

# MUSIC & MORE ONLINE: NOVEMBER 2020

For members, past and present, of **BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL CHOIRS**  
and for all who relish, treasure and encourage **INSPIRATIONAL CATHEDRAL MUSIC.**

Editor: Dr John Bertalot, Cathedral Organist Emeritus, Blackburn Cathedral

## BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL

Readers of our *October M&M* will remember that **JOHN ROBINSON** had our organ console moved from the head of the Nave (where the organist couldn't hear the organ in balance 'cos of mighty pillars) to a position on the **central altar platform** facing the North transept, alongside the Cantoris men's stalls from where the organist could hear the organ and choir in balance.

### HOW DID John R. DO IT?

JR knows a member of the congregation whose business specialises in moving **heavy objects!**



### One step up: 3 more to go!



It can't have been that easy... it wasn't!

This is where the console will be for our recitals.

Recitalists will glory in



the **Niagaras of sounds** which will engulf them.

No other cathedral organ in the UK (except, of course, **Liverpool Anglican**) will be able to match the thrill of Blackburn.

Compare the moving-up-steps of Liverpool's 1924 console with ours! See p.10



**Former Blackburn Choristers gathered from 6000 miles away for  
Our Annual General Meeting of the Blackburn Cathedral Choristers' Association  
via ZOOM on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 5.15pm**

**thanks to the technical wizardry of our Secretary, Graham Chapelhow.**

1<sup>st</sup> row: Graham Chapelhow, John Bertalot, Bernard Hargreaves (in California) & Bob Keen.

2<sup>nd</sup> row: Clara Slater at the University of Bristol, Allan Holden, Iain Thompson & John Marr.

3<sup>rd</sup> row: Stewart Hopkinson, Dean Peter (our President), John Robinson (Director of Music)  
and Neil Fellows (in Germany)

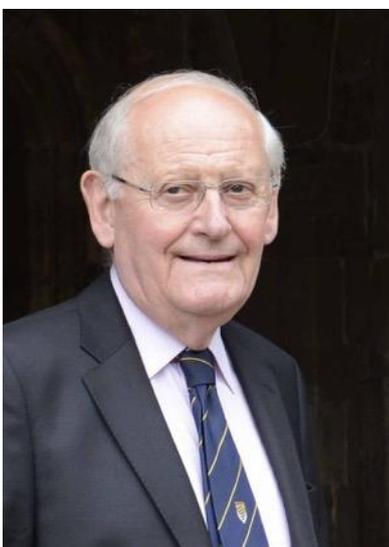
4<sup>th</sup> row: Louie Hindle and David Robinson.

Even though we all look *uncommonly serious* – it was a great meeting with lots of fun.

For example, Dean Peter, who was our benevolent Chairman, said,  
Blackburn's music department, year after year, continues to amaze me.



JB was thrilled that of the 11 choristers who 'attended' the meeting, no fewer than 8 were JB choristers! He was particularly thrilled that **Bernard Hargreaves** joined us live from his home in California (where it was 10.00am): Bernard plays golf 2 or 3 times a week and has escaped the Californian wild fires, and **Neil Fellows** came to us from his home in Germany where he and his family make much music.



Comments about our October *Music & More*

**from Dr Roy Massey, former Director of Music of Hereford Cathedral,  
where OUR JOHN ROBINSON was one of his choristers**

Hi John,

Thanks for this bumper issue which should keep-up everyone's spirits and boost the morale of Blackburn cathedral musicians yet again. In this time of war against the virus, M&M must be Blackburn's secret weapon.

It promotes a positive outlook on life and recognises the results of hard work and achievement even when circumstances are less than ideal.

Its lively and colourful presentation brings cheer and good spirits into the lives of all who read it, and presents a positive picture of cathedral life and music and the folk who support it in the past, now, and in the years to come.

It is a wonderful achievement by an old friend who is supposed to be retired!

Love from us both,

As ever,

Roy

We shall welcome our 2021 Choral Scholars in January:

## MATTHEW BALDWIN



Matthew is a classically trained bass from the North West of England. He trained at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) under Quentin Hayes.

His vocal training began in 2014 with Michael Hall, who introduced him to the world of opera. Through the opera company *Musica Lyrica*, Matthew gave his first public performance as an operatic soloist singing arias from *The Magic Flute*, *Don Pasquale*, and *Showboat*. At the age of 18, Matthew performed in his first opera, *Tosca*, where he played the role of Sciarrone, following which, he spent 6 months in Italy studying with internationally acclaimed tenor, Angelo Marenzi.

In summer 2018, Matthew was delighted to perform his first principle role as Sarastro in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, a role he reprised in early 2019 with Flat Pack Music. In July 2019, Matthew debuted in London, performing the role of Colline in Puccini's, *La Boheme*.

Matthew is frequently called upon as bass soloist, including Faure's Requiem and Mozart's Requiem. He is also the bass soloist for the internationally acclaimed Welsh male voice choir, Johns' Bois, who currently hold the title of Choir of the World 2019 & 2020.

Excellent, Matthew! You will add so much to the *gravitas* of our fine Cathedral Choirs.

## MIKE HILLESDEN

Who wrote to JB:

Hi John,  
Life has been a little chaotic recently which has led to me to be a bit useless with checking my emails.

To answer your questions from your first email; currently I am pursuing a part time, **online masters in computer science with the University of York**. Alongside this, I am freelancing as a musician which, before the virus meant **I was performing in Manchester and Liverpool** as much as I could but since then it has morphed into singing teaching. Over the course of the scholarship, I hope to improve my sight singing ability alongside my technique and expand my repertoire within a new community. **I have always made long lasting friendships within choirs that I have sung with and I hope that Blackburn is no different.**

I have always loved singing within choirs. I joined my first church choir, **Holy Trinity Choir Southport, at age 10**. I have sung with a church choir ever since, singing with **Holy Trinity Micklegate while I studied music at York**. I am very thankful for the musical education that I received through singing within the church and I believe that it is why I am so passionate about choral singing in both sacred and secular settings. I hope that I can benefit the community of Blackburn Cathedral in the same way that I have benefitted from learning choral music and hopefully help to inspire new talent amongst young people.

All the best and looking forward to meeting you soon,  
Mike Hillesdon

Mike has a B.A. in Music from the University of York and is completing an MSc in computer science. He also holds the Duke of Edinburgh's **GOLD** Award and plays the French Horn, Violin, Clarinet and Saxophone!



Excellent, Mike: you sound like a fun chap to have around – especially when music is being made! JB

## From former chorister **STEPHEN RICKERBY**

### **“Why I joined the cathedral choir all those years ago”**

My mother auditioned – and failed – to become a member of the John Bertalot Singers (a.k.a. The Renaissance Singers). But JB then asked my mother, “Do you have a son who’d like to sing in the Cathedral choir?”

“Yes, I have a son,” she replied, “But he’s never shown *any* interest in singing.”

“Does he breathe...?” shot back JB.

“Well, yes,” came her bemused reply, no doubt a little uncertain of where this line of questioning was heading.

“Then he can also sing!”

Much to my mother’s surprise (after this was related to me) and probably my own surprise, I said I’d like to give it a go.



### **And so began my time in Blackburn Cathedral Choir.**

Early memories are of that impressively reflective black concert grand piano in the Song School, flanked by the then rather rickety practice stalls, the dark paintwork of which had been picked away by generations of choirboys.



I recall haphazard efforts trying to hit the right notes, my failure to keep up, and my amazement at the angelic sounds that were emerging coherently from the other boys’ voices. Everyone else knew automatically which books and manuscripts to turn to, and where to put them afterwards. Everything had a place – books, sheets of music, collars and ruffs, cassocks and surplices – and everyone knew where those places were. It was all so very orderly and different, and ... exciting.

### **To my mother’s still greater surprise, I stayed the course:**

the Friday evening rehearsals, and the early Saturday morning ones, too (with football on the Cathedral’s invariably muddy grounds afterwards);

the two Sunday services and their own rehearsals;

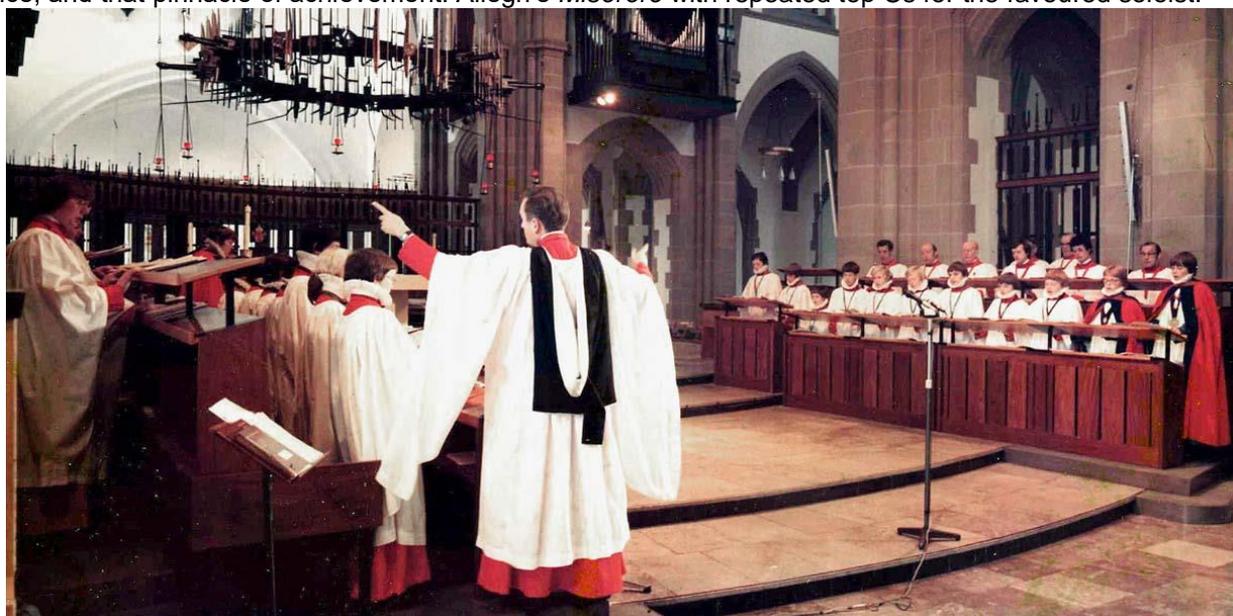
the two-out-of-three weekday Boys-only Choral Evensongs after school;

and all the special services and events in addition (how often was *Jesu, joy of man’s desiring* sung at Saturday weddings?)

### **It was a whole new way of life.**

Ahead of me were the senior choristers – including the incomparable **IVOR BOLTON** (who is now an orchestral conductor of international stature – but who also credits his time as a Blackburn chorister with the formative education and experience which enabled him to succeed in such a challenging career).

Those Prefects with their (then) heavy black cloaks and ever-increasing medallions effortlessly, it seemed to me, sang prestigious solos: *Once in Royal David’s City* in the opening darkness of the Nine Lessons and Carols Service; and that pinnacle of achievement: Allegri’s *Miserere* with repeated top Cs for the favoured soloist.



**Stephen Rickerby as Head Chorister (far right) at the final Consecration of Blackburn Cathedral in 1977 in the presence of HRH Princess Alexandra. JB had the privilege of presenting Stephen to the Princess.**

The choirmen on that side were: Jack Smethurst, Frank Hare, Billy Bradley, Derek Crompton, Paul Fielding and Bob Keen, and in the back row Jim Smith (hidden) and Bernard West.

(Stephen continues): I was never a good soloist, it must be said. The likes of **Nigel & Philip Chew, Stephen Parkinson, Stephen Ward** and **John Marr** and others, justifiably made those solos soar, and I was happy to be a witness and listen.

**Nigel & Philip Chew in Delft during our first Holland tour, 1975**

It was such a very rigorous training, yet always a joy and a thrill, marked by so many rites of passage and achievement, both small and great, but all ultimately meaningful. How exciting it was to transition to the second of the Friday evening rehearsals (which the junior boys did not attend) and to stand, as a senior boy alongside the other senior boys, with the dedicated and impressive choir men singing in the stalls behind us!

My good friend **Stewart Hopkinson**, has described how JB inspired our sung and spoken pronunciation – rolling our r's and ending our words with emphatic consonants. To this day, I find myself berating Choral Evensongs on the radio when I hear muffled and painfully slow psalm-singing. That wasn't how it was done under JB!

We learned the art of processing, and to sit stock-still in straight-backed choir-stalls (no mean feat for the duration of some of **Provost Jackson's** sermons).

Under the stern but kindly guidance of **Canon Williams**, our musical education was paralleled by religious instruction: how difficult it was to understand that the phrase from the evening collect "that **both** our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments" did not mean that we possessed two hearts... Yet, now, how indelibly stamped on our memories are those beautiful prayers from the Book of Common Prayer.

**Highlights were many:** the singing of **Ralph Vaughan Williams' Five Mystical Songs** at a recital in **Liverpool's Roman Catholic Cathedral** – it was an enlightening introduction for me to George Herbert's sublime poetry; the utter quietness of choir and audience in the immediate aftermath of singing a beautiful piece of music in the lofty, bare churches of Holland and Germany; the solemn procession to **Bairstow's Lamentations**... Such enduring memories are shared by many old choristers.

**PHOTO from the 1977 2<sup>nd</sup> recital tour of Holland and N. Germany:**

L-R: JB (in 'with-it' trousers) hugging Faith Jackson, the Provost's wife.

Provost Jackson, and **choristers:**

**Chris Ryan** who now lives in Singapore with his wife and family, **Stephen Rickerby** & **Andrew Shuttleworth** who has fulfilled his ambition to become a chef in the Merchant Navy!



*(Stephen Rickerby continues)*

**My profession as a conservator of historic wall paintings** means that I am often away in far-flung countries: working with my wife, **Lisa**. We have had the privilege and good fortune to preserve wonderful paintings together in remote rock-cut churches in **Ethiopia** (scaling cliff-faces to do so – I'm wearing the **red helmet**); at Buddhist temples in **China, Bhutan and India**; in **Egyptian** tombs and temples; and at Orthodox churches in **Cyprus and Georgia** among other places.



From a Prefects' board in the Song School.

1975 **Nigel Chew**  
**Philip Chew**  
 1976 **Stephen Rickerby**



(Left) In one of those surprising confluences of life, in 2012, Lisa and I conserved a stunning medieval painting of St. Christopher in one of the North Wales churches cared for by the **Revd Philip Chew!**

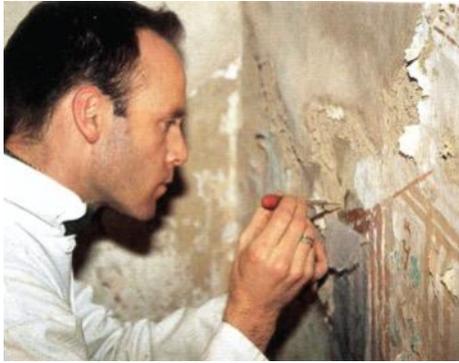


All this has meant that I am usually thousands of miles away from Blackburn when it comes time for the Old Choristers' Annual Reunions, which I have sadly not attended for many years,

What I can say, though, is that the discipline and purpose instilled by my years as a Blackburn Cathedral chorister have remained with me, shaping my daily life. Being able to sustain careful work on a precious painting over many hours in difficult circumstances is not that far removed from the discipline required of a cathedral choirboy. I'm sure that other Old Choristers will have carried forward similar ways of being throughout their own lives and careers.

In the September *Music & More* **John Marr** and **Stewart Hopkinson** both testify to this with eloquence and sincerity.

John and Stewart also relate their own memorable experiences of auditioning for Blackburn Cathedral choir with JB.



experiences of auditioning for Blackburn Cathedral choir with JB.



Thank you,

JB, for accepting boys who, at the beginning, had to demonstrate little more than breathing to be brought into the formative and loving environment of Blackburn Cathedral Choir, and for changing our lives.

Thank YOU, Stephen for your thrilling memories of Blackburn Cathedral choir all those years ago. I confess that I was not fully aware that our creative and self-disciplined musical life together meant so much to you and to your colleagues – and continues so to do. I am humbled and thrilled. Thank you, indeed. JB

From **Dr June Nixon**, former Director of Music, Melbourne Cathedral which, during her time there, was the only cathedral in the Southern hemisphere where Choral Evensong was sung daily – and her choir was wholly voluntary! That's why she was awarded a well-deserved **Lambeth Doctorate of music**.

Hi John,

Thanks so much for M&M which I always enjoy reading. It's so important to keep up the morale of all the choristers and organists in these troubled times.

I can't help wishing I'd had that support for my cathedral's music.....

Melbourne (as you've probably heard) is in the midst of a lockdown - only outdoors for 1hr exercise, medical and food shopping. It's boring, but the number of cases does seem to be dropping and there is some cause for optimism. I do hope things are looking up at your end.

I know it's a well-worn cliché, but do keep well and safe.

Much love from us both,

June



#### A FOUNDER-MEMBER OF THE SINGERS

It's always very good to hear from dear friends who may have sung with us many years ago. One such very special person is **Millie Sleight (née Whiteside)** who is a founder-member of the Renaissance Singers. Millie writes to JB about once every couple of months sharing her joy in music including being an accompanist for a fine choir in Lincolnshire.

But Millie doesn't have a computer so she can't receive our *M&Ms* online.

BUT her daughter now can. And so Millie wrote:

'I have at last received the **September M&M magazine**...daughter Helen delivered the print-out into my hands. It's lovely to be connected again and many thanks for your effort on my behalf' I was very interested to read about your change of auditioning techniques. It called to mind a phrase which began creeping in during staff meetings when I returned to teaching in 1989: **GIVE A CHILD THE "OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR OWN LEARNING."** Lots of good wishes and Much love, Millie





**It's also always very good when we hear news of present choristers**

Here's a photo of **GEORGE SEEDALL** immediately after he had been promoted to **PREFECT** last January.

George is 12 years old and attends Ribblesdale High School. He has a 9 year old brother called **William** who goes to Balderstone School. Their family live on a dairy farm in Mellor where George enjoys feeding the calves and looking after his chickens. He is keen to follow in his father's footsteps and become a farmer but his other passion is football and it would be his dream come true to become a professional football player.

He loves his music and has been in the choir for almost 5 years. His favourite music at choir is the Fauré *Requiem* and he enjoys playing Ludovico Einaudi on the piano.

George is also working towards his RSCM **GOLD** Award (the highest national honour a chorister can receive) and also his Grade 5 piano.

And here's a video of George playing a composition by the Italian composer, Ludovico Einaudi – from memory! (in the key of A flat major – 4 flats!)

<https://youtu.be/y9oqinifYqQ>

**Choir parents** – please send photos of your sons and daughters to JB so that we may know a little bit about our choristers and what they're doing – for now we hear and see them only at a distance.

[john.bertalot@gmail.com](mailto:john.bertalot@gmail.com)

**AND WHILST WE'RE TALKING ABOUT MUSIC AND MUSIC THEORY...**

**Did anyone solve the music puzzle on page 14 of our October M&M?**

The question was: what chord could you play to modulate DOWN a semitone – especially when playing or singing scales?

The answer is **A GERMAN SIXTH**

☐ German 6th

**What's a German Sixth?** It's "an augmented 6<sup>th</sup> chord built on the *flattened super-tonic*". (As we're going down into the key of F sharp major: therefore the new tonic is F sharp. Therefore the super tonic (one note higher than the tonic) is G sharp. Flatten it, and it become G natural. Build a triad on that : (add B natural and D natural) then add a note which is six notes higher than the G (= E), then augment it (E sharp).

**Question:** 'Why can't we call the E sharp a perfectly ordinary F natural?' Answer: because it then becomes a completely different chord = **the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> of C major**!! And the chord to play after **that** is C major or minor!

## ALIZON ELLIOTT

Who, on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, celebrated 50 years as a leading member of the Renaissance Singers



Alizon in 2016

Occasionally in this life one comes across a few, a very few, exceptional people.

Those of us who have the privilege of knowing Alizon Elliott will know that she is one of those incomparable people. Why?

Because she is always so full of life – joyful life, life which is bubbling over with energetic joy. So much so that she shares her joy with all whom she meets. How?

Because she shows that she is interested in you. She gives you her whole attention.

And she shares her creative involvement in her own life with you as though you were her greatest friend – which, indeed, you are during that happy encounter.

She looks upon life as though it were the most joyful privilege – which, indeed, it should be for all of us – and for her it truly is. And so we come away from that encounter so enriched that we, too, may look upon our own lives as a joyful privilege, to be shared in equal measure with our own friends.



And more than that: she, **with Dave**, (*the Singers sang at their wedding*) has created a wonderful family – all of whom are aboundingly intelligent and equally delightful. To be in their company is to find oneself re-created in their out-going adventuresome spirit and embraced in their enfolding love.

And even more than that: Alizon is perpetually young. That truly is a gift to be cherished. She has been a leading member of the Renaissance Singers for 50 glorious years – a truly ‘front row’ soprano who can sing solos now as beautifully as she did 50 years ago.

And here’s an indication of that happy truth: a photograph of the Singers taken 38 years ago, with Alizon sitting, of course, on the front row – indistinguishable from the Alizon we know and love and cherish today. JB

**All of us have aged 38 years – but not Alizon!**



From **HARVEY STANSFIELD**,  
Blackburn's 2018 organ scholar,  
who is now organ scholar of  
**COVENTRY CATHEDRAL**.

Dear JB

It has been very busy at the Cathedral over the last week. We had a wonderful service last Sunday which included my official installation as Organ Scholar alongside **Rachel Mahon** being admitted as DoM and we also bade farewell to **Kerry Beaumont** as he retires.

I will take all your advice about the Reubke 94th! Couldn't agree more about focusing on the text. A fantastic piece!

I'm currently learning the Liszt *BACH!*

**Listen to and watch CHORAL  
EVENSONG from Coventry Cathedral:  
Page 14**



We've also heard from **DAVID BRIGGS** who gave his very first recital here in Blackburn when he was only 14. (He played the entire programme from memory – including Bach's Toccata in F.)

David eventually became DoM of Gloucester Cathedral – then, as his brilliance spread, he became an international organ recitalist and composer.

But he regards our Blackburn organ (for which he was the Consultant for our rebuild in 2002) as one of his favourite organs.

Currently he is headquartered at the ENORMOUS **Cathedral of St. John the Divine** in New York City, from where he sent his latest news:



**David Briggs: Blackburn**



**St. John the Divine, New York City**

"Since early March, when the coronavirus hit hard and all of my concerts for the foreseeable future were cancelled, I've had, for the first time in years, limitless hours to conscientiously revise old chestnuts and also learn new music. Prior to March I was on airplanes most weeks, heading off to perform both in the U.S. and in Europe. With my 'live' performance schedule temporarily put on hold (I have had 55 concerts postponed into 2021/22) it's given me an opportunity both to practise and also to record.

"As well as rehearsing and recording, I've been busy composing and arranging. New commissions during the pandemic include a mass setting for Wells Cathedral, UK, and a setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Trinity College, Cambridge. **Orchestral transcriptions** have included Ralph Vaughan Williams' ravishingly beautiful Symphony No. 5, Louis Vierne's Symphony in A Minor, Op. 24 (1909), and **Beethoven's Ninth Symphony**, for a concert at the Cathedral, hopefully in the Spring. *Watch this space!*"

**DAVID** had been commissioned to compose a Mass for choir and orchestra for us which he would have conducted in Blackburn Cathedral this October. Now, alas, postponed until Covid-19 is o'er got.

**Whenever anyone meets David, and hears his brilliant playing, the first thing we always say is: "Phew!"**



## LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL 96 years ago!

Their cathedral always was bigger  
than ours ...  
... MUCH bigger!

And so is their organ ...

... and **heavier** !

(See page 1)



### APPLY TO JOIN BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL CHOIR – NOW!

Having read accounts of what singing in Blackburn Cathedral Choir can do for a boy or girl,  
PARENTS are warmly invited to consider giving their children a similar privilege **now**:

Our Director of Music, **John Robinson**, says “I would love to hear from parents of any boys or girls in years 3-5.”

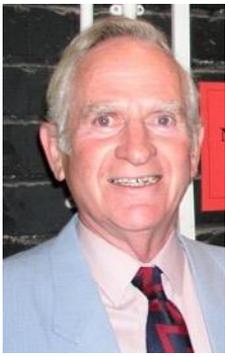


“Please just drop me a line if you know anyone who might be interested in this unique musical and spiritual opportunity.”

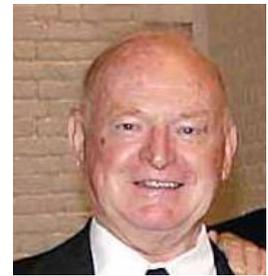
YES! Get in touch with **JOHN ROBINSON** (who was a cathedral chorister himself!) to find out more - *without obligation*.

*Perhaps your neighbours have children who should join us?*

[john.robinson@blackburncathedral.co.uk](mailto:john.robinson@blackburncathedral.co.uk)



**Memories of ERIC BANCROFT** who joined Blackburn Cathedral Choir 78 years ago and who died in October, told by his long-time contemporary **ALLAN HOLDEN**



**Allan**

I met Eric for the first time when he and his brother John when they were admitted as probationers into Blackburn Cathedral Choir (directed by the wonderful **Thomas L. Duerden**) some two years after I had been admitted in 1940 and so started a friendship that has lasted until his untimely death just recently.

**Eric wearing his regimental tie**

I recall them living with their parents and sisters, Shirley and Maureen, on Shear Bank Road in a rather stately home, however that did not stop from us becoming friends together with choristers **Peter and Gordon Fielding** and we had parties on each other's birthdays and we



used to march down to the Cathedral on Sundays in our **Eton suits**, which caught many people's attention.



There was a gap of a number of years when we led our separate lives, **Eric served as a lieutenant in the army**, mainly in Hong Kong, while I followed my career in Carlisle and Cheshire.



**Thomas L. Duerden** and his boys in the Cathedral Song School, 1942.

*[TLD was a firm disciplinarian, but was so devoted to his choristers that they became equally devoted to him. This active loyalty lasted for the rest of all their lives.]*

We eventually met up again in 1965 when John Bertalot, who succeeded TLD as organist and choirmaster, set up and organised what became **Blackburn Cathedral Old Choristers' Association**. We met several times a year for social outings (with food and drink) and many OCs came to our annual Reunion weekends, which still continue.

During the gap years Eric had tragically witnessed the death of his beloved wife Liz, also his brother John. Eric had to arrange for John to be returned to this country after dying abroad ... very sad times indeed.

We came to know each other better when I joined the Old Choristers' committee; Eric was the Deputy Chairman. He kindly invited me to stay at his lovely home in Mellor, following our committee meetings and AGMs, during which we had many hours to chat usually with a "pink gin" or two, his favourite drink, until the early hours.



His dry sense of humour seemed to gel with mine, bouncing off each other's comments like a comic duo although we never reached the standard of Morecambe and Wise. For instance I recall the time we were enjoying a drink in the post house pub, Eric dressed in his pink shirt, pink socks and pink pocket handkerchief in his light jacket, his usual attire, when a young lady approached us asking if we were "partners" to which Eric replied " No, he's me Dad", happy memories at my expense.

Eric's generosity knew no bounds both in a financial sense, he made very generous donations on my Mother's 100th birthday and passing occasions towards **The Derian House Children's Hospice**, which is situated in the heart of Lancashire.

Derian House provides palliative, specialist respite and end of life care for children and young adults throughout the North West region  
Charity number: 1005165 Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 1DH

Eric also supported former chorister **Stewart Hopkinson** when he held his *Senior Old Chorister's* event in aid of the Cathedral's music department. There were many other worthy causes which Eric supported.

His main contribution towards charity was his continuous work and duty for **cancer research** when as a member of his local area committee raised somewhere in the region of **three million pounds**, a feat that enabled them to receive a prestigious award in London as the area raising the most donations, a remarkable achievement. Incidentally Eric raised enormous amounts by hosting a quiz night every Wednesday at his local hostelry for many years.

On a private note, I feel and what I am conscious of, is these recollections would never have occurred if we had never joined our Cathedral choir all those years ago where our friendships were born, raised, developed and sustained by praising our dear Lord together as young boys, that have endured and will follow in his kingdom, I am sure.

One of Eric's and my favourite hymns is "*Angel voices ever singing*". What a great consideration to reflect upon when we approach the time when we will join *that* choir.

Eric, rest in peace, love and friendship. God bless. Allan.

*A few photos of Eric and Old Chorister friends:*



**Albert Ogden** (who joined the choir in 1938!) with **Eric Bancroft** and **Allan Holden** at an Old Choristers' photo exhibition which the then Senior Old Chorister, **David Smalley**, had arranged to raise funds for the Association.



OCs **Peter Fielding**, **Geoffrey Taylor** and **Eric Bancroft** at an Old Choristers' Reunion. All three were TLD choristers, and it shows!



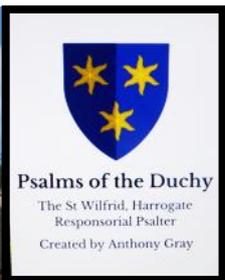
Share  
your news  
here!

Yes, Blackburn DoMs, Choristers and Scholars,  
past and present,  
we'd love to include **YOUR news** in our *M&M*  
magazine.

So please send it (with photos) to

[john.bertalot@gmail.com](mailto:john.bertalot@gmail.com) **Thanks!**

Heartiest congratulations to **former Blackburn Cathedral (Tanner) chorister ANTHONY GRAY** (who went on to become Organ Scholar of Bradford Cathedral, then Organ Scholar of Robinson College, Cambridge) who is now Director of Music of **the enormous church of St. Wilfrid, Harrogate** ... for he's just published the **ST WILFRID PSALTER** – which is a collection of psalms with chants and congregational refrains composed especially for it by 40 current composers.



**Anthony leads a busy creative life:** he is also the **Musical Director** of the Fairfax Singers, a 40-strong amateur choir based in Burley in Wharfedale, and he's an **Organ Tutor** for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Leeds, teaching in schools throughout North and West Yorkshire. He is also the Assistant Director of the **Florence International Singing Programme**. **Well done, Anthony!**

Heartiest congratulations to **former Blackburn Cathedral (Tanner) organ scholar, JUSTIN MILLER** who is now



Director of Music of **St. Matthew's Church, Northampton.**

That church's organ bench has launched the careers of at least **eight Cathedral Directors of Music:** Wells, New York, Llandaff, Blackburn, Norwich, Westminster Cathedral & King's, Peterborough, and Llandaff again.



Justin hails from the USA, but he has made his mark on the English

Cathedral scene, having held posts at 4 cathedrals: **Blackburn** of course, **Ripon**, **Winchester** and **Worcester**, where his choir-training skills and fabulous organ technique have thrilled many a choir and congregation.

And, despite the Covid situation, Justin had arranged a series of **St. Matthew's concerts** – for which only **70 tickets** would be available (to ensure self-distancing) which had to be **booked in advance** for carefully placed chairs. **They were sold out!!**

What a terrific programme **Justin arranged for the first concert with his wonderful soloist, Rhonda Browne:**

- Johannes Brahms: Von Ewiger Liebe & Die Mainacht
- Robert Schumann: Waldesgespräch & Widmung
- Richard Wagner: Der Engel & Träume
- Herbert Howells: King David
- She Moved Through the Fair - Traditional Irish
- Cole Porter: The tale of the oyster
- Liza Lehmann: There are Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden
- Jeremy Nicholas: The Usherette Blues
- Ivor Novello: We'll Gather Lilacs in the Spring
- Flanders & Swann: A Word on My Ear

**Piano solos:**

- Johannes Brahms: Intermezzo Op 118 no 2
- Clara Schumann: Nocturne Op 6 no 2



Here are Justin & Rhonda rehearsing:

[https://youtu.be/q6ZAUtGhK\\_M](https://youtu.be/q6ZAUtGhK_M)

**Well done, Justin!**

**CHORAL EVENSONG:  
COVENTRY CATHEDRAL  
15 October, 2020**

Rachel Mahon: Director. Harvey Stansfield: organ



Psalm 94 (Chant: JB)  
Canticles: John Wood  
Anthem: Doubt not thy Father's care – Elgar  
Postlude: Rhosymedre – R. Vaughan Williams

<https://www.facebook.com/coventrycathedral/videos/840855866653540/?sfnsn=scwspmo>

Rachel Mahon wrote to JB: We are also delighted that Harvey has started as organ scholar at Coventry Cathedral and look forward to what the rest of the year will bring.

