

CHOIR NEWS – OCTOBER 2015

I've often wondered if my notes are widely read, or read at all, but this week brought an email proving conclusively that they are. What a relief. So thank you Ruth Bardou (who is unconnected with the choir or the parish) for contacting me with a link to a recording of William Boyce 'All the Ends of the Earth'.

OXFORD, CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Our visit on 25th of August went without a hitch, if you ignore the fact that the hymn announced at the start of the service wasn't the one we had prepared. Great fun; after a few frantic moments order was restored and the service restarted, this time with our hymn. We sang in front of quite a large congregation which was very satisfying, and I tell myself this had little to do with the fact that it was a very wet afternoon. Husband and wife team, Cathy and Derek Stone both sang solo parts. Is this a first in the history of the choir? Does it matter? They both sang wonderfully well.

For the voluntary, Cynthia played a piece by Dietrich Buxtehude, and was rewarded with a spontaneous round of applause. We are so fortunate to have someone as accomplished to accompany us.

Those who like evensong may be interested to know that there are a number of broadcast sung evensongs from Oxford colleges in the run up to Christmas, details are on the Radio 3 website. From personal experience I can say that these are delightful and well worth the effort needed to attend. Some of the choir usually go, if only to take part in the hymn singing. It's a rare opportunity to take part in a broadcast. Mind you even this may be under threat. Recently when the Genesis Sixteen sang evensong from St Martin in the Fields, the instructions to the congregation were not to sing at all. Fortunately a few defiant souls, keen perhaps to sing under the direction of Harry Christophers, defied the BBC and sang out lustily. Long may that be so; this is a service not a concert after all.

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL

The Learning Page of our website carries details of the music for our visit to Winchester in October so I will not list it all here. It's a matter of personal sadness to me that I will miss the Sunday services due to the pull of a rugby world cup semi-final that day at Twickenham. Sadly neither World Rugby nor Winchester was prepared to be flexible on dates to accommodate me!

Winchester will be the last cathedral visit of the year and unusually we do not have a New Year booking.

Whilst singing in cathedrals is something of a highlight for us, our main responsibility is to support the services in the parish and with Harvest, Remembrance, Advent and Christmas services all coming up as well as Eucharist and Evensong in the Parish there is plenty for us to do. Added to this we still 'owe' Bledlow Ridge a sung evensong for the robes we acquired from them some months ago. They have not forgotten so we shall be busy as ever.

THE BLEDLow 100 CLUB

The winner of the September draw will be announced in the next Choir News and on the website.

For 2016 I am giving serious thought again to the draw taking place once a quarter with first, second and third prizes each time. If you have views on this please let me know so that I can take them into consideration.

The 100 Club is our sole source of finance and we are very grateful to all those who support us in this way

More news in November.

Mike Beattie

Tenor, scribe and promotor of the Bledlow 100 Club

7 September 2015