

Wakefield Cathedral Old Choristers' Association Newsletter

www.wcoqa.org.uk

February 2015

Dear All,

A belated Happy New Year!

Last year, the Association had a good year. A number of Old Choristers made contact for the first time or after a period of non-contact and are now included on our mailing list. As we approach the Association's Golden Jubilee, we wish to contact more Old Choristers in the hope that the Golden Jubilee Dinner on Friday, 6th May, 2016 will be our best ever supported event. If you are still in contact with former choristers, who have no contact with the Association, please see if you can persuade them to get in touch and join the mailing list. Hopefully, they may then be able to support our events.

As an Association, we have never arranged many events each year as so many OCs leave the area when their years in education are over. The two annual events are the reunion dinner in May or June, which always follows evensong, and a lunch and AGM, usually held on Advent Sunday so OCs can stay on for the Advent Carol Service. For the past two years, we have also organised concerts to show off the talents of Wakefield's former choristers. Following our successful gala concert featuring a number of OCs in 2013, we followed this up in October 2014 when Marc Corbett-Weaver gave a tremendous piano recital at the Cathedral. The London-based Old Chorister showed why he is making such an excellent name for himself as a professional musician. I hope we can arrange more of these concerts in the future.

As mentioned in the September newsletter, Peter Gould, our former Assistant Organist, was guest speaker at the Annual Dinner. Unfortunately, the attendance was affected as it was on the Friday prior to the Spring Bank Holiday. However, it was good to see Peter before he retired at Christmas 2014 from the post of Organist and Master of the Choristers at Derby Cathedral, which he has held for over 30 years. On Advent Sunday, we sat down to a Christmas lunch in the Treacy Hall before holding the 2014 AGM in the Eastwood Room. At the meeting, Alec Tinker took over from Adrian Altman as secretary and David Dean, a former secretary of the Association, was elected to the committee. Adrian will remain on the committee. A new venture took place on Christmas Eve in the Treacy Hall before Midnight Mass. OCs and their families were invited to meet for pre-service drinks. We hope this becomes an annual event and numbers grow in future years.

In 2015, we have our 49th annual dinner, which will be held in June. Wakefield's new bishop, the Right Revd Tony Robinson will be our guest speaker (please see further details below). Our Sunday lunch and AGM will take place towards the end of the year. We expect the date to be Advent Sunday, 29th November but that will be confirmed in our next newsletter.

If you are hoping to come to evensong before the annual dinner in June, you will see a shortened Cathedral as work on the east end restoration will be in full swing. However, the work will hopefully be completed by Easter 2016 and our Golden Jubilee Dinner will take place in the Cathedral nave from where we shall be able to see the fully restored building in all its glory. It should be an amazing sight and an excellent venue for the special occasion.

More about the restoration work can be read in the Dean's letter below. We are very appreciative of the Dean's continuing support of the Association and, as usual, wish to thank him for giving of his time in putting pen to paper.

Yours,

John North
Chair, WCOCA

Letter from the Dean

Here in Wakefield, it feels like the lull before the storm. Of course the usual cathedral round of worship and community events continues, and with Lent coming, we're seeking to move up a gear in terms of liturgy and spiritual formation. And having bade a long farewell to Simon Earl, our Assistant Director of Music, who has clearly secured a place in everybody's heart, we are looking forward to the arrival of his replacement, Sachin Gunga. But the main focus of our life and work at present is planning for the builders to move in and occupy the quire and East End and crypt for the coming twelve months. We've recently woken up to the fact that this is going to be immensely more disruptive than when we closed the nave for a year. For with the nave we lost a single room, albeit our biggest, whereas this time we're losing 8 or 10. And there is a vast amount of furniture and stuff to store. And we're still expecting cathedral life to carry on more or less as normal.

It will of course be disruptive for the choir. They are moving home, up into the Eastwood Room, which presents its own challenges: what with taking down a wall to move the grand piano, and carting hundreds of metres of sheet music from the crypt to the first floor. They are also having to abandon the choir stalls for twelve months, moving into the nave, although we have some fabulous new wooden music stands being made, half of which have been most generously funded by a legacy from Jack Copley. If you would like to know more about these music stands, and how you might contribute to the remaining three, please get in touch with the office. And then of course the organ will be removed, so that the East End cleaning does not affect its performance, and we shall be using an electronic organ in the nave during this period. We are very grateful in advance to all our musicians for the undoubted hassle they will endure.

Our expected finishing date is shortly after Easter 2016. It is not long before we shall welcome the national gathering for Old Choristers, and it would be marvellous if as many as possible from Wakefield planned to be there - not only to fly our flag, but to help us celebrate all that will have been achieved in this lovely building.

The Very Revd Jonathan Greener
Dean of Wakefield

WCOCA Officials and Committee Members 2014-15

Chair: John North

Secretary: Alec Tinker

Treasurer: James Holt

Federation Representative: John Holt

Clergy Representative: The Reverend Canon Andi Hofbauer

Committee Members: Adrian Altman, Rob Barraclough, Mark Brotherton, David Dean, Neil Hopwood, Andrew Reavons

Annual Dinner 2015

The annual dinner will be held at QEGS on Friday, 12th June at 8pm. The meal will follow evensong, which will be sung in the Cathedral nave at 6.30pm. Musical interludes at the dinner will be provided by a Cathedral chorister(s). As was mentioned above, the Rt Revd Tony Robinson, Bishop of Wakefield, will be our guest speaker.

Menu

Fish Platter (Tuna, Smoked Mackerel, Large Prawns)

Sliced Roast Topside of Beef with Horseradish Sauce.

Chicken Coronation with a Rocket Salad Garnish.

Warm Stilton and Pear Tartlets.

Spinach and Ricotta Cannelloni.

Hot Potato Wedges.

A selection of salads

Assorted Bread Rolls & Butter.

Selection of Desserts.

English Cheese Board with Grapes.

Coffee & Mints.

£ 18.00

If you wish to attend the dinner, please find the return slip at the end of the newsletter. The closing date for returns is Friday, 5th June. A reminder will be sent out nearer the time.

Choir CD

The Complete Psalms of David, Volume 7, Series 2: Psalms 89-104

The CD was released in January and is a very impressive recording. The choir is on top form with Simon Earl providing impeccable and sympathetic accompaniments. The record company is very impressed with the CD and Tom should be proud of Wakefield's contribution to the second series of the Complete Psalms of David, which is featuring some of the country's top cathedral choirs. If the CD is bought from the Cathedral, it can be purchased for £10.00.

Priory Records has also produced a second CD of the choir, featuring well known church music. This will be released later in the year. We shall let you know when it is on sale.

Goings and Comings!

Simon Earl

February 2015 has seen Simon leave his post as Assistant Director of Music to take up the post of Director of Music at Christchurch Priory, Hampshire. This is an excellent move for Simon. His predecessor, Hugh Morris, has taken over from Peter Gould at Derby Cathedral so let's hope that in future years, Simon may be making a move to a cathedral position. Christchurch has both a boys' and a girls' choir with first class resources and there are opportunities to develop the music further in the coming years. A new "musical" vicar is also arriving at Easter who should offer Simon good support.

There have been some excellent Assistant Organists at Wakefield over the last few decades. Simon has been at Wakefield since 2011. His work as Tom's Assistant has been of the highest order. His immaculate organ playing both as an accompanist for the choir and his solo playing has always enhanced services. His easy going manner has made him well-liked by choir members and members of the congregation. His support of Association events has been much appreciated and he will be greatly missed. We wish him all the best for the future.

Sachin Gunga

Sachin has been appointed as the Cathedral's new Assistant Director of Music. He is a graduate of Cambridge University, where he was a choral scholar and chapel organist of Trinity Hall. Sachin was Assistant Organist of Llandaff Cathedral until the end of 2013 when, sadly, due to financial difficulties, Llandaff had to terminate the employment of the choir's lay clerks and that of the Assistant Organist. His last post has been acting Assistant Director of Music at Lincoln Cathedral. As a boy, he was a chorister at Derby Cathedral with Peter Gould as his choirmaster! We wish him well in his new post and hope he enjoys his years at Wakefield.

Wonder where they are now?

Nils Bersweden

Nils was a chorister in the last years of Dr Saunders' time and at the beginning of Jonathan Bielby's tenure. He is now a clergyman in the Diocese of Salisbury, holding the post of Team Rector of the Clarendon Team Churches. He lives in Winterslow. Coming to our events is difficult for Nils but he is hoping to be at the Golden Jubilee Dinner.

Peter Darkin (Chorister 1944-1950)

Peter now lives in Bridgnorth and was a regular attender at our dinners in the past but has not attended for a number of years. He would be very willing to make the journey if he knew other OCs from his period would be present. He regularly visits New Zealand and always meets up with Terry Cass. Terry is the only one he is in contact with from his time in the choir.

Stephen Pare

Stephen was another chorister from Dr Saunder's era. He joined the choir in 1961, the year before his father became Provost. He is Priest in Charge of three churches in the Diocese of Llandaff, covering the parishes of Llansantffraid, Bettws and Aberkenfig.

Jonathan Bielby

It's interesting that Stephen Pare is working in the Diocese of Llandaff as Jonathan is now the interim Director of Music at Llandaff Cathedral. As mentioned in the paragraph about Sachin, the financial problems at Llandaff have had a serious impact on the choral foundation. In the autumn of 2014, the Director of Music left and Jonathan has stepped to put the "ship" back on an even keel.

During the period from Easter 2014 to the summer holidays, Jonathan looked after the music at St. Mary's, Redcliffe, Bristol while their director was on a sabbatical.

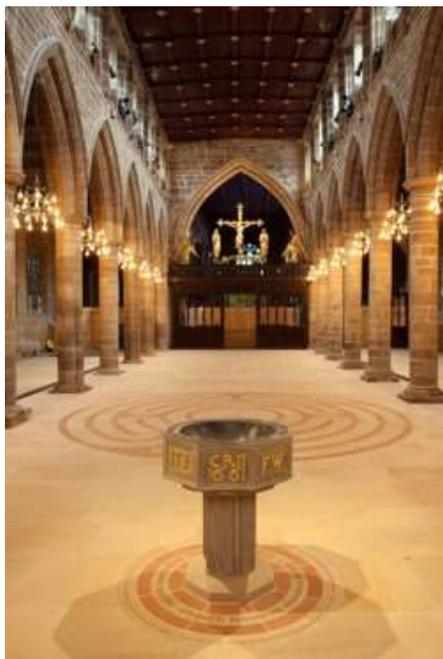
Now that's what you call having a relaxing retirement!

Subscriptions

Although the number paying their subscriptions has increased since we began to offer the annual payment by standing order, we should still like to encourage more to take up their annual subscription. It only costs £10 per year and for that you are helping the finances of our Association and also receiving a copy of the excellent "Once a Chorister" magazine, published by the Federation of Old Choristers' Associations. Please return the form at the end of the newsletter if you have not already done so.

Golden Jubilee Celebrations and hosting the AGM of the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations Friday and Saturday, 6th-7th May 2016

We hope to have most of the details of both these events in place for the July newsletter. In the meantime, please make a note of these dates.



WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS ASSOCIATION

Standing Order for Payment of Annual Subscriptions

To: The Manager, Bank / Building Society

Branch Address:.....

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Sort Code:

Account Number:

Name of Account Holder:

Please pay to the Wakefield Cathedral Old Choristers Association at Barclays Bank, Wakefield Branch,

Sort Code: 20 89 68

Account Number: 00911569

Reference: WCOCA/..... (Member's Name)

the sum of ten pounds (£10) on 1st June, 2015 and thereafter on the same date each year until further notice.

Signed

Print Name

Please return the completed form to:

James Holt
25 The Spinney
Sandal
Wakefield
West Yorkshire WF2 6JN

Please return this slip by 1st June if you wish to continue to pay your subscription by cheque.

Name

I wish to continue to pay my subscription by cheque and enclose a cheque for £10.00 to cover my subscription for 2015. Please make cheques payable to "WCOCA".

Signed

Please send your cheque to:
James Holt
25 The Spinney
Sandal
WAKEFIELD
West Yorkshire WF2 6JN

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Annual Dinner Reply Slip
To be returned by Friday, 5th June

Name

I wish to attend the Annual Dinner on Friday, 12th June and require places at £18.00 per person.

I enclose a cheque, made payable to "WCOCA" for £.....

Signed

Please send your replies and cheques to:

Alec Tinker
5 Wellhouse Way
PENISTONE
South Yorkshire
S36 8ER