



THE CATHEDRAL AND  
ABBEY CHURCH OF  
SAINT ALBAN

# ALBAN NOTES

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Ex-Choristers' Association  
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Issue 33 (Q3 2015)

*Affiliated to the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Associations*

## From the Chairman

On Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> November there will be a '**Veteran's Gaudy**' day for those who sang in the choir or were cathedral musicians during the years 1950 to 1985, or before, and their spouses/partners.

A very successful veteran's lunch (for the over 70s) was held a few years ago and we hope that many former choristers, lay clerks and musicians will once again participate in this special day. The ECA has not held an event for some time so this is a very good opportunity to meet up with old friends and to meet members of the ECA Committee.

**Please see the form below which should be returned to the Chairman by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October.**

## Other important dates for the diary

### 5<sup>th</sup> June 2016 – Exquire Choral Eucharist and Biennial Re-union

The Cathedral Diary Planning Committee has very kindly agreed that Exquire (our ECA choir) may sing the service of Choral Eucharist on Sunday **5<sup>th</sup> June 2016** so please put this date in your diary **NOW**.

**This will replace our normal biennial reunion service of Choral Evensong.** Invitations will be sent out early next year and we hope for a good response from former Cathedral Choristers and Abbey Girls, including current Abbey Singers, and Lay Clerks. The service will be followed by drinks and lunch (and possibly a very quick AGM). More details to follow but if you wish to sing with Exquire then please register your interest with the Chairman by email or telephone (01296 630169) as soon as possible.

### 25<sup>th</sup> June 2016 - AGC 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

This will be a social occasion for ECA members and we hope that many former Abbey Girl Choristers will participate on this special occasion.

## Members' News

We welcome the following ex-choristers to the ECA. They completed their service with the choir in the summer term. From the Cathedral Choir; **Eric Kocharyan, Tom Pazzi-Axworthy, Rory Hall, Thomas Johnson, George Throup** and **Gus McMahon**, and from the Abbey Girls Choir; **Emily Price, Louisa Kataria** and **Fiona Snelling**. We look forward to meeting them at a future event.

We also welcome tenor lay clerks **Nick Arratoon** and **Benjamin Goodson** who have completed their service.

## Cathedral Choir News

Once again the Cathedral Choir has excelled with a brilliant service of Choral Evensong which was broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, to celebrate the Feast of the Birth of John the Baptist. The Service was directed by the Master of the Music, Andrew Lucas with Tom Winpenny, Assistant Master of the Music, playing the organ. The Precentor was Fr Paul Arbuthnot.

The Order of Service, which rather uniquely had no announcements, included:

Introit: The great forerunner of the morn, by Vaughan Williams (Oli Martin Smith as tenor soloist)

Preces & Responses: Bernard Rose

Psalm: 80 (Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel) and 82 (God standeth in the congregation of princes)

Hymn: On this high Feast Day (Coelites Plaudant)

Canticles: Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis in A, by Edward Naylor

Anthem: Vox Dicentis, by Edward Naylor (Oli Martin Smith, tenor and Freddie Pazzi-Axworthy, treble).

The service was made even more exciting with the choir being augmented by additional lay clerks – 6 altos, 5 tenors and 5 basses – a master stroke by the Master.

A recording of the service has been placed in the Cathedral Choirs' sound archives, a copy of which is available for private use.

## Choir visit to Hildesheim

During the May half-term holidays the Cathedral Choir toured Germany giving concerts in several locations, including Hildesheim, where the original of the St Albans Psalter is kept. The trebles are shown here in their Cathedral Choir fleeces.



## Bad News & Good News



It is with very mixed feelings that we say goodbye to **Gemma Winpenny**, Music Department Secretary, who is moving *'onwards and upwards'* to become Liturgical Administrator and PA to the Canon Precentor at St Paul's Cathedral with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October. Gemma has been a great supporter of the Ex-Choristers' Association and has always been willing to offer assistance, advice and guidance when we have held concerts, reunions and social events at the Cathedral.

We wish Gemma every success in her new and challenging role at St Paul's.

## Organ Scholar

We welcome **Nicholas Freestone** as Organ Scholar at the Cathedral for 2015-16. Nicholas will accompany the Abbey Girls Choir and the Abbey Singers and also assist with the Cathedral Choir and the training of the probationers for both choirs. Nicholas is also accompanist to the St Albans Bach Choir and organist for St Albans School.

Nicholas is a graduate of the University of Oxford, where he held the organ scholarship at Worcester College between 2011 and 2014. He was responsible for the day-to-day running of the college's chapel music, including training the college's boy trebles and sharing in the direction and accompaniment of the college choirs in four choral services each week.



**Nicholas Freestone**

Upon graduating, Nicholas spent a year as Senior Organ Scholar at Wells Cathedral. He was also Assistant Director of the Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society and Musical Director of the Mid-Wessex Singers. Prior to commencing his university studies, Nicholas held the organ scholarship of Tewkesbury Abbey.



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## **ECA Veteran's 'Gaudy'**

Some of you may recall that in 2010 a 'Seniors' Lunch' was held at The Chequers Inn in Redbourn, Hertfordshire and was attended by around 20 former choristers and lay clerks over 65, and their spouses/ partners and also Peter and Pat Hurford. It was a splendid occasion and our 'old choristers' were able to catch up with colleagues whom they had not seen for many years.

Building on this very enjoyable event, if you sang in the Cathedral Choir in, or prior to, 1965 or you are a former chorister, lay clerk or member of the music staff over and 65, then you are cordially invited to a 'Veteran's Gaudy' on **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November**.

The programme for the day, commencing at 11.30 am will include:

- An exhibition of the Cathedral Choirs Archive, including choir photos and a chance to listen to some early choir recordings, and a short talk about the archive projects.
- Lunch, to be confirmed / and depending on numbers, will be in either the Abbots Kitchen or Cafe Rouge opposite Sumpter Yard on Holywell Hill.
- Choral Evensong at 4.00pm followed by an IOFS Organ Recital by the Danish organist, Bine Bryndorf, or an optional visit to the lay clerks' hostelry, the White Hart. This event is not a formal reunion so we will not be singing alongside the Cathedral Choir.

The arrangements for the lunch will be as before in that each person/couple pays for what they choose from the menu and I envisage that a two-course lunch will cost no more than £10-15 pp plus drinks.

The ECA has not held an event for some time so this is a very good opportunity to meet up with old friends and to meet members of the ECA Committee.

If you wish to attend this "Veteran's Gaudy" then please return this form by email attachment to [malcolm.bury@stalbanseca.org](mailto:malcolm.bury@stalbanseca.org) or by post to Malcolm Bury, 23 Long Plough, Aston Clinton, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5HB by no later **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October**.

If you are an ex-Abbey Girl Chorister (none of whom are 65!) or a chorister or lay clerk under 65 then do not despair, the ECA committee is working on events which, we hope, will appeal to younger ECA members and a "Girls day out" to coincide with the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the Abbey Girls Choir which will be held in the Abbey on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

Thank you.

Malcolm Bury - Chairman

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To: The Chairman ([malcolm.bury@stalbanseca.org](mailto:malcolm.bury@stalbanseca.org))

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*I/We wish/do not wish** to attend the 'Veteran's Gaudy' on **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November**.

Name of spouse/partner: \_\_\_\_\_