



ALBAN NOTES

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Affiliated to the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Associations

From the Chairman:

My apologies for this late edition of Alban Notes. Recent months have been dominated by family matters which has meant that I have been unable to focus fully on the Ex-Choristers' Association.

However, it is pleasing to be able to report that we had a very successful Biennial Reunion on Sunday 5th June when Exquire, comprising some 28 former choristers (soprano and treble) and lay clerks, sang the Service of Choral Eucharist. David Ireson conducted the choir for Herbert Sumsion's *Leicester Service* and Andrew Parnell's anthem, *Oculi omnium* – Andrew also played the organ for the service.



Father Neil Kelley

The Preacher at the Eucharist was The Reverend Neil Kelley, Rector of Bushey. Fr Neil was the first Organ Scholar at St Albans Cathedral from 1983 to 1984 when Stephen Darlington was Master of the Music.

The service was followed by drinks & snacks in the Crypt, kindly managed by Moira and Paul Dean, and the ECA Annual General Meeting, which was attended by over 20 members.

The Chairman submitted his report (available on the ECA website) together with the Financial Statement prepared by Honorary Treasurer, John Meager

The Dean commented that the music at the service had been well led by Exquire and if the ECA could produce such music on a regular basis then a request to sing another service in 2017 would be favourably received.

Items discussed at the meeting included the continued vacancy for the position of Honorary Secretary and also Honorary Treasurer with John Meager expressing his wish to stand down. A further ECA Camp at Luccombe in 2017 with the likelihood of the weekend of 28th/30th July being the preferred dates.

New Committee Member - Richard Lilley – Cathedral Choir Representative 1980s

We welcome Richard Lilley to the Committee, Richard was a Chorister when Stephen Darlington was Master of the Music, becoming a probationer in 1979 and retiring as Head Chorister in 1984.

With fond memories of Choir Camp he maintained contact for many years, often taking holiday to coincide with camp.

A career with Hertfordshire Constabulary and its shift work took him away from pursuing music but did provide him the opportunity to meet Gill, a colleague who became his wife. Richard and Gill (coincidentally with family ties to Minehead) were married at St. Mary's, Luccombe during choir camp in 2000. They still live in Hertfordshire with their two children who attend school in Harpenden.



He has recently joined St. Albans Bach Choir, singing Tenor, and was elected to the ECA management committee in June 2016.

In the early 1980s Richard's father, Brian, was instrumental in initiating, and presided over, an "Old Choristers' Day" attended by over 50 former choristers and where messages from Her Majesty The Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury were read. Following this meeting "The Association of Former Choristers of the Cathedral and Abbey Church of Saint Alban" was established.

Evensong to mark 20 years of the Abbey Girls Choir (Quire)

On Saturday 25th June the Abbey Girls Choir celebrated their 20th anniversary with a special Service of Choral Evensong where they were joined by the Lay Clerks and former Abbey Girl Choristers.

Music included a specially commissioned introit, "Holy Innocents" by Judith Weir which was partially sponsored by the Ex-Choristers Association, the canticles The Jesus College Service by William Mathias and the anthem "Ave Maria" by Gustav Holst.

A reception was held in the North Transept at which the Abbey Girls Choir Director, Tom paid tribute to the achievements of the choir and former director Simon Johnson and Founder-director Andrew Parnell. Andrew also gave a brief, but illuminating, talk on the early history of the Girls Choir and how it flourished during the first few years.



Abbey Girls Choir and Lay Clerks rehearsing with Director, Tom Winpenny



**Andrew Parnell
Founder-director of the Abbey Girls Choir**



Photographs: Malcolm Bury

**The Abbey Girls Choir with former Abbey Girl Choristers
Andrew Lucas (Master of the Music), Simon Johnson, Judith Weir CBE,
The Rev'd Berkeley Zych (Precentor), The Very Rev'd Jeffrey John, Dean of St Albans,
Tom Winpenny and Andrew Parnell**