

CHOIR NEWS-APRIL 2018

Where is Nigel Owens when you need him?

I've been reflecting on how singing in a choir is like taking part in a team sport. The parallels are many, and particularly with the sport of rugby. The most striking thing is that rugby, like singing, is a game for people of all shapes and sizes. Size or the lack of it, does not usually detract from the usefulness of the individual to the team. Bledlow Choir has its little and its large players, comparable to the fly half and front row of a rugby team. Then the age range of those taking part, admittedly not as wide in rugby as in singing, but wide none the less. And all sorts of back grounds work together for success. So barristers sing with accountants; policemen play alongside doctors (think Martin Bayfield and Jonathan Webb)

All of which allows me to tell the tale of when Bledlow Choir sang at the wedding of one of the leading lights of Risboro Rugby Club (training Tuesday and Thursday at 7pm; home games at PR School sports field). I have to admit to having a hand in this. Club chairman and senior player, Andrew (Mo) Emmett and his wife to be, Lizzie, had an organist but no choir for their wedding at Monks Risboro church. Now Mo and the rest of the team are great friends of my son Tom. They have adopted him as a kind of club mascot and as the water boy for their matches. If I can't get to a game, one of them picks him up and brings him home afterwards. And he is always included in their social outings, which is more than I am- not that I could stand the pace nowadays. So I asked the choir if they would help me reciprocate the kindness the club shows to Tom and give up a couple of hours to sing on their big day and no fewer than thirteen (enough for a rugby league side, two short for union) volunteered. Cathy stepped up to the plate and rehearsed us at her home then conducted us on the day. We sang them some Rutter and they sang Jerusalem. The sops and altos had the odd tear in their eyes as usual. Subsequently I took some light-weight jibes about cross dressing, but it was worth it. And many of the club told me how impressed they had been by our singing, which might be more than we were with theirs! Somehow I have been trying to work in how we were the Wasps to their Harlequins but I expect that the editor would award a penalty against me. I tell the tale as an example of two diverse sections of our community coming together on a happy occasion.

None of this has anything to do with Nigel Owens. I needed to get your attention.

Stop Press

We are singing Evensong at Canterbury Cathedral on 17 April at 5.30 and would love to see you there. Why not make a day of it? Canterbury has so much to offer, both the cathedral and the town are well worth a visit.

100 CLUB

By the time this is published in Messenger, we will have had the first 100 Club draw for 2018. As I write we have around 80 tickets sold, slightly fewer than last year. I'd like to say a big thank you to all who are supporting us in 2018 through the 100 Club and to all those who have supported us in the past. This is the fifth year in which the 100 Club has given the choir the financial support it needs to thrive.

Best wishes to you all

Mike Beattie

Tenor, Scribe, Promoter of the 100 Club