



St. Albans Cathedral Ex-Choristers' Association

Affiliated to the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Associations



Chairman's Report for the year ended 30th June 2013

My annual report usually covers a period from 1st July to 30th June the following year but so much has happened in 2013 it would be amiss not to mention all the activities that have occurred to date.

I begin my report this year on a note of sadness that whilst the health of our President, Peter Hurford, is stable sadly it will not improve and our thoughts and prayers are with Pat and the family.

The ECA has had another eventful year.

Our membership numbers continue to increase as valedicted choristers of both choirs join the association and we continue identify and locate 'old choristers!' We now have nearly 600 names recorded on our database.

We have continued to publish Alban Notes on a quarterly basis and I am very grateful to our Honorary Secretary for editing and generally improving my drafts. Circulation is broadening to include current lay clerks and our clergy – I believe it's important that they know what we're doing.

Earlier in the year current lay clerk Simon Colston decided to hand back the reins on the IT and Finance management of the Association after some six years excellent and professional service. We are delighted that Tony Price has stepped up to take over the IT Role and John Meager the role of Honorary Treasurer – he is also now our Vice Chairman.

I hope you have accessed our improved Website which has been re-designed and upgraded by Tony. The website is an important communication to and on average we have around 90 hits every month.

The main event of the year was, of course, the ECA Concert in the Nave on Saturday 22nd September. The concert featuring the Abbey Girls Choir with their Director, Tom Winpenny and Exquire was conducted by David Ireson and we were very fortunate to have tremendous support from former musicians – Hannah Watts, Bex Muhley, Emily Knight, Claire Innes-Hopkins, Tom Semple, Andrew Parnell, Stephen Charlesworth and Rogers Covey-Crump - their individual performances contributed to a varied programme which was much appreciated by the audience. Sadly as many of you will recall I was in hospital having my appendix removed but I was grateful for to John Meager, Laura Hicks and Maureen Adams for ensuring that the evening went smoothly.

I am disappointed that we will not be able to continue our biennial concerts in 2014 – there are no available dates in the Cathedral diary.

Two events that I must mention that fall outside the reporting period and will also be included in next year's report.

The first Ex-Choristers' Camp at Luccombe took place early July and was a tremendous success, mainly due to the excellent organisation of Tony & Ros De Rivas and some splendid weather. The traditional walk to Dunkery Beacon and a swim at Cow Castle, not to mention the very moving Last Post played by Mike Hurford brought back some great memories of years past. Your new committee will be looking at a further camp as an agenda item for 2014.

The other event was the marriage of Tom & Gemma Winpenny and we wish them good health and happiness in the future.

During the current year an enormous amount of planning work has been undertaken for the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations (or the FCOCA) festival being hosted by the ECA in a couple of weeks time. The festival will be attended by around 80 delegates from cathedrals and collegiate choral foundations in the UK and Eire. This is an opportunity to showcase our Cathedral Choirs and the achievements of our own Association.

Looking to the future we have our biennial reunion in July 2014 when we will issue an updated Members' Year Book and in 2016 we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Abbey Girls Choir when we hope to be able to bring many former girl choristers back to the Cathedral.

Finally, I should like to thank the outgoing committee for their tremendous efforts and encouragement over the last year and also Andrew Lucas and the Music Department, and Anna McCrum, Dean's PA without whose support our Association would find it difficult to flourish.

Thank you.

Malcolm Bury – Chairman

8th September 2013