



SOLIHULL

Former Choristers' Association

Chapel Choir News 2013-2014

Gary Barlow's inspirational words 'Sing it louder, sing it clearer, knowing everyone will hear you'- performed this year by 40 of our choristers alongside the popstar- sum up the Chapel Choir's year 2013-14; perhaps the busiest yet for our young singers. From the LG Arena to the BBC airwaves, from a premiere performance in St Paul's Cathedral to the High Sheriff's Legal Year Service, our Chapel Choir has been heard far and wide while the Former Choristers' Association continues to grow.

High Sheriff's Annual Judicial Service

On 14 October we had the honour of singing in St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick, for the High Sheriff of Warwickshire's Annual Judicial Service to mark the start of the legal year. As well as the High Sheriff (himself a former member of staff at Solihull), notable attendees included the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, a High Court Judge, the Bishop of Coventry and many local dignitaries. The Chamber Choir, enhanced with trumpets and timpani, performed Handel's 'Zadok the Priest', James MacMillan's 'Give me Justice' and Britten's arrangement of the National Anthem. This was a thrilling occasion for all involved.



FUTURE EVENT

Russian Treasures with Tenebrae

On Friday 14 November at 7.30pm, leading professional choir Tenebrae directed by Nigel Short will perform their acclaimed programme of Russian Choral music in what promises to be a spell-binding evening in our Chapel. They will be joined for by our own Chamber Choir for a performance of Rachmaninov's 'Bogoroditsye Dyevo'.

Tickets for this event at £10, £12.50 and £15 will be available from Monday 22 September by contacting School Reception:

duggant@solsch.org.uk
0121 705 0958

Former Choristers' Association Meeting 2013

Following the launch of the Solihull Former Choristers' Association in 2012, the second annual meeting took place on 24 November 2013 in the form of a 'Come and Sing' Fauré's 'Requiem', combined with chamber orchestra and choirs from the local community. With over 200 singers coming together in the School Chapel, the sound was magnificent. Highlights of this event include solos by Former Choristers Clare Whiting, Jack Halsey and Sam Troth, violin playing by Former Chorister Jacqui Martens and a touching performance of Fauré's 'Élégie' by Dominic Martens. Preceded by a fun-filled lunch in the David Turnbull Music School, the occasion was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.



At the end of the 2013/2014 academic year we welcomed Dominic Martens, Chris Bevins, Ben Newman, Ben Piggan, Shashank Chaganty, Maddie Lavery, Hannah Butler and Katie Singleton into the Association and we hope to see them at many future events.

FUTURE EVENT

Mozart's 'Requiem' with Orchestra of the Swan

On 8 March the Chamber Choir will be joined by the Solihull School Choral Society, family, friends and local choirs for a massed performance of Mozart's masterpiece. We are delighted that the Stratford based Orchestra of the Swan will join us for what will be another rousing occasion in our Chapel.

We would be delighted if Former Choristers were able to join us for the day.

2-5pm Rehearsal
5pm Tea in the David Turnbull Music School
6.30pm Concert in Chapel

Please contact walkero@solsch.org.uk to sign up.

Girls' Choir visit to Lichfield Cathedral

On 28 November the Girls' Choir had the wonderful opportunity to sing Choral Evensong in Lichfield Cathedral. After looking around the glorious building they rehearsed in the Quire and sang to a friendly congregation of family and friends. The music included the 'Aviemore Service' of Pamela Davies (who also conducted), Aston's Responses and Stephen Cleobury's arrangement of 'Let all mortal flesh'. They sang exceptionally well and look forward to a return visit.

A Ceremony of Carols (and Oxbridge news)

During the Advent Carol Service in November the sopranos and altos of the Chamber Choir performed Britten's 'Ceremony of Carols' with Hungarian harpist, Rita Schindler. Combined with anthems and hymns sung by the remainder of the Choir, this made for a highly moving service. One highlight was the solo 'That yonge child' which was provided by Maddie Lavery. We congratulate Maddie who is soon to embark on her first year as a Choral Scholar at Worcester College, Oxford.

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

On 15 and 16 December the Chapel Choir was on top form for what is, for many, the highlight of the year. With the Chapel packed to the rafters on both nights the combined Choirs performed a mixture of seasonal music including Will Todd's 'My lord has come', Chilcott's 'Sussex Carol' and Jonathan Dove's riotous 'Run shepherds, run!'. Marking the death in November of Sir John Tavener, his 'The lamb' provided the musical centrepiece, a fitting tribute to the composer and the true meaning of this special time of the year. It is always wonderful to see so many Former Choristers at this event.

FUTURE EVENT

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

This year's Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will take place on Sunday 14 December at 6.30pm and Monday 15 December at 7.30pm. Music will include our newly commissioned 'Ave Maria' by Will Todd, music by Morten Lauridsen and traditional festive favourites.

Tickets will be available from 24 November via the School Office:

duggant@solsch.org.uk
0121 705 0958



BBC 'Daily Service' Broadcasts

On two occasions over the year various sections of the Chapel Choir have broadcast live to the nation via BBC's 'Daily Service' programme, reaching an audience of 250,000 on each occasion.

Firstly, on 21 January the Chamber Choir departed School at 6am to travel to St Emmanuel Church, Didsbury, to rehearse and perform Peter Nardone's 'I give to you a new commandment' as well as two hymns, conducted by Oliver Walker and accompanied by Philip Rushforth (Director of Music, Chester Cathedral). Similarly on 17 June the Girls' Choir, conducted by Pamela Davies, performed White's 'A prayer of St Richard of Chichester'. Hymns included 'From heaven you came' for which chorister Alex Sasse provided a moving cello descant.

FUTURE EVENT

BBC Daily Service

The Boys' Choir will broadcast their first live 'Daily Service' programme on Wednesday 19 November, 9.45am. Please tune in to BBC Radio 4 Longwave to hear glorious music and support them in this nerve-wracking experience.

The 'Solihull Service'

On 9 March 2013 the Chamber Choir gave the world premiere of the 'Solihull Service' (Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis) by Ben Parry. The work, especially written for our own Choir, is now published by Edition Peters and available to buy from their website. Ben Parry is currently the Director of the National Youth Choir of Great Britain and has worked with the world's leading choirs, as well as composing music for a whole range of artists and films. The music is rhythmically demanding, though the greatest challenge is for the organist. Congratulations to Peter Irving who tackled this superbly. We are very grateful to Former Chorister Philip Talboys for making this project possible.



FUTURE EVENT

'Ave Maria' by Will Todd

We are delighted that, through the generous support of the Solihull School Parents' Association, we have commissioned a new 'Ave Maria' by leading English composer Will Todd. This will have its first performance during Evensong in School Chapel on Sunday 7 December, 6.30pm, as well as during our Festivals of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Best known for his choral works, Will's jazz-inspired *Mass in Blue* has been performed more than 100 times since its 2003 premiere, and his anthem *The Call of Wisdom* was featured in the Diamond Jubilee Thanksgiving Service.

Choral Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral

On 10 March 2013 the Chamber Choir made a return visit to sing Choral Evensong in this magnificent building. Music included our new 'Solihull Service' by Ben Parry, Elgar's 'The spirit of the Lord' and Ayleward's Responses. The Choir was conducted by Oliver Walker with Peter Irving playing the organ. It was very good to see many Former Choristers at the service, as well as a drinks reception afterwards.



FUTURE EVENT

Choral Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral

On Tuesday 24 February 2015 at 5.00pm, the Chamber Choir will return to St Paul's Cathedral to sing Choral Evensong. This will be followed by a drinks reception for Former Choristers. Further details to be announced.

Gary Barlow

Over two evenings in April, 40 members of the Chapel Choir performed onstage at the LG Arena in front of a total of 26,000 people, alongside Gary Barlow and his band. They had been invited to perform his hit single 'Sing', written with Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, as part of his UK tour. This unforgettable experience came about with only two week's notice and we are delighted that Old Silhilian and Former Chorister Richard Lucas was engaged to create a documentary about the event's preparations; this can easily be found on youtube, as can countless videos of the two performances. Congratulations must go to Ellie Ajao and Georgina Dolby for beating off much competition for the solos which were performed brilliantly.



Farewell to Pamela Davies

It was in the spirit of gratitude, sadness and celebration that the combined Girls' and Chamber Choir came together with former choristers for the final service of the year to mark the retirement of Pamela Davies who has given much time, expertise and energy as Choirmistress over many years. Peter Irving and I are tremendously grateful to her for her support and we will all miss her. We are delighted that Pamela will continue to teach at Solihull on a peripatetic basis.

And finally....

Chapel services continue to be sung every Sunday evening at 6.30pm during termtime. If you are in the area, please do come along and say hello; you are guaranteed a warm welcome.