

## CHOIR NEWS

OCTOBER 2014

My first draft for this month started with the words ‘This month I find myself with little to say, something that never seemed to happen to my predecessor!’ On reflection though, as I write this in late September, there are a number of things that come to mind.

Did you know that 2014 is the tenth year in which Jeff Stewart has run the Bledlow Choir? I often wonder how many parishes the size of Bledlow has a choir which has thirty members and that has sung major services in most of the senior cathedrals of the land. My guess is that it is very few. At the risk of embarrassing him, none of this would be possible without his skill and dedication. It’s a great privilege for very ordinary singers like me to learn under his direction and long may it continue.

We have been thinking about new ways for the choir to master its music and at the same time not make a weekly practice absolutely necessary. So from October the number of choir practices will be reduced and will take place in the week before a sung service or a visit to another church/cathedral. The intention is that music will be distributed in advance so that we can learn the words and the notes in our own time, and then come together for a practice or two to get the blend and passion right. And of course we do have quite a repertoire of music that can be reused when the occasion allows. We may also have a few ‘choir days’ a year in which we work with other local church choirs on specific pieces of music.

And related to this, we’d always welcome new members into the choir. There is nothing to fear and there is no audition. What you will find is a very friendly bunch of people in the age range 18 to 80ish, who have a lot of fun learning to sing church music with passion and feeling. Church choirs are closing all the time and we mustn’t let this happen in Bledlow. Can you imagine Easter or Christmas without sung music?

Our autumn term is being spent in preparation for a sung Evensong in Hereford Cathedral on Friday 31 October, and then services in the New Year at Great Yarmouth Minster and Norwich Cathedral. All the details are on the parish website. I hope that some of you can get to them.

Finally, I can’t do this ‘News’ without mentioning the Bledlow 100 Club. By the time you read this, there will be only three more draws left and we will be looking to 2015. From the choir point of view the 100 Club has worked well and has raised £2500 towards our annual running costs. So I hope that you will support us in the same way next year. More on this in the Messenger soon.

So there was something to say after all!

More next month

Mike Beattie  
18 September 2014