

CHOIR NEWS: OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE NEW

This is my first shot at Choir News. With a change of scribe comes a change of style. I shall use these notes to keep you abreast of what is going on in and around the choir at Holy Trinity. Is that what you want? I certainly hope so, or I should not have been chosen for this job. 'Chosen' is of course not quite the right word. My hand was up to ask a question, but before you could count to three, it seems that I had volunteered to become the scribe from the choir, giving the view from the pew, or more prosaically, to write 'Choir Notes' for the foreseeable future. So be it. You will be the judge of my efforts.

I'll start by thanking Nick Symondson, my predecessor, who has now retired to Cheltenham at an absurdly young age. Reading his earlier contributions, gave me a proper insight of the choir's activities over the years. Above all he was able to capture what this choir is about: hard work, high standards, friendship and fun. Nick himself was in the thick of it all. We miss his cryptic remarks, schoolboy humour and his impish grin.

CATHEDRAL VISITS TO YORK, PARIS AND HEREFORD

In May, we travel to York Minster, to sing the services over the weekend of 31 May/1 June in that magnificent place where choral music has been sung for over a thousand year. What a privilege. The highlight will be Martin How's Westminster Service and Martin How himself is coming to a Bledlow rehearsal to take us through it. He is a very highly regarded composer of church music and was awarded the MBE for 'Services to Church Music'.

We then sing at the American Cathedral, Paris on Sunday 13th July and as the next day is Bastille Day, Paris will be especially busy, so those planning to come with us, should book their travel and accommodation now.

Finally, on 31 October we will sing Evensong in Hereford Cathedral. It will be a busy year.

THE BLEDLOW 100 CLUB

The Bledlow 100 Club got off to a good start raising £2500 for choir running costs. It's not too late to join. Membership forms can be found at the back of the church or by following the links on the choir pages of the church website.

The winner in January was Philip Goding. Congratulations to him. The next draw is on 20 February, in the Lions at 9.30pm.

Choir members pay their own accommodation and travel expenses when singing away from the parish, but we must raise £4000 per year to cover other direct costs and keep the centuries' old practice of choral worship alive and thriving in Bledlow.

ABSENT FRIENDS

Until the end of March, our wonderful choir master, Jeff Stewart is in Germany to rehearse Peter Grimes and with performances in Gera, East Germany from the end of March to early June he will be stacking up the air miles. With Jeff away, our organist, the indomitable Cynthia Hall, is doubling up at services as both conductor and accompanist. Multi- tasking par excellence!

More next month

Mike Beattie
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