

Choir News

One highlight for a small number of us during Christmas just past, was to sing Evensong at Westminster Abbey on Boxing Day as part of St Mary's Singers. Fortunately, the music was mostly things that we had sung before, but it was a real privilege to sing there and to a congregation that I reckon was around 500 strong.

Christmas also saw the last appearance with us, for a while at least, of Becky Miller, one of the younger sopranos, who is going to be spending the next two years in Canada. We send our best wishes to her for the future and hope to see her again one day.

We hope that you all enjoyed the Christmas music as much as we did. Hats off again to those who chose the carols, and the readings and the readers too.

With Christmas now behind us, we are turning our attention to the services and cathedral visits for the year ahead. Our programme for 2018 is on the parish website. We will be singing at Birmingham and Durham cathedrals, as well as monthly in the parish churches. In 2019 we will be at St Paul's, Southwell and St Albans. Not a bad schedule for a small parish choir such as ours. We will be working hard to do justice to the occasion each time; whether that is in the parish or in a cathedral, it's the same challenge. My main thing this month is the launch of the 100 Club for 2018. Since it was first set up in 2014, the 100 Club has raised most of the money to pay the choir's expenses and so we have not had to take money from the parish. It would be very helpful to me if you are re-joining the 100 Club (wonderful and thank you!) or would like to join for the first time (dare I say, even better!) if you could let me know by email to: bigmike.beattie@gmail.com. It would be great if this year we could become a 100 Club both in reality as well as in name. We only need to go one better than last year, when there were ninety-nine members. I'll be emailing existing members separately, but if you are joining for the first time, I will have to send you a membership form to complete, or you can download one from the website.

Just over a year ago I joined the ranks of the retired and lost the use of my office computer set-up. It's about the only thing that I do miss about work. I tell you this as I struggle to cope with 'gmail' and my ancient laptop to write this Choir News. Yes, I know, a bad workman blaming his tools. Bear with me, it will only get better.

More next month.

PS I have the usual surfeit of Jerusalem artichokes on my allotment. Just email me if you'd like some. First come, first served.

Mike Beattie Tenor, 100 Club Promoter and Scribe