



# ALBAN NOTES

ST. ALBANS  
CATHEDRAL

St Albans Cathedral Ex-Choristers Association  
THE CATHEDRAL AND ABBEY CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN

Affiliated to the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Associations

Issue 49 – Autumn Term 2019

## Message from the Chairman

I hope you and your families enjoyed a pleasant Christmas and New Year celebrations marking the start of the decade. The Autumn Term is always a busy one for the Cathedral Choirs, leading to an increasingly busy schedule once December arrives. I hope you enjoy reading the review provided by Andrew Lucas, the Master of the Music, below.

The Cathedral itself has been particularly busy during the same period, with the medieval wall paintings in the Nave being brought to life using modern technology from September, and a Space Voyage exhibition between 28<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November. (Follow these links for more information - [Wall Paintings](#) and [Space Voyage](#)).

You can keep up to date with news and events at the Cathedral by following their website or by looking at the current edition of [Abbey News](#).

I chaired a management committee meeting in November during which we discussed plans and opportunities for 2020 which are now well underway. Following the death of our President, Peter Hurford, one of my priorities was to address the vacancy. With the agreement of the committee I was delighted to invite **Dr Stephen Darlington MBE** to become our President, and I am pleased to announce he accepted. His appointment provided an opportunity for a new Vice President which I am very pleased to announce has been taken by **Andrew Parnell**.

Finally, to ensure the ECA is well positioned to sustain a long future, it gives me great pleasure to inform you that **Rogers Covey-Crump** has accepted our invitation to become an Honorary Member. I look forward to introducing you all to Stephen, Andrew and Rogers at our forthcoming events.

You will find the minutes from our AGM and amendments to our Constitution on the website. The Constitution now includes changes to reflect the name change to the Cathedral Girls Choir as explained by Andrew Lucas, later in this edition of Alban Notes.

## Choral Evensong in memory of Peter Hurford

We have been asked by the Hurford family if the ECA would be willing to celebrate the life of Peter at Luccombe this coming summer. Peter was born in Minehead where he was educated as a child. He learnt to play the organ at St. Michaels Church, in the old town of Minehead and also played



St Alban & St Amphibulus



the organ at St. Mary's Church, Luccombe in his youth. It is not difficult to realise why he chose this part of West Somerset to establish the annual Choir Camp in 1958.

I anticipate we will sing Choral Evensong at 3pm on **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September** which will bring to a close a weekend in which all members are welcome to participate. The usual field will be available for those who wish to bring a tent or caravan, but there are many guest houses and hotels within a few miles. Further details will be sent out nearer the time but please keep the weekend of 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September free.

## Choir News

In the autumn term the Cathedral Choirs were involved in two broadcasts of Choral Evensong on consecutive days in October, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, just before half term. The first was a recording by the Cathedral Choir (boys and men) of a service that has just been broadcast (on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020). The basis of the musical structure of the service was to honour the memory of Peter Hurford, so we sang two pieces by him ("The Holy Son of God" and "Truly the Lord is in this place") and Tom Winpenny played two movements from his Suite for organ "Laudate Dominum".

The anthem was a work commissioned by Peter for the IOF in 1975 by John Joubert ("Lord make me a channel of your piece") that has rarely been performed since, and I included Howells' Gloucester Service, which I know Peter particularly enjoyed (he broadcast these canticles in the year he covered George Guest's sabbatical at St John's Cambridge).

The following day, the senior boys were joined by the senior girls and the Lay Clerks to do a live broadcast, which was all different music, of course. It was particularly tiring for the older boys and the lay clerks to do both, but this is the pattern for the future with BBC broadcasts, which are constantly under threat from ever constrained budgets, so doing "two for the price of one" in terms of broadcast set up and engineering makes sense.

At the end of term, the same boys and girls sang in the two Carol Services, as last year. It is a formula that works well, both spreading the burden and creating opportunity, and it is now established as tradition. This gave us also the opportunity to reallocate the services between the choirs on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The boys sang a Christmas Eve Evensong with carols and then Midnight Mass, whilst the girls got up on Christmas Day and sang at the Parish Eucharist and Matins. It is certainly better for both sets of children to focus their attention and energies into one day, rather than across two.

Finally, after 25 years it became necessary to replace the girls robes with new ones, and the opportunity was taken to dress the girls in the same style of robes as the boys and men (red cassocks and surplices, rather than white cassocks and red tabards) from the start of term. This, along with a subtle but significant name change to Cathedral Girls Choir more accurately reflects the status and incorporation of the girls choir into the full musical life of the cathedral's music.

**Andrew Lucas**  
*Master of the Music*



## Member News

On 23<sup>rd</sup> December, the former choristers of the Abbey Singers (joined by a few lay clerks) sang their now traditional Christmas Evensong.



*The Abbey Singers with Organ Scholar, Marko Sever (front centre).*

The canticles were a setting by Charles Wood in D and the anthem was "*Christe, Redemptor Omnium*" by Matthew Martin.

### Organ Scholar

In September 2020, Marko Sever will be moving on from St Albans to take up the post of Organ Scholar at Westminster Cathedral. Although he will be leaving us, Marko tells us he will fondly look back on his time at St Albans, especially the people, and in particular, the Probationers he taught theory to, and the Abbey Singers, whose relentless sharp wit on Tuesday evenings he will miss!

### Mark Bushby RIP

It is with sadness that we inform you of the death at the end of the year of former lay clerk Mark Bushby (tenor 2002 to 2004). He was a fine singer, inspiring teacher and good friend to many. A concert in his memory is being organised (not by the ECA) on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May at St Mark's, Hamilton Terrace, London NW8 9UT, starting at 7pm. Tickets are £20 and all funds will be donated to the Sport in Mind charity in Mark's honour.

## 2020 Yearbook

Later this year we will be producing the ECA Yearbook. Please could I urge all members to review the member records on the website ([www.stalbanseca.org/member-records](http://www.stalbanseca.org/member-records)), particularly their own, and let me know of any updates or amendments. If you would like to provide an extended biography, particularly if you have pursued a career in music, please let me know.

## Committee News

Your Management Committee are meeting on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in the Deanery to progress plans for this year. There are vacancies for representatives of the Abbey Girls Choir and for representatives from the Cathedral Choir for 2000 and onwards.

Should you be interested in seeing and supporting what goes on behind the scenes, to keep our ECA current and interesting to all members, please let me know. You would be welcome to attend the meeting, to contribute your ideas, with no obligation of becoming a committee member unless you would like to volunteer. I would like to ensure our ECA is sustainable for all, regardless of gender or age.

## Dates for the Diary

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

*Cathedral Choir Concert*  
St Etheldreda's, Hatfield at 7pm

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020**

*Cathedral Girls Choir Concert*  
St John's, Harpenden at 3.30pm

*The ECA has been asked to sing for the following services:*

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

*Corpus Christi at 8pm*

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

*Choral Evensong in memory of Peter Hurford*  
St. Mary's Church, Luccombe

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020**

*All Saints Day Choral Eucharist 11:15am*

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

*Ash Wednesday at 8pm*

*Please make a note of these dates and look out for reminders and details of rehearsals in forthcoming editions of Alban Notes. Your support at such events is very much appreciated.*

## ECA Website - Facebook - Twitter

Our website can be found here - [www.StAlbansECA.org](http://www.StAlbansECA.org). We also have a [Facebook page](#) and we are also on Twitter - [@StAlbansECA](#). Please follow, like, re-tweet and comment, or just keep up to date.

