpose was to explore how the two organisations can work together to our mutual benefit. The RSCM represents and supports music in Christian worship of thousands of churches, large and small across the UK and internationally. Many of the musicians they work with are themselves former choristers, who may not have contact with their former choir associations. We represent an audience that the RSCM would like to reach, and we are able to promote RSCM events such as the International Chorister Day in September this year. I am

hoping to meet with the new Chairman of the Choir Schools Association in the near future and I am grateful to my fellow committee member, Stephen Milner (Salisbury) for making the introduction. Together with CMT and the RSCM, I believe that our four organisations, collectively, can become a very strong voice in support of Choral Music and make very positive steps towards ensuring that the very highest standards of choral music in worship are maintained.

Progress has been made in bringing the Federation into the 21st century. We have created a “development” team, which includes the Development Officer and Assistant Development Officer, the Membership Officer, Honorary Treasurer and myself. This sub-committee has met once, so far when the Development Officer, Arnold Wills, presented a strategy for the next three years, which will form the basis of discussions at future Executive Committee meetings. A revised and updated constitution will be presented at the AGM for approval along with a simplified guide to organising a Federation Festival. As mentioned above, we have made progress with updating our “brand” image to move away from the somewhat “old fashioned” image we currently project. I presented some ideas to the Executive Committee, which I also included in my May Chairman’s Update, based around using Once a Chorister as our “brand” name without completely losing our full title. If further progress along this route is approved at the AGM, the concepts will be given to a graphic artist to develop into finished artwork along with suggestions for designs for outbound communications such as newsletters, website, emails and letters so that a common style is adopted through our activities.

I am very pleased with what we have achieved in the last 12 months but there is still much to do and many challenges ahead, not least of which is how we maintain the data we hold on our affiliated members and other contacts. At present, various spreadsheets are maintained by Officers who need to communicate on behalf of the Federation. The Secretary, the Treasurer and I maintain mailing lists, in a variety of formats for mailing purposes, both email and postal mail. None of us has access to the others lists and ensuring and maintaining consistency and currency is problematic. The data we hold is not complex, but each relationship has more than one touch-point in either direction. We need to find a cost effective and sensible solution to this challenge and I hope that we will do so in the next 12 months.

Also, in the next 12 months I hope we will make further progress on reaching out to our membership and increasing our contact with them. I hope that Associations will invite the Federation to join them in their respective gatherings and that members of the Executive Committee will attend events wherever possible. I will also make every effort to meet with those Associations I have not yet had chance to talk with and encourage Associations to talk to one another and exchange ideas. Above everything, I hope that we will continue to work with other organisations supporting choral music in worship and to encourage everyone to celebrate choristership.

[Nick Hodges - Chair FCOCA]

Secretary's report

The 2021 AGM was due to be held in Ely during the FCOCA 2021 Festival, but was rescheduled to take place as a video conference on the same date, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since the 2020 AGM the Executive committee met a number of times using Zoom: 17th October 2020, 6th March 2021, 4th July 2021 and 11th September 2021. The Development sub-committee met separately (in addition), and the Chair & Secretary managed to meet informally in person. Despite IT glitches we managed very well with good attendances, and it did save committee members a lot of time and travel costs, not to mention doing a small bit to reduce noxious emissions. Minutes of all committee meetings are produced, and Newsletters published to our Website, so there is little else to mention here.

Thanks must go to my wife Nicola who takes minutes during our committee meetings.

[Alastair Pollard - Honorary Secretary]

Membership Secretary's report

80 membership cards were issued to 7 Associations in the past year.

It has been noted that many associations are unaware of membership cards.

On Twitter we are currently following all cathedrals and many churches (154 in total). Our followers have increased from 133 to 153, We have 171 Facebook followers.

[Richard Lilley - Membership secretary]

Presentation and adoption of annual accounts

The accounts are shown as they have been for some years now, so hopefully easy to interpret! Whilst subscriptions received are not dissimilar to the 2019 figure when we look at income, they still fall short of what they should be, perhaps due to some associations not meeting much if at all during the pandemic. So I trust we may see a few more subs in by the end of this year...

The second main item shown in the expenditure column is the £195 for Regalia. It was 2006 when the Federation accounts were last updated with a new valuation of its regalia, being the Chairman's Chain of Office and Secretary's Pendant. Initially we had an estimated cost of revaluation of £400 so it was excellent news when the company invoiced us for just less than 50% of that!

You will see the results if you glance at the Balance Sheet with the first item shown as just under £24k in 2019 but now worth over £33k. But remember it is a book value and whilst it increases the Federation's assets we have to consider the true regalia worth to anyone other than us?

The largest item in the expenditure column remains as it has for some years now and relates to the cost of insurance. So all I'm going to say at this point is that the Executive Committee have

started to think very hard about the cost of insurance. As your Treasurer I am concerned that we have begun to show a deficit each year (£910 in 2020), now that we are not seeing income from the sale of Once a Chorister or the bulk of the merchandise which we used to sell. This means that we are using capital to balance the books, and you need not be a great mathematician to note that we can only continue to survive for this decade if we stay as we have been.

So watch this space! The financial position of the Federation has to be paramount in any decisions taken within forward thinking of our operations. We have made one decision though, and I will be writing to the treasurers of the associations who insure their regalia through the FCOCA – one of the benefits offered for umpteen years. With a number of the items possibly kept anyway within the confines of the cathedral, church or college, we will be asking for items to be insured “locally” from 2022. So to sum up I will say a rather similar year to 2019. We still have funds in the Bank, but they are starting to diminish.

The accounts have been verified as a true record by our Independent Financial Examiner Mr Matthew Guest, ACMA, of Manchester.

[Michael Lake – Honorary Treasurer]

Development report

During this last year the focus for development has been the future and what as an organisation we offer in our ‘shopwindow’.

How we go forward has been very much the topic of conversation. We cannot continue as we are.

A number of questions have dominated our discussions:

- What do we do for new members?
- Will we attract new members?
- What do we offer?
- How long will we survive as an organisation in our present form?
- To what extent and how do we become financially self supporting so that we hold on to our limited funds and ideally improve our position year on year?

These and other questions will occupy our thoughts over the coming months, as the development team produce our ‘Plan for the future of FCOCA’.

If any members have ideas in terms of what we offer please contact the Chair of the development team, Arnold Wills (Peterborough) on Arnold.wills@haycroft.co

[Arnold Wills – Development Officer]

Regional Representative reports

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many associations have not met in the past year either in person or virtually using video-conferencing software. This has significantly affected churches, cathedrals and choirs, and many former chorister events, gatherings, and meetings were not possible. However, a few FCOCA associations have met using video-conferencing software, and some have now started to meet in person. Hence there is very little news from the Regions, but other reports from members can be found elsewhere in Once a Chorister or on our website www.fcoca.org.uk

- **Durham:** The Chorister School at Durham merged with Durham School in September 2021 to form the Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation (DCSF). Some of the former Chorister School buildings will continue to be used by younger pupils, and the Cathedral Choir will continue as before. To stay relevant to changing times, Choristers no longer need to board at the School. Durham Cathedral Old Choristers' Association will merge into the Old Dunelmians Society, but will continue to exist as a subsidiary and retain its name and identity, together with membership of the Federation.
- **Salisbury:** Salisbury Cathedral will be celebrating 30 years of the Girls Choir with a special concert with former girl choristers singing in Salisbury Cathedral on Saturday 9 October 2021 at 7.30.

New Vice-President – Carl Jackson



We are pleased to announce that Mr Carl Jackson MVO, Director of Music, Royal Palace of Hampton Court has agreed to become a Vice-President of the Federation. Carl, who has been at Hampton Court since 1996, studied at the Royal Academy of Music and was Organ Scholar at Downing College, Cambridge, where he was a pupil of Peter Hurford. More recently, Carl will be recognised as one of the judges for the BBC Chorister of the Year competition.

Carl was guest speaker at the Federation's 2018 Annual Festival held in Peterborough. We are delighted that Carl has accepted the position and we look forward to welcoming him to future Executive Committee meetings and the wealth of experience he will bring to our discussions.

Future Events

At the moment the Federation AGM will not be a separate event and will take place during the annual Festival. However, this may change in the future if members associations offer to host a separate AGM event, possibly as part of their own association reunion.

Ely 2022
Warwick 2023

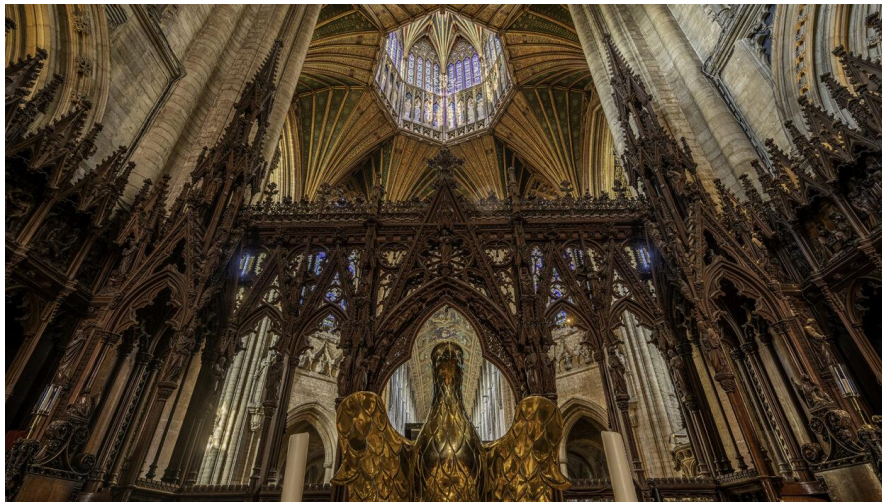
Vacant	2024	Can you help by hosting a Federation Festival?
Vacant	2025	Can you help by hosting a Federation Festival?
Vacant	2026	Can you help by hosting a Federation Festival?
Vacant	2027	Can you help by hosting a Federation Festival?
Vacant	2028	Can you help by hosting a Federation Festival?
Vacant	2029	Can you help by hosting a Federation Festival?
Vacant	2030	Can you help by hosting a Federation Festival?

The guide to hosting a Federation Festival has recently been updated, giving useful information about hosting such an event. Executive Committee members and previous host associations will be only too happy to help and remember that you no longer need to arrange overnight accommodation for attendees or transport between event venues.

Federation Festival - Ely 9th – 11th September 2022

The Dean of Ely Cathedral and President of the Society of Ely Choristers Mark Bonney, Edmund Aldhouse Director of the Music, and the Ely Cathedral Choristers' Society invite you to the FCOCA Festival in Ely in 2022, and are looking forward to meeting you in the City of Ely.

We may only be a small city of around 20,000 souls but the cathedral can be seen from miles away as the "Ship of the Fens" rises above the low-lying surrounding wetlands. William the Conqueror began work on the Cathedral in 1083, and the magnificent Octagonal tower and lantern is acknowledged as one of the wonders of medieval engineering. This incredible structure, suspended high over the centre of the Cathedral, was completed in 1342 and is considered the jewel in the Cathedral crown. The music at Ely Cathedral is offered first and foremost as an expression of worship, and the tradition of daily choral music remains at the heart of the Cathedral's work and witness. Today the Cathedral Choir consists of boy and girl choristers and adult professional singers, who between them sing at the majority of the daily services.



The first organ was built in 1685, and the present case was installed in 1850. In 1908 Harrison and Harrison built a virtually new organ, with the console shown here. Restoration work on the fabric of the building of the last three bays of the North Choir Aisle in 1999 and 2001 was an opportunity to ask Harrison and Harrison to carry out an extensive programme of restoration on the organ.



Festival details are subject to change, but this is what we expect to happen:

Friday 9th

Morning/afternoon	Delegates arrive Registration	
1600	Tea and welcome	South Transept
1730	Evensong	Quire
1830	Civic Reception	Old Palace or Cathedral
2100	Compline	Lady Chapel

Saturday 10th

0800	Communion	tbc
Morning	Optional tours	
	Talk	Venue tbc
1145	Organ Recital	Cathedral
	Lunch	Own arrangements
1230	Ely Reunion Lunch	Almonry
Afternoon	Free time	
	Ely Society AGM	Almonry tbc
	Federation AGM	Cathedral Centre tbc
1630	Rehearsal for Evensong	Octagon
1730	Festival Evensong	Octagon
1900 for 1930	Drinks	Monastic Barn, King's Ely
	Banquet	
	Guest Speaker – Christopher Robinson CVO CBE	

Sunday 11th

0815	Communion	High Altar
1030	Festal Choral Eucharist	Octagon
1215	Farewell Reception	North Transept
1300	Sunday Lunch	Almonry

Updated details will appear on the Federation website, but in the meantime for more information please contact: John Marshall: jandrmarshall68@yahoo.co.uk

[John Marshall, Chairman of the Society of Ely Choristers]

RSCM International Chorister Day



We were not sure whether the idea would be adopted but were heartened to see all sorts of choirs up and down the country marking International Chorister Day (ICD). Some cathedrals and other churches chose to make chorister awards that day; some other choirs held 'be a chorister experiences'; others marked it more simply in references in the prayers. RSCM arranged events in Croydon Minster; St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol; St Wulfram's Grantham; Baildon Parish Church; and Newport Cathedral. And we are pleased that we were able to share stories of choristers' experiences, young and old – though we would

certainly be pleased to receive more to add to the pages on our website.

So, the big question of course is: what next? We learnt a lot from 2021 and want to make International Chorister Day 2022 (9th October – save the date!) celebrated even more widely. We will update our resources on the RSCM website and are doing what we can to enable churches to mark the day; and will also be looking to work with other organisations to be able to share news of it more broadly. We also have a day series of chorister courses planned for February 2022; and this forms part of our much bigger, over-arching Education Plan. You can find out more about that on our website (www.rscm.org.uk) –

search Education Plan in the blue box at the top. The Plan includes the headline details of how we are going to work towards growth in church music. There needs to be young people involved in church music at every level from great cathedrals to local churches, and our work will need to reflect the need of the church to engage afresh with local communities. We have lots of ideas we are beginning to enact but are under no illusions that this is a big task.

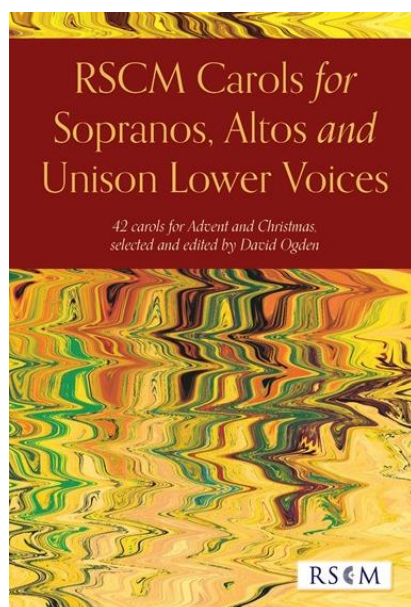


Many readers may be familiar with RSCM chorister training badges and ribbons, which over the years have gone through various guises and stages. For more than 20 years, this scheme has been called Voice for Life, and is a valuable way of building and recognising the achievements of

young choristers (though in fact is equally applicable to adults). We have just launched our revised Singing Awards syllabus, and now offer a comprehensive range of support resources for choristers who are taking these exams. Do take a look – search ‘singing awards’ on the website – and perhaps you know a chorister, or indeed a whole choir, who might be suitable to engage with this. We know that choirs with young people in them have been especially hard hit by the ravages of the pandemic and are, therefore, particularly aware of the need to encourage and support them in resuming singing again. There is much to be done!

[Hugh Morris - Director RSCM]

[Photos from ICD Croydon Minster]

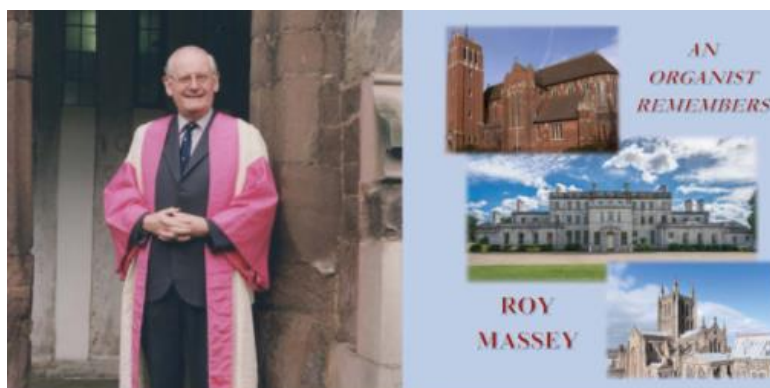


This superb new collection of 42 carols by 26 composers has been specially compiled to appeal to church and school choirs of all kinds. Written during lockdown, choirs and those who listen to them will love the 30 new carols in a wide range of tempos and styles (from plainsong to funk). Selected and edited by David Ogden, with rehearsal and back tracks available on demand.

For more information click [here](#)

<https://www.rscmshop.com/books/9780854023011/rscm-carols-for-sopranos-altos-and-unison-lower-voices>

Roy Massey is one of the most influential organists and choir trainers of the past 50 years. In this fascinating memoir, Roy takes us from his beginnings as a treble in Birmingham, to his time as Warden of the RSCM at Addington Palace, Director of Music at Birmingham Cathedral, then at Hereford for over twenty-five years, where he directed the Three Choirs Festival many times. In his retirement, Roy has been no less busy, serving a term as President of the Royal College of Organists and as a much sought-after organ recitalist. Roy's memoirs are engaging and fascinating, and the reader will enjoy the story as well as the many characters that have influenced Roy's career along the way.



You can also purchase a copy of the book [here](#).

<https://www.rscmshop.com/books/9780854023301/an-organist-remembers>

Cathedral Music Trust Update

It's hard to believe already a year has gone by since our Chair Peter Allwood wrote in his letter to FCOCA *"the latest lockdown during November in England has taken live choral singing back a few paces.....very little singing is taking place in the rest of the UK"*. One year on, as we emerge from the pandemic crisis, I am glad to be able to provide a much happier update, not just for the world of choral singing but also regarding all the things we have been up to at Cathedral Music Trust.



Organisation

I feel it is worth spending a moment reminding readers of the Trust's purpose and aims. Launched in July 2020, Cathedral Music Trust was established in order to build on the remarkable work of Friends of Cathedral Music (FCM) since its launch in 1956, and the Diamond Fund for Choristers (DFC) which was established by FCM as its dedicated fundraising arm in 2016. In line with FCM's founding objectives, our aims are:

- to increase public awareness and appreciation of cathedral music
- to support and encourage all those involved in making cathedral music
- to extend its range of grants to individuals, choirs and choral foundations

In everything we do, the Trust aims to be a voice for cathedral music, upholding this integral part of the nation's cultural heritage by campaigning on behalf of cathedral music and musicians, supporting cathedral choirs and choristers in need and encouraging the pursuit of excellence in choral and organ music.

Harry Christophers CBE, founder and conductor of the Sixteen, is our first President and, earlier this year we announced Alexander Armstrong, actor, comedian, TV and Classic FM radio presenter (and ex- chorister and ex-choral scholar!) as our first Ambassador. Since Peter's 2020 letter to FCOCA we have grown our professional staff to six, working across development, marketing and communications, operations, administration and finance. We appointed two new Trustees to Chair our Development and Finance & Audit Committees, recruited a number of talented new committee members and have welcomed new regional volunteers ("Area Representatives").

Early in 2021, after months of meticulous preparation and testing, we went live with a wonderful new website and, through the dedicated efforts of our communications staff, have an ever increasing audience following us on social media channels.

As can be seen, much of the last 12 months has been spent putting our house in order. With a new robust infrastructure, sound governance and an excellent professional team in place, we are now focussing our full attention on a series of exciting new initiatives and campaigns in order to raise awareness of our cause, grow audiences and further strengthen our financial resources with the ultimate aim of increasing our grant giving capacity.



From Left to Right

Jonathan Macdonald, Chair of Development & Trustee, CMT
 Natasha Morris, Development Director, CMT
 Alexander Armstrong, Ambassador CMT
 Sophie Carp, Communications & Marketing CMT
 Peter Allwood, Chair of CMT

Fundraising and Grant Giving

Peter reported on the highly successful Cathedral Choirs Emergency Fund which we ran in 2020 in partnership with the Ouseley Trust and Choir Schools Association. Together with £1m of match funding provided by the Church Commissioners, we were able to ensure a staggering £2 million was dispersed by December 2020 to support cathedral choirs across the UK at the height of the pandemic. For many this was a “life-saver” and we are grateful to all those who contributed so generously at such a critical time.

In May 2021, as part of the Trust's regular annual programme, we awarded grants of almost £500,000 to 36 Anglican and Roman Catholic choral foundations. This represented a significant increase in the previous level of annual funding granted by the Trust as our Trustees recognised the need to "dig deeper" at a time when the cathedral music is still dealing with the devastating financial impact of the pandemic. Having said that, it remains a sobering fact that the aggregate amount of grant applications we received this year was almost 4 times the amount we were in a position to award.

In December 2021 we will sadly say goodbye to the DFC team who have done an outstanding job in raising funding for choristers over the past 5 years. From January 2022, having put all the necessary building blocks in place, all fundraising will be run by our development office in the name of Cathedral Music Trust. We will be launching a number of exciting and innovative national fundraising initiatives in the New Year with the aim of growing the Trust's resources to help close the gap between the amount of critical funding requests we receive each year and the amount of grants we can prudently award.

New Initiatives

In September we launched a recruitment campaign for founding members of a Future Leaders scheme, an initiative I am particularly excited about. We are convinced that engaging with younger generations is key to our future success and indeed the succession of those that currently drive support for cathedral music. Our Future Leaders will work in partnership with the Trust's Development Committee to bring fresh insight into supporting our cause. The scheme is designed to ensure that the voices of young people are at the heart of what we do, and members of the group will be given the opportunity to influence and engage with the Trust's organisational strategy whilst developing skills to support them in their future careers. We have been delighted by the overwhelming response we have received to this recruitment drive and hope to have the scheme up and running in the New Year. In addition, we have been recruiting for new members of our Grants and Friends Committee, and 2022 will see us embark on a search for new Trustees to further support our mission.

Our Christmas Campaign, 'Open a world of opportunity this Christmas' will see us raising funds to support future generations of choristers and cathedral musicians through a digital advent calendar. In addition, through our campaigning and advocacy, we are working to celebrate and promote the service of Choral Evensong across the UK, as well as seeking to widen access to choristerships, hosting both an education conference for Music Department staff and through campaigning and advocacy. Our website is regularly being updated, and all details can be found on our initiatives at www.cathedralmusictrust.org.uk.

To conclude, it is clear that FCOCA and Cathedral Music Trust have much in common and I am convinced we can achieve more towards our shared goals by working together. On behalf of all of us at the Trust, wishing all your members a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to further collaboration in the New Year.

[Jonathan Macdonald. Chair of Development. Cathedral Music Trust]

A Celebration of Choristership

Wells Cathedral Past Choristers Evensong



FCOCA Chair, Nick Hodges chats with Director of Music, Jeremy Cole.

Federation Chairman, Nick Hodges, attended his first engagement on Saturday 2nd October this year when he joined past choristers of Wells Cathedral at the annual evensong for the Wells Cathedral Chorister Trust and the celebration of the 90th birthday of former Director of Music, Dr Anthony Crossland, which was held at Wells Cathedral on Saturday 2nd October. Nick attended the event at the invitation of the Trust's chairman, Arnold Wills, who is also Vice Chair of the

Federation.

Initially, the Wells Cathedral Girl Chorister Trust was established, to support the girls' choir, whose thirtieth anniversary occurs in 2024. In 2011 it became the Wells Cathedral Chorister Trust now supporting all choristers. With the support of its Royal Patron, HRH the Countess of Wessex, its objective is to help young singers from all backgrounds to train in a world-class musical and Christian environment and to allow any child with musical talent the chance to be a cathedral chorister regardless of financial circumstances.

The event began with a "Celebratory Tea" to mark the occasion of Dr Crossland's 90th birthday, attended by a number of former choristers from Dr Crossland's time as Director of Music and also, more recent leavers. The opening speech was given by Wells Cathedral Choir Association Chairman Chris Seaton who was at chorister in Dr Crossland's time.



Dr Anthony Crossland conducts the Wells Cathedral choir

Choral Evensong followed with the full choir of boys, girls and vicars choral. After some very fine singing of the psalms, the choir sang C V Stanford's setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in A after which Dr Crossland stepped forward to conduct a rousing performance of Parry's, I was glad, complete with trumpets and timpani.

Life as an Organist – by Dr. Anthony Crossland



Dr Anthony Crossland with Wells Cathedral Choir

Dr Crossland has provided the following account of his time at Wells and the importance of ensuring the future Cathedral Music:

My wife and I moved to Wells in September 1961 following my appointment as Assistant Organist, which carried with it free accommodation in Vicars' Close and a stipend of £200 a year. Initially we lived in No. 25 but three years later, shortly before the birth of our second child we were allocated a larger house, No. 15, where we were destined to remain until 1996 when I retired.

Cathedral duties were not particularly demanding in those early years: I took the morning chorister rehearsal each Wednesday and probationer choristers came to my house every other weekday morning for more individual singing and music theory coaching. Occasionally I would provide organ voluntaries at services and was also required to play for the one weekly full choir rehearsal, which took place on Saturday afternoon before Evensong. It was only recently that a retirement age had been introduced for the choirmen: hitherto they were appointed (and given a house in Vicars' Close) for life, and one Vicar Choral still remained under those terms for some years after my arrival.

Denys Pouncey, the Cathedral Organist, retired at the end of 1970, when I was fortunate enough to be appointed to succeed him and the arrival two years later of Patrick Mitchell, a competent and committed musician, as Dean (one of four Deans under whom I served) gave the necessary added impetus to the gradual development and improvement of the Cathedral's music, and also of the remuneration and general well-being of the Choristers and Vicars Choral. Extra rehearsal time was established, short-term Choral Scholars were appointed to augment the Vicars Choral and choir activities expanded to include

broadcasts, recordings, outreach visits to churches in the diocese and tours further afield, culminating in 1986 with a round-the-world tour (the first such to be undertaken by a cathedral choir) when, with the Cathedral School chamber orchestra, we performed in Singapore, all seven of the then Anglican cathedrals of New Zealand, and in Los Angeles within the space of three weeks. Another great highlight came in 1991 when the choir visited Rome. Here the choir had the honour of being presented to the Pope as well as singing a Mass by Palestrina in the church (Santa Maria Maggiore) where the composer had once been choirmaster.

In September 1994 we became the second cathedral to admit girl choristers and were delighted, not only by the number of candidates who came forward, but also by their enthusiasm and musical potential. Sixteen girls were initially selected, of an age range comparable to that of the boys, and after about five weeks of training they sang their first Evensong with the Vicars Choral and were admitted as members of the Cathedral Foundation. From the outset the intention was that the girls' choir should exist as a separate entity from the boys, but on certain occasions it did mean that the two could be combined, and with the Vicars Choral, Choral Scholars and a number of deputy singers who were available we were able to muster a quite formidable choral force for special services and concerts.



Recent former choristers: Zara Topham, Hannah Wills, Frances Henderson, Robert Wills

The Cathedral Organist was also ex officio conductor of the Cathedral Oratorio Society, an amateur chorus that gave two performances a year of large choral works with orchestra, my duty as Assistant being to accompany the weekly rehearsals. In 1966 I succeeded Denys Pouncey as conductor and during the next thirty years we gradually extended the repertoire,

introduced a rudimentary audition process for the singers and brought the orchestra onto a more professional footing. I particularly remember a performance in 1977 of the Monteverdi “Vespers of 1610” when we placed the chorus and main orchestra in the middle of the nave facing north with the audience seated all around them, which meant that we could use such remote areas as the triforium, west gallery and organ loft for special acoustical effects – the long-suffering soloists having to undertake laborious journeys along narrow staircases and walkways to reach their various positions whilst from the podium I could only hope that they would finish up in the right place at the right time ! Other highlights came in 1989 when we marked the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the second World War with a performance of Britten’s “War Requiem”, and in 1991 Walton’s “Belshazzar’s Feast”, which calls not only for a very large orchestra but also for two optional brass bands which, thanks to the kind co-operation of the Cathedral School music department, we were able to muster and which resulted in moments of probably the loudest sounds ever in the cathedral.

But to return to more routine musical matters. Our choristers were selected at annual Choral Trials at which, in addition to basic vocal quality, they were required to show competence in aural and academic tests as well as a general brightness and mental alertness – quite a tall order, but necessary to enable them to keep up with school work in addition to the demands of their cathedral duties. The daily routine consisted of a rehearsal in the Practise Room (above the West Cloister) or in the Undercroft each morning from 8.30 until about 9.45 and a full choir rehearsal in the Quire before Evensong, with a longer full choir rehearsal on Saturday afternoon as well as one on Sunday morning before the Communion Service. The choristers were also required to be on duty for the major festivals of Christmas and Easter, which they always much enjoyed.

All of this added up to a very considerable commitment and sacrifice on the part of the children and their parents, and the various academic and social pressures on the young have increased dramatically since my time, as has the ever-growing financial burden on Deans and Chapters in maintaining cathedral choirs, but so far this unique and great tradition survives, and for children having the necessary vocal potential plus a real love of singing the rewards of performing regularly to high musical standards, together with the degree of self-discipline and self-reliance that this brings, are immeasurable and enduring. In conclusion I can do no better than quote the words of one of my first girl choristers, now a distinguished professional opera singer and a Patron of the WCCT: “Having the opportunity to perform professionally from such a young age is an unbeatable opportunity for talented children”. Long may this opportunity continue and long may there be a wholehearted response from such remarkable boys and girls.



Former Wells Cathedral Organist, Andrew Nethsingha and former choristers with Dr Anthony Crossland

Life as a Chorister – by Paul Wing

Paul Wing was a Chorister at Wells under the famous Denis Pouncey. Here he shares a few words he wrote about his experience:

Following my audition I was allowed to telephone my parents to inform them I had been awarded a choral scholarship to the choir. It was a defining moment for me and I quickly adapted to the weekly routine of practices, eight sung services every week, shortened holidays at home, occasional radio and tv broadcasts (including an experimental European tv Christmas programme linking three choirs, one being the Vienna Boys Choir) and taking the collection at the carol service on Boxing Day before being allowed home! The money collected was for the choristers and 'Dapper' (Mr Denis Duncan Rivers Pouncey, organist and choir master) would pay us on our return in January varying amounts of cash according to seniority. The collection also paid for two outings each year. The experience of being a chorister was unique, learning vast amounts of music and being part of a great cathedral, my love of the building has never left me.

Once my voice broke I was persuaded to learn the double bass and the organ. After Wells I went to the RAM and have been in the music profession ever since, both as an orchestral player and then management. I retired in 2007 but earlier this year was asked to become General Manager of the English Chamber Orchestra. I strongly believe that had I not been a chorister my career would have gone off in a very different direction.

Thank you Wells. I have much to be grateful for.

Life as a Chorister – by Richard Cromwell

Richard Cromwell was a chorister in Dr Crossland's time, and he provided the following memories of his time as a chorister:

"It was 50 years ago this coming January in 1972 that I became a Wells chorister under Tony as Choirmaster. In those early days I joined as a pre probationer, a bit like a learner driver, and with no room in the choirstalls we stood outside the stalls (standing on a box) peering over the cornerboys shoulder at the music. When you had proven yourself, you became a probationer and then finally a fully-fledged chorister, with the presentation of your surplice by the Dean. Looking back, joining at a young age, you have no expectation, and you get on with the long established chorister routine without questioning.

Before the formation of the Girls' Choir, the boy choristers and Vicars Choral shared responsibility for all the weekday and weekend services, including 3 services on Sunday - we only had Wednesday afternoon off. Chorister practice happened every morning in the practice room above the cloisters and then again pre-service, plus an extra session with the Vicars Choral after evensong on Mondays – it was pretty gruelling! Choristers would gather for ranks outside Cedars House prior to duties for evensong – but no refreshments since lunch! I remember always being hungry! There was a tradition of a chorister game that was played for 5 mins before we left that some may remember; bouncing a golf ball cricket game against the wall of Cedars House - a moment of fun before setting off crocodile fashion down Vicars Close to the cathedral.

Under Tony's leadership the choir flourished in the early 70s with new Vicars Choral drafted in. When I first joined, the tradition was for one vicar choral on each side of the stalls to beat time for much of the service. Tony soon changed that and conducted from the front, so no escape for us and I think our quality rapidly improved!

The first vinyl recordings were made of the choir on evenings in the nave with a caravan recording studio outside the west front which Tony would beetle off to between pieces to check that no dog barking could be heard.

We did what I think was the first ever choir tour in the summer of 1977. Nothing glamorous oversees but a coach journey down to Cornwall and around local parishes for a few days – great fun was had by all. My mother somehow made it on the coach one day, by chance on her birthday and she still remembers happy birthday being sung in full harmony with the Vicars Choral at full voice.

Personally, I was not an academic achiever, but that tough chorister routine helped me in later life with work ethic, teamwork and the perseverance needed in business. I've also been fortunate as that foundation of great music has stayed with me throughout my life and given me huge enjoyment - I know I can say the same for my chorister brother Alistair and also Chris (Seaton) who I have sung with many times since.

Today has been a very special time meeting fellow choristers and having the opportunity to celebrate with Tony his 90th Birthday along with Barbara and extended Crossland family. I'm sure we are all very much looking forward to evensong and seeing Tony with the baton once again."

My first experiences as Director of Music



After graduating from music college, I became Assistant Director of Music at Peterborough Cathedral, before moving to Durham Cathedral as Sub-Organist in 2011. I became Director of Music and Organist at Rochester Cathedral in September 2019, so I am now approaching the end of my second academic year, although sadly only about six months of that time has occurred during 'normal' times. Before the onslaught of COVID-19 the cathedral choir and I were able to enjoy the fruitful period of music making. During the first few months of my leadership, I was able to assess properly where the major challenges lay and

to begin to implement my vision; the choir began to get used to my approach and to the new areas of repertoire which I started to introduce.

There were many early highlights for the choir but they really came into their own at Christmas with some stunning performances at the two concerts (including an atmospheric ceremony of carols in the undercroft), Radio Kent carols and the Advent and Christmas carol services. This was soon followed by a highly successful 'chorister experience day' which we hope to make an annual fixture. In February 2020 we had a memorable Lent procession, barging our way through the hundreds of visitors to the museum of the moon, during which time I also enjoyed giving an organ recital to a packed cathedral with music inspired by the cosmos.



The timing of the Coronavirus lockdown in March 2020 could not have been more unfortunate as the choir was starting to make great strides in musical achievement. The choristers were hard at work preparing for Lent and Easter, musically and liturgically the most fulfilling part of the year. It was certainly a very strange and quiet Easter! The choristers returned in June to online rehearsals and participating in recordings from home for use in the Cathedral's online worship. This was a new experience for them and the self-discipline required to make the recordings will be a useful skill in the future, but it is no substitute for the 'real thing' of singing together, the routine of daily rehearsal and the repertoire of skills which become forgotten when not used regularly. The enforced cessation of our singing was a particular blow to those in their final year of the choir and to those whose voices were on the verge of breaking.

In September we were finally able to resume singing activities, albeit with a much altered schedule of shorter rehearsals, chorister-only or Lay-Clerk-only services and the challenges of socially-distanced seating, which is particularly difficult for the new Probationers who usually learn a great deal from being paired with a chorister 'buddy' with whom they share the music, something which was not possible with the new regulations. We continue this formation to this day but it presents major challenges in terms of ensemble, with people so spread out and far away from the conductor. During the following lockdowns we were restricted to using the Lay-Clerks only, including the whole of the Lent term, which has meant we have been unable to gather any real momentum as a full choir, although we were able to explore a wide variety of 'Men's Voices' repertoire.

Another concept we have had to embrace is the live-stream. On the plus side it has enabled those who are isolating to remain in touch as well as reaching a wider audience that is usually possible (including my own parents in the West Midlands). However, live-streams fall into a strange middle ground where the product is able to be fully scrutinised and maintained indefinitely, whilst carrying the risk that things can and invariably do go wrong in live performance, especially given the factors which are out of our control such as the requirement for shorter rehearsals, long periods of non-activity, spaced seating or whole year groups off due to self-isolation. The choristers first service, following a four-month break after Christmas was a live streamed service in thanksgiving for the life of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. I am proud of the choir for raising rising to the occasion and for the results they were able to produce.

Despite recent challenges some real positives within the musical life of the cathedral should be celebrated. In September 2020 we welcomed no fewer than nine new Probationers into our newly integrated mixed-treble Line. This new set up enables increased opportunities for both boy and girl choristers, both in terms of regularity of singing as well as increased music-lesson provision in school and better financial sustainability for the cathedral. One unforeseen advantage of the new system is that during the various lockdowns it allowed the King's choristers to continue rehearsals as an extension of the school activities, an opportunity sadly not afforded to our older girl choristers due to their attending a mixture of schools. Coronavirus aside, the new arrangements are working fantastically well and various other cathedrals and churches have shown a great interest in our model, with some already following suit.

Over the course of the 2019-20 year we also welcomed our new permanent team of six Principal Lay-Clerks. The consistency of attendance, musical standard, voice-blend and a shared vision for the Cathedral's music has helped the choir grow immensely and gives the trebles some regular role models to look up to. They continue to be supplemented by a healthy number of Deputy Lay-Clerks (including some new recruits).

From September 2021 we are launching our next stage of the development plan for the Choir in the form of sixth-form choral and organ scholars. This is an area not covered by many cathedrals, affording former choristers and others in the wider community (not necessarily at King's School) an opportunity to become involved in the cathedral's musicmaking, perhaps with a view to undertaking a gap year or university scholarship. Alongside this we plan to hold regular singing days for anyone aged 13-18 with a love of singing. Together with the Children's and Voluntary Choirs our aspiration is for there to be opportunities for all ages and abilities to make music at the cathedral. A new innovation will see the Children's Choir singing at the Cathedral Eucharist once a term as part of the All-Age Worship.

Douglas Henn-Macrae announced his retirement from directing the Voluntary Choir and we thank him for his many years of service. The Voluntary Choir will now be directed by our Assistant Director of Music, Jeremy Lloyd, as an important aspect of his professional development, something which I appreciated hugely in my roles at Durham and Peterborough where I ran their equivalent choirs. In all our musical activities I am blessed to be supported by Jeremy, whose organ playing is particular is always exemplary.

So, in summary, it has been an interesting but enjoyable start to my time at Rochester and I very much hope for all our sakes that the forthcoming academic year will present slightly fewer challenges.

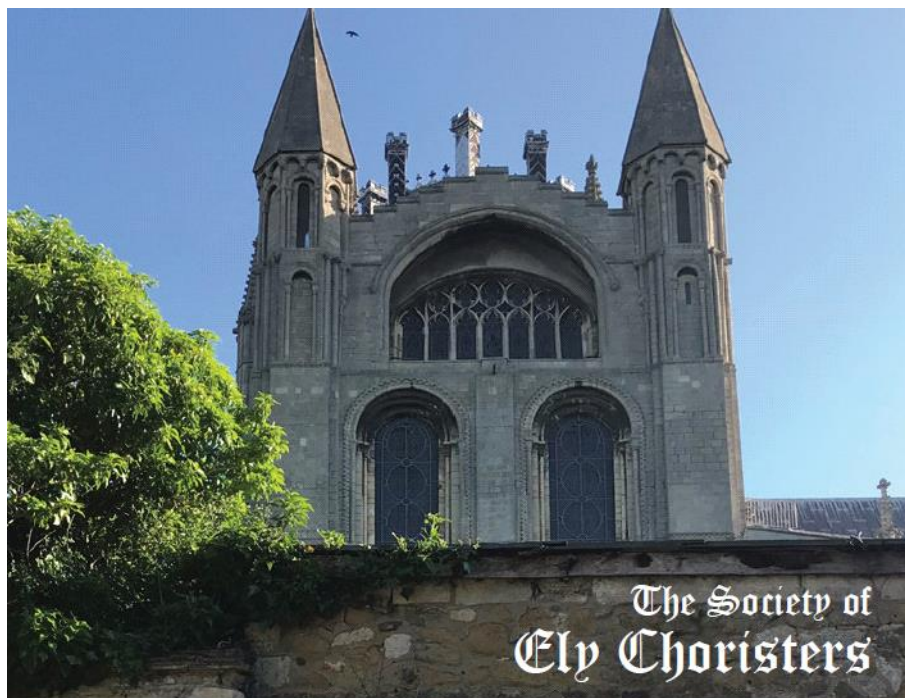
[Francesca Massey - Director of Music and Organist at Rochester Cathedral]

[From the Association of the Friends of Rochester Cathedral Annual Report 2020]

Member News

Ely Cathedral

Society of Ely Choristers



Eighteen months ago none of us imagined the life of the Cathedral and its choirs would be dominated by the Covid pandemic until well into last summer. However in the past few months the regular programme of services has resumed, though people who are not singing or speaking continue to wear masks. Thank goodness for Zoom and You Tube which have enabled people to follow services from their homes, as many still do.

The highlight of 2021 was to have been the Federation Festival, which would have been combined with our own Reunion over the weekend of 15-17 October. After prolonged discussions with the Federation's Executive Committee, it was decided to postpone the Festival to September 2022. Because of Covid restrictions in place last July we were unable to say 'Farewell' to the choristers who left the Cathedral choirs and were admitted to the Society and Federation at the end of the Summer Term. The Charles Bush Memorial Award and Melody Day Prize were awarded to James Allen and Caroline Fisher for their outstanding contributions to their respective choirs. It was very disappointing that the awards could not be presented at the Reunion Choral Evensong.

One of the few regular events we were able to hold was the Annual Act of Remembrance on the Saturday before Armistice Day, but among the many casualties of the lockdown, for a second consecutive year, was the Easter Breakfast. The choirs sang whenever possible under the Covid restrictions, and I congratulate them, the lay clerks, directed and accompanied by Edmund Aldhouse, Sarah MacDonald, Glen Dempsey and Aaron Shilson for their hard work under difficult circumstances, and for the music of a very high standard which enhanced our services, whether we worshipped in the Cathedral or on line.

At the end of the summer term we said 'Farewell' to the Assistant Organist to Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir, Aaron Shilson. We congratulate Aaron on his appointment as Assistant Director of Music at Llandaff Cathedral. but will miss him, both for his contribution to Cathedral music and worship, and for his support for the Choristers' Society, including editorship of the Yearbook.

In September we welcomed Jack Wilson as Graduate Organ Scholar. Jack, who was a chorister of the Cathedral Church of St Columb, Londonderry, comes to Ely from Belfast, where he was Assistant Director of Music of the Cathedral Church of St Anne.

Although the Federation Festival was postponed until 2022, we did hold our annual Reunion in October, attended by 51 members and guests. It was sad that a number of familiar faces were missing, but encouraging to see some younger members attending for the first time. After an excellent lunch we heard an entertaining and well received talk by David Pickard, the Director of the Proms, who was an Ely Chorister from 1970 to 72. We are now making preparations for the Federation Festival which we very much hope will take place from 9 to 11 September 2022, and the draft programme is printed elsewhere in this magazine. I am delighted that Christopher Robinson has accepted our invitation to be the guest speaker at the Festival Banquet.

At the AGM I retired as Chairman, and was succeeded by my son, Andrew, who was Head Chorister in 1985-6. It was also agreed to change the name of the society to Ely Cathedral Choristers' Society.

[John Marshall, Chairman, Ely Cathedral Choristers' Society]

Ely Cathedral Boys' Choir



When I became Director of Music little did I know what storms awaited us, but I can report that we weathered them all with patience and fortitude, and an absolute resolve to continue our music making at the highest standard.

2020/21 inevitably was a less colourful and varied year than we are accustomed to. Inevitably there were no major concerts or a tour on which to report, and of course the choir's activity was once again seriously curtailed between January and early March of 2021. Nevertheless, I think we shall all remember the last twelve months as one of the most remarkable periods in the choir's recent history. Upon the boys' return in September it rapidly became clear that the long lockdown had not affected either their standard or motivation. After months of uncertainty,

some very impressive singing in the Michaelmas Term was a great reassurance that all was well.

We were very lucky indeed that the boys in Years 4 to 8 constituted one boarding household, sparing us the difficulties of social distancing and bubbling which many choirs are still experiencing. Chapter and King's Ely were unfailingly supportive of our efforts to allow the choir to sing as much as possible, while always within a safe and risk assessed framework. Ely has emerged as one of the very few choral foundations whose daily service pattern has been virtually unaffected by the pandemic, and we count our blessings in this regard.

Two events in the Michaelmas Term stand out particularly. One was the “Songs from Lockdown” concert which the boys gave in October. It was particularly moving, both as the first concert in the Cathedral since the pandemic began, and as a testament to the boys’ hard work week after week on Zoom during the preceding Summer Term.

The other highlight was the boys’ and Lay Clerks’ broadcast of Choral Evensong for the Epiphany, which the BBC recorded in November. The wise men made a special journey from the Triforium to create the right atmosphere, and the choir’s singing of Warlock, Sumsion and Mendelssohn was warmly received by listeners across the world. That recording coincided with the second lockdown, during which it became apparent that the only way of maintaining the choir’s daily schedule would be through live streaming. This has very quickly become part of our daily pattern, and it is heartening to know that our daily services are heard and enjoyed by worshippers all over the world.

A small-scale Christmas celebration proved a prelude to the third lockdown, where once more the boys reverted to weekly online lessons, small group rehearsals and regular “EvenZooms”, again prepared and sung with all the professionalism and devotion we associate with services in the Cathedral. A cautious return just before Easter meant that, unfortunately, the boys were only involved in one service during Holy Week, but the Summer Term was much closer to normality, with younger boys increasingly making up for time lost during lockdown and demonstrating their future leadership skills.

In July we said farewell to one of our Lay Clerks, Dr Mark Darling, who left to take up a teaching post at the University of Oxford. We also bade farewell in April to Tom Stockwell, Housemaster in Choir House to Ludgrove School. He was succeeded by Loveday Perceval-Maxwell, whose energy and enthusiasm have proved to be exactly what the boys need in these trying times of Lateral Flow Tests and Boarding House Bubbles!

Last but not least, we said goodbye to our splendid Year 8s: Alex, Arnold, Alfie, Robert, Max and Tomas. Without their enormous dedication and hard work the choir would not have emerged in such good health from the pandemic, and I shall miss them all greatly.

[Edmund Aldhouse – Director of Music]

Ely Cathedral Girls’ Choir

It won’t surprise readers to hear that this has been an odd and interrupted year for the girl choristers, as it has been for all of us. In late August, the choral community around the world received the results of ENT surgeon and tenor Declan Costello’s PERFORM study with relief and joy. Despite the negative narrative around singing and Covid over the preceding months, they demonstrated that singing was no more dangerous than speaking. So with appropriate risk mitigation in place (social distancing for the lay clerks, for example) choral services were able to resume in the Michaelmas Term and with the return of all pupils to school. The September choristers’ return video of the girls and boys singing for the first time in the cathedral since March has had over 15k views across the various platforms, which is obviously an indication that it wasn’t only Edmund and me who missed their singing!

The Michaelmas Term began with the installation of Senior Choral Scholars, and the long-overdue installation of probationers. We all loved being back in our normal routine of morning rehearsals, and the girl and boy choristers were in “bubbles” which meant that they could sing together without

the awkwardness of social distancing, which is a challenge to ensemble. Particular highlights of the term included recording Christmas videos in October, a live BBC Radio 3 broadcast of Choral Evensong on Armistice Day, livestreaming our annual performance of Britten's 'A Ceremony of Carols', and a Christmas stayover, which was joyous and celebratory despite its complications, including no boarding provision at school, and the girls and boys being unable to sing together. After Christmas, when schools were closed again due to lockdown, I was able to see the girls once a week for a Zoom rehearsal. Although Zoom rehearsals are anything but effective musically, it was lovely to see the girls again and to be able to keep them feeling like cathedral choristers. During these rehearsals, the girls bravely battled technological glitches, latency, and too much screen time to learn a new setting of the Mag & Nunc, and several of the trickier Office Hymns, including many of the ones we missed last year (Lent, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost). Also during the winter lockdown, Miriam, Sixth Form Organ Scholar, achieved her ARCO diploma (Associateship of the Royal College of Organists), highly unusual for someone still in school.



We were very grateful to return to School and Cathedral in March for a few weeks of upper voices services (the boys and girls didn't sing with the lay clerks at first, just to be safe). Holy Week and Easter were quieter affairs than usual, though it was good for the girl choristers to be able to sing one service in Holy Week, and then for the Sixth Form Choral Scholars to sing Evensong with the lay clerks on Easter Day. The Summer Term felt almost normal, with the main service pattern resuming, though services were only held in the octagon for the first six weeks. The Year 11 choristers and the Sixth Form Choral Scholars took much of the first part of term off for their exams, which gave the Year 7 to 10 girls a chance to learn repertoire, and take responsibility for services on their own. The choir is still very "young" in its existence, where even the Year 10 choristers have only had six uninterrupted terms in the choir.

A particular highlight of the Summer Term was the recording of a new CD, volume 2 of our highly successful disc "To be a light", settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for upper voices. The new disc has 10 songs on it, all of which are by living composers, including three female composers, and three sets of canticles written especially for us. At the end of the year we were very sad to say goodbye to the wonderful Aaron Shilson, our assistant organist for the past four years, who moves on to the exciting new post of Assistant Director of Music at Llandaff Cathedral. Meanwhile, we are looking forward to a healthier future, thanks to our wonderful NHS, and to lots more singing!

[Sarah MacDonald - Director of Ely Cathedral Girls' Choir]

Wells Cathedral

We have been sad to miss two annual reunions as a result of the COVID pandemic but finally we managed to gather over 30 ex choristers, organists and choral scholars to a tea in the Cathedral's Vicars Hall celebrate the 90th Birthday of one of our recent and long standing Organist and Master of the Choristers, Dr Anthony Crossland on 2 October 2021. It was wonderful to celebrate this milestone at a wonderful Evensong in the Cathedral with Dr Crossland conducting the Great Choir performing "I was Glad" by Sir Hubert Parry. This iconic anthem and accompanying trumpets filled the Cathedral Nave.

Comment from Roger Lendon on Facebook:

I was a chorister at Wells from 1970 -'74. I was there yesterday, and it did indeed bring back many memories. In fact it took me back 50 years, and at one point I was filling up with emotion. Tony skipped up past the alter like a spring lamb and conducted the choir with his usual authority and aplomb. He duly received a much-deserved round of applause at the end of the service, and if yesterday was anything to go by I reckon we will be back in 10 years to do the same thing for his 100th birthday!



It is wonderful to see the Cathedral choir back in full song. HRH The Countess of Wessex, made a visit to Wells Cathedral on Monday 17 May as part of a wider visit to Somerset, coinciding with the re-opening of hospitality and tourism businesses. The Countess was greeted by the Dean of Wells, the Very Reverend Dr John Davies DL, who escorted Her Royal Highness into the Cathedral. Her Royal Highness was invited to take a seat in the Nave for a short performance given by the Wells Cathedral Choristers. Director of

Music, Mr Jeremy Cole directed the Choristers in a delightful recital which included a demonstration of the various exercises the Choristers are taken through each day to warm up their voices and maintain and improve their vocal health and technique. The Choristers then sang two uplifting pieces which included: *The Lord is my Shepherd* by Howard Goodall and a sparkling arrangement of Sydney Carter's hymn, *The Lord of the Dance*. The recital was accompanied by the Assistant Director of Music, Mr Alexander Hamilton.

The award-winning choir Tenebrae visited Wells Cathedral on 30 June 2021 for a performance of Joby Talbot's exquisite *Path of Miracles*. In the concert's first half, our own Choristers shared the platform with Tenebrae in former-Wellensian Owain Park's *Footsteps*. Their singing was immaculate and Tenebrae's conductor, Nigel Short complimented them on their superb performance and commitment.

[Chris Seaton – Chairman of the Wells Cathedral Choir Association]

Norwich Cathedral



I write as we have just completed **'Sing to Dippy'** – a week in which over 1,000 Primary School children from across Norfolk came to the Cathedral to take part in the première performances of 'Creation Song' by Bob Chilcott. This piece, telling the Creation story in beautifully crafted movements for the Cathedral Choir interspersed with a refrain for children's chorus, was commissioned by the Dean & Chapter of Norwich Cathedral and the Norfolk



Music Hub to celebrate the 'Dippy on Tour' exhibition that brought the enormous Diplodocus cast from the Natural History Museum in London to the Cathedral nave for 3 months at the end of its national tour. It was a week very different to what the cathedral choir usually do, but a reminder of how we have all had to adapt as a consequence of the pandemic and, more importantly, of the huge value of getting children through our cathedral doors to experience the joy of singing together in such a beautiful space. One teacher remarked on how her

children had never been exposed to music of such high quality: the impact that cathedral music can have on the lives of children is so important and should not be under-estimated. After all, none of them will forget the experience of singing together standing around a dinosaur in the nave of Norwich Cathedral!

The Cathedral Choirs have made a remarkably strong return after the disruption faced during the past academic year. Happily, recruitment of both boy and girl choristers remains strong and we are looking forward to welcoming many more children for our forthcoming 'Be a chorister' day. As life opens up again, projects on the horizon include Christmas concerts both in Norwich and London and a performance of Bach's St John Passion at the start of Holy Week 2022. In June 2022 the Cathedral organ will be taken out of use for the start of a £1.8 million rebuild by Harrison and Harrison of Durham: we are excited about this enormous project and eagerly await the completion of the newly rebuilt instrument in the summer of 2023.

[Ashley Grote - Master of Music at Norwich Cathedral]

Gloucester Cathedral

It is wonderful to be able to report that the postponed 2020 Worcester Three Choirs Festival has just taken place; and an excellent week of many concerts was enjoyed by hundreds of music lovers, many of whom travelled from overseas, despite the various restrictions and quarantines which are still in place. The Boy Choristers, Girl Choristers, Lay Clerks and Youth Choir all contributed to a very successful festival; a festival which was being carefully observed by many arts organizations and politicians to see what is now possible in this altered post-Covid country of ours. The Festival confounded all the doubters, and marked a much-needed return to normality for all those who performed and attended. The Three Choirs Festival was in fact the climax of a slow awakening of musical activities which began at Easter.

On Easter Sunday, the Boy Choristers and the Lay Clerks were permitted to sing Evensong, but no congregation was allowed to attend. The service was designated as being for "Video streaming only". Filmed Choral Evensongs with no congregations remained the status quo until late June, when worshippers were allowed to sit in the presbytery, which is considered a "safe" distance from the choir. The Boy Choristers and Lay Clerks sang Evensong on most days of the week through May and June. It was wonderful to have the routine of the Opus Dei re-established after the many months of sporadic worship, or just bleak silence. The boys were on top form in June and July; they are currently making a wonderfully bright and energetic sound.

The Girl Choristers were permitted to sing together from mid- May, and sang an Evensong (behind closed doors) for the first time in 2021 on 24th May. This was a joyful occasion, but tinged with sadness, when we all realised that our wonderful team of Girl Choristers, as established in 2016, had only a handful of services to sing, before many of them had to leave. In fact, the many months of enforced idleness for the Girl Choristers has been little short of tragic. However, they produced a fantastic conclusion to the term, as if they were all desperate to sing together again for a few final occasions.

Aside from the already-mentioned Three Choirs Festival (at which the boys and girls all sang at two combined Evensongs, and the boys sang in an evening concert), the most significant event in those precious weeks of late May and June was the recording by the Cathedral Choir of another CD. This latest recording is entitled *Music for Gloucester Cathedral* by Ian King. Ian King, who tragically died in December 2020, was a wonderfully-original composer who blessed the Cathedral Choir by writing many pieces for them, including a St. John Passion. A trust set up by Ian's father funded the production of the CD, which should be ready for sale by the end of the year. The music is devout and challenging, but beautiful, and deserves wide dissemination. The company Somm Recordings, who produced our very successful Venables recording in 2019, once again are doing the work for us. I have no doubt that the King CD will do similarly well. The boys, girls and Lay Clerks all sang with great skill and stamina in the three days of recording sessions; and Jonathan Hope accompanied them on the organ with his usual accuracy and imagination.

The Cathedral's Youth Choir, Middle Choir and Junior Choir have all endured comparatively unproductive years, owing to the various lockdowns under which we all suffered. However, my colleagues Jonathan Hope, Mary Pan and Nia Llewelyn Jones skilfully kept the choirs together by holding singing sessions on Zoom, until the time came in June when all these young singers could once again sing together "live". The CJC, in particular, sang splendidly on the last Sunday morning service of the term, where their performance of *Ev'ry time I feel the spirit* was met by lusty applause from the congregation. The CMC and CYC joined the Cathedral Choir for a most

moving end-of-term Evensong in the nave, at which the sound and sight of all the Cathedral's singers joining together again for the first time for eighteen months moved many of us to tears! Let us all hope that never again will any Government feel the need to prevent us from singing to God in our wonderful Cathedral.

I must here thank my wonderful colleagues Richard Mitchell, Jonathan Hope, Nia Llewelyn Jones, Mary Pan, and Helen Sims for their generous support throughout these troubled months; and I would like to wish Mary well in the future, as she leaves us to pursue her medical studies in the United States.

[Adrian Partington – Director of Music Gloucester Cathedral]

Blackburn Cathedral

Each month John Bertalot (Director of Music at Blackburn Cathedral 1964 – 1982) produces a bright and colourful edition of “Music and More” giving all the news and information relevant to the Cathedral and choirs past and present of Blackburn Cathedral. The last few editions are published on the Federation Website www.fcoca.org.uk under the <Current Members and News> tab. The Federation were invited to attend their annual reunion and AGM this year and a report is included in the November edition. Here is an extract.



When the Blackburn Cathedral Choirs' Association held their Annual Reunion on Sunday 12th September we were *thrilled to bits* to welcome folk who had travelled long distances to be with us. A special guest was ALASTAIR POLLARD, Secretary of the *Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Association*. (He'd been a chorister at Durham Cathedral.) One OC had travelled all the way from near Hereford, and another faithful singer had come from Ely. And there were FOUR founder members of the newly renamed Blackburn Chamber Choir (originally: Blackburn Bach

Choir, founded by JB in 1965!)

The afternoon began with the traditional (fairly exciting) Annual General Meeting chaired by our Director of Music, John Robinson, after which we all tried to *squeeze* together to fit into JB's camera view-finder:



JB (DoM 1964-1982), **John Marr** (BCCA Treasurer, Prefect 1974), **Andrew Orr** (Chairman 2003, new committee member), **Graham Chapelhow** (BCCA Secretary, Prefect 1976), **Iain Thompson** (Prefect 1979 see p. 12), **Louie Hindle** (current Youth Choir), **Clara Slater** (BCCA Student rep. Prefect 2017), **Adrian Wilson** (Sr. Old Chorister 2017), **John Robinson** (DoM 2019), **Alastair Pollard** (FCOCA Secretary), **Allan Holden** (Prefect 1945) **Philip Carr** (Prefect 1970), **Peter Crowther** (Prefect 1958).



John Robinson then rehearsed the cathedral choir (men, girls and boys) for Sunday Choral Evensong, whilst the rest of us enjoyed a refreshing cuppa and caught up with each others' news.

After an impressive Choral Evensong, sung by our boys and girls and 'back row' directed by John Robinson and assisted by our new organ scholar Samantha Poh, we all gathered for a group photograph, with the choir:



But the evening was not yet over, for we all trooped into the South Transept where there was a generous reception with wine, delicious nibbles and an amazing birthday cake to celebrate JB's 90th birthday in 3 days' time. Colin Jones, the Cathedral's Chief Financial and Operating Officer dispensed wine (generously!) And then JB cut the 'organ console' cake, which had been wondrously created by Laura from our Cathedral Café. Thank you all, dear friends, for a truly wonderful day!

[John Bertalot (Director of Music at Blackburn Cathedral 1964 – 1982)]

Coventry Cathedral

Choir reunions have never been much of a thing at Coventry Cathedral, where an ethos of looking forward rather than back, has understandably prevailed. However the trend was bucked in 2012 at the Golden Anniversary celebrations, when almost all of the Consecration Choir returned to attend the Service and meet together for a Dinner where the guest speaker was Richard Sadler. Richard was the eminent Coventry Photographer, who accompanied the Cathedral Choir on its tours to Berlin and Ottobeuren in 1963 and 1964. Efforts had been made to trace later choristers, but it had been a mammoth task tracing the consecration choir, as it was. I had visited Richard, and re-commissioned 60 of his best choir photos, and as a consequence was encouraged to use those photos to write "Following the Cross of Nails" published via Amazon.



Ten years on there is to be a Diamond Jubilee celebration, and once a again a Choir reunion is being organised. However this time the target audience is outrageously ambitious. The reunion is open to all who have sung in Coventry Cathedral Choir, and already one member of the choir that sang at the laying of the Foundation Stone has asked if he can come too. Choristers from the Old Cathedral are welcome too, but the youngest of these will be well into their nineties. To date the invitation has been sent to all known contacts using email and Facebook, local radio and local press – but still valued comrades remain unfound and I am looking for new tricks to get the message across. Nick Hodges of FCOCA suggested that I write an article for different musical organisations, so here it is.

On May 21/22 2022, there will be a weekend reunion for all those who have sung in Coventry Cathedral Choir, and indeed any others who have sung in the Cathedral and feel that they would like to be part of the event. There will be a Choral Evensong dedicated to former Choristers, in which they will be invited to fully participate, if they wish ... and if you do it might be a good idea to re-visit Stanford's evening service in Bb!!! There will be a formal dinner, but I abandoned the idea of a guest speaker because the room will already be filled with gifted speakers, and if everyone who would like to say a few words is given a chance, then the dinner might last longer than a Ken Dodd Comedy Night! Other events are being planned for the weekend, but some will be contingent on how many plan to attend, and that might grow somewhat if word really gets out. The Cathedral Staff and the Friends of Coventry Cathedral have been hugely supportive, but things have only been possible because of the hard work of a few of the "Originals", members of the Consecration Choir, a dwindling group who have already lost more than their fair share of their colleagues, including Brian Saunders, the first Head Chorister, who was one of the team helping me put the event together. I am not going to name drop, but a number of our famous alumni are intending to come, and any of the current choristers will have a chance to pick some impressive brains.

It is difficult planning with COVID hiding behind each nook and cranny, but the Golden Reunion produced such joy and renewed friendship, I am spurred on by the "Jack Reacher" code," hope for the best but prepare for the worst".

I hope to see you there,

[Mike Smith Chorister 1960-65]

Salisbury Cathedral

Since Spring 2020 and with the steady onset of Covid-19, times have felt unusual and unfamiliar for the Cathedral Choir. Advent 2020 in particular was something of a non-event as our spectacular services 'From Darkness to Light' were cancelled, and it was only with some good fortune that we were able to sing at Christmas at all, under strict Government and Church of England guidelines. However, we were able to deliver a BBC Choral Evensong in December 2020, and hold Christmas services in some form.

Since the initial lockdown, we have been able to keep something of the choir's momentum going, albeit with the help of various communications platforms (of which Zoom is one) as a way of rehearsing the choristers. At the most restrictive times, we rehearsed music as best as we could and then the children were tasked, with their parents' help, to record themselves and send the recording in for editing and then using as part of a streamed Sunday service. This was a lengthy process although I felt it importantly allowed the choristers to still feel part of a team. Meanwhile, the Lay Vicars were themselves making recordings of various pieces which were also used in streamed services. The situation continued like this until the summer of 2020, and I felt particularly sorry for my oldest choristers who did not experience the climax to their chorister careers as the Winchester Southern Cathedrals Festival was cancelled and their last singing day here in July was a low-key affair.

In the Autumn of 2020, the social distancing rules started to relax, and we were permitted professional singing in the cathedral with strict observance of 'bubbles' becoming the guiding principle. Practically speaking, this meant that I could have my choristers singing and grouped in their two school bubbles. One has also to remember that the choir always feels like a new choir in September, our having said farewell to ten fully trained choristers in July. We even had to process in and out of services in a strange format and the lay vicars had to be at least two metres from each other and from the choristers. As the song room was considered too small for safety, we rehearsed either in the Quire or in the Chapter House. It was hardly an ideal way to make music together.

One item of news which caught the imagination was our provision of organ music during the cathedral's vaccination days (January to April 2021). My colleague John Challenger and I played the organ throughout this period, and people were very appreciative of our performances of soothing classics (with a few numbers from the Musicals too) and even sent us requests which we did our best to play. To be able to make a small contribution to the positive news of the vaccinations was a pleasure and a privilege.

As we enter the winter of 2021 there are some glimmers of hope. Most recently, we were able to hold a magnificent concert celebrating the 30th anniversary of the formation of the girls' choir at Salisbury. This brought together some 80 former girl choristers, our current Cathedral Choir and the Southbank Sinfonia for a simply stunning evening, organised as ever in meticulous fashion by our great friend and champion of the girls' choir Lady Chichester.



[Photograph credited to Ash Mills of the 30th Anniversary of the Salisbury Cathedral Girls Choir]

I am enormously grateful to my musical colleagues – both young and old – for their patience and fortitude during these unusual times and we look forward to all that lies ahead.

[David Halls - Director of Music Salisbury Cathedral]

The Federation

Constitution of FCOCA (2021 Version)

1 Purpose

The Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations (FCOCA) exists for the benefit of Associations to which former choristers can belong. Associations that may be affiliated to the Federation are those linked with any Christian place of worship that maintains, or has maintained in the past, a tradition of choral worship to a high standard and considered appropriate by the Executive Committee of the Federation.

2 Objectives

- 2.1 To bring Affiliated Associations into closer touch with one another
- 2.2 To encourage the formation of former chorister Associations where such do not exist
- 2.3 To further the love of choral services in Christian worship and to support its continuance
- 2.4 To hold an Annual Gathering (Festival) in the home town or city of an Affiliated Association or other place deemed appropriate
- 2.5 To maintain contact with the members in whatever way deemed appropriate

3 Administration

- 3.1 A General Meeting shall be held once a year (the AGM). It may be held virtually (on-line) or at a place deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee. At least six weeks' prior notice of the date, place and time of the meeting, together with the agenda, shall be circulated to members. All decisions of the AGM shall be binding on the Committee. Five delegates representing affiliated associations in addition to members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- 3.2 The Executive Committee or any six member Associations may call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). Notice must be given in writing to the Honorary Secretary who will then give six weeks' notice to all delegates of the date, time and place and the nature of the meeting. Five delegates representing affiliated associations in addition to members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- 3.3 Minutes of all committee meetings, AGMs, EGMs and sub-committee meetings shall be recorded
- 3.4 The Officers of the Federation, being the Chair, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, shall be elected at each AGM
 - 3.4.1 The Chair must stand down if elected annually for five consecutive years and shall not be eligible for re-election until a further year has elapsed
 - 3.4.2 All other officers shall not normally hold their posts for longer than five consecutive years, unless elected at the AGM to do so
 - 3.4.3 For all elections, the Chair will be taken by a Vice President who will have a casting vote in the event of a tie
- 3.5 Nominations for committee members may be made at any time and may be co-opted at any time
- 3.6 The Executive Committee may co-opt advisors if deemed necessary

4 Committee

- 4.1 The Executive Committee (ExecComm) shall comprise the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer and any other roles deemed appropriate by the ExecComm. Representatives of Associations hosting future Annual Festivals and AGM may also be invited to attend ExecComm meetings.
- 4.2 Meetings may be held virtually (on-line) or at a place deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee
- 4.3 A quorum shall be five members which must include the Chair or, failing whom, the Vice Chair and at least one other Officer

5 Membership

- 5.1 The following classes of membership shall be available:
 - 5.1.1 PATRONS: the current Parton is the Archbishop of Canterbury, Other Parton may be invited to become Patrons by the Federation as it sees appropriate
 - 5.1.2 PRESIDENT: the Federation may, from time to time, appoint a President.
 - 5.1.3 VICE-PRESIDENTS: may be appointed to provide advice and guidance to the Federation and the Executive Committee. Vice Presidents will be invited to attend ExecComm meetings but will not have a vote at the meetings
 - 5.1.4 AFFILIATED ASSOCIATIONS: Any Association (See Section 1) deemed appropriate by the ExecComm, to which former choristers may belong, upon receipt of a completed application form

6 Motions

- 6.1 Each Affiliated Association will have one vote at AGMs and EGMs
- 6.2 Affiliated Associations unable to attend an AGM or EGM may appoint another Affiliated Association or a member of the Executive Committee as a proxy
- 6.3 Any Affiliated Association wishing any matter to be considered at an AGM or EGM may do so by giving written notice of the motion to the Honorary Secretary at least eight weeks prior to the proposed meeting

7 Finances

- 7.1 The financial year shall run from 1st January until the 31st December
- 7.2 In the event of dissolution and ceasing to exist, after payment of all its debts, the remaining property and assets shall be donated to such charities as any representative from an Affiliated Association may propose
- 7.3 T The Federation shall maintain one or more bank accounts in its name, and cheques drawn on such accounts must be signed by two duly authorised officers for amounts in excess of £100, and by one duly authorised officer if the amount is £100 or less
- 7.4 Associations will pay an annual subscription at an annual rate fixed at the AGM or EGM, such rate to apply from the beginning of the calendar year
- 7.5 Expenses incurred in the management and organisation of the Federation shall be borne out of Federation funds

8 Matters Not Covered By This Constitution

The Executive Committee shall have power to deal with any matter not covered by the Constitution, subject to confirmation at the next AGM.

OaC Editorial contact

The Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations has now published several editions of the Once a Chorister Magazine in electronic format, and this is the sixth. In general, the feedback has been positive about the content, and individual copies can be downloaded and printed for those who prefer a physical medium. Reports from Associations are not always published in the Once a Chorister magazine, but if not they can now be found on the Federation website www.fcoca.org.uk. This not only reduces the size of the magazine significantly and so reduces printing costs, but also means that our website has more up to date material. This does rely on Associations submitting their reports and those of their organists and master of choristers to their Regional Representative or directly to secretary@fcoca.org.uk.

Once a Chorister is a great vehicle for keeping people up to date with Federation events such as the Festival and AGM (when they are able to take place), and articles of interest from similar organisations or those that potentially affect choral foundations.

I hope that this edition is to your liking. Please continue to submit articles for publication in the Once a Chorister magazine or the website www.fcoca.org.uk.

The global pandemic has affected all our lives, but places and events are opening up as things will get back to "the new normal". We are not able to listen to live music in our churches and cathedrals and even join in.

[Alastair Pollard - OAC Editor]

Secretary@fcoca.org.uk

Committee email contacts

Contact can also be made through these generic email addresses:

Chairman@fcoca.org.uk

Secretary@fcoca.org.uk

Membership@fcoca.org.uk

Treasurer@fcoca.org.uk

The Federation Prayer

Almighty God, we thank you for the music we enjoyed in our lives as choristers and sang together in your house to glorify your name. Let that music always be a witness to your majesty and love, and remind us that you are always watching, and listening from your heavenly throne. May your Spirit guide us through our daily lives so that we may continue to be the instruments of your peace, and proclaim with a glad voice your honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Adapted from "The Musician's Prayer"

Committee members

Chairman	Nick Hodges	(Warwick)
Vice Chairman	Arnold Wills	(Peterborough)
Honorary Secretary	Alastair Pollard	(Durham)
Honorary Treasurer	Michael Lake	(Chelmsford)
Membership Secretary	Richard Lilley	(St. Albans)
Development Officer	Arnold Wills	(Peterborough)
Deputy Development Officer	Oliver Hamilton-Box	(Peterborough)
Website Officer	Richard Watts	(Westminster Abbey)

Regional Association Representatives

East Anglia & South East	Ayrton Westwood	(Norwich)
Midshires & Wales	Nick Hodges	(Warwick)
South West	Stephen Milner	(Salisbury)
North and Ireland	Alastair Pollard	(Durham)

Vice Presidents

Geoffrey Mitchell	(Exeter)
Alan Oyston	(Durham)
Ian Henderson	(Rochester)
David Horwood	(Eton)
Carl Jackson	(Chapel Royal Hampton Court)
Dr. Francis Jackson	CBE
Dr. Barry Rose	OBE

Affiliated Associations

Blackburn Cathedral Choirs Association
Bristol Cathedral Choral Alumni
Cambridge, The Choir Association of **St John's College**
Cambridge, **King's College** Old Choristers' Association
Canterbury Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Chapel Royal Choristers' Association
Chelmsford Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Chester Cathedral Choristers' Association
Chichester Cathedral Choristers' Association
Christ Church Cathedral, **New Zealand**, Choir Society (Inc)
Dublin Christchurch Cathedral Past Choristers' Association
Dublin **St Patrick's Cathedral** Past Choristers' & Pupils' Association
Durham Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Ely Cathedral Choristers' Society
Eton College Old Choristers' Association
Exeter Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Gloucester Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Guildford Cathedral Choir Association
Hereford Cathedral Former Choristers
Kingston All Saints Parish Church Choir Association
Leicester Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Lichfield Cathedral Former Choristers' Association
Lincoln Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
London (St. Paul's): The Guild Of The Companions Of St Paul
Norwich Cathedral Ex Choristers' Guild
Oxford Christ Church Cathedral School Old Boys Association
Oxford New College Old Choristers' Association
Peterborough Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Portsmouth Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Rochester Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
St. Albans Cathedral Ex-Choristers' Association
St. Edmundsbury Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Salisbury Cathedral School Association
Southwark Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Southwell Minster Old Choristers' Association
Tenbury Wells St Michael's College Society
Truro Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Wakefield Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Warwick St Marys Guild Of Ex-Choristers
Wells Cathedral Choir Association
Westminster Abbey Old Choristers' Association
Westminster Cathedral Old Boys' Association
Winchester Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Winchester College Quiristers Association
Worcester Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
York Minster Choristers' Association

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