

eNotes

Singing together in Sherborne

West Dorset was our destination on Sunday 1 May, when we joined forces with Sherborne Abbey Choir to sing Choral Evensong.

Although heavy showers had been forecast, rain held off and enabled the boys to let off steam between the rehearsal and service with a football match on the green outside Sherborne Abbey.

The music comprised favourites from our repertoire: the Evening Service in C by Charles Villiers Stanford, the *Evening Hymn* by Henry Balfour Gardiner and the Responses by Bernard Rose. It was conducted by Paul Ellis, Director of Music at Sherborne Abbey; Canon Eric Woods, Vicar of Sherborne, presided. Afterwards, the choirs processed outside for a photo to mark the occasion.

The afternoon concluded with a tea generously provided by Sherborne Mother's Union and Abbey Choir parents.

Robert Fielding thanked them for it and continued: 'We greatly value our link with Sherborne Abbey, which has now been going strong for a decade. It is always a pleasure to make music together and we look forward to entertaining our friends from Dorset in November.'

❖ You can see more photos online from the afternoon at www.romseyabbeychoir.org.uk.

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Two Abbey Choirs outside Sherborne Abbey

Robert Fielding writes...

The Summer term is a good opportunity to assess where we are and where we are going. We have just had a short break after a busy Holy Week and have a few relatively straightforward weeks ahead. The boys are able to play football before their practices begin on Mondays and Thursdays; the light evenings make such a difference as we come out into the warm sunshine after working hard.

With thoughts turning to our visit to Wells Cathedral and the high standards of singing required there, work is now in progress on singing technique, sight-reading, watching and listening. This is no less important in early July, when the boys take part in a performance of *St. Nicholas*, by Benjamin Britten, with Romsey Choral Society.

Seven new probationers, Jack Bartlett, Oliver Corbett, George Duncan, Jacob Fisher, Oliver Harper-Adams, Henry Roberts and Charles Thomas, are settling in well. We said a sad farewell last term to probationer Michael Stewart and to Head Chorister Peter Newman. Peter has been a strong leader of Cantoris and a committed member of the choir since joining on 4 April 2005: seven years service – and this with other commitments (not least cricket) competing for his time. I will always remember Peter for his strong lead in our hymns and for his open and honest character with a wicked sense of humour!

Promotions this term include Barnaby Taylor as Head Chorister and Nicholas Newman as Team Leader, both

on Cantoris (the choir stalls on the left-hand side if you are facing towards the altar).

Adrian Taylor is providing us with very musical organ accompaniments and relieved that some of the new music he has had to learn is now making a second appearance on the lists!

Joe Lindsey and Nathaniel Taylor were admitted as Choristers on 15 May. Both are on crutches after accidents. I would like to scotch rumours that this is an initiation they have had to go through to get their surplises!

Choral Evensong at Christchurch

On Sunday 3 April, Mothering Sunday, we paid our first visit to Christchurch Priory for many years, where we sang Choral Evensong with its choir. A game of football in the grounds of Priory House kicked off the afternoon before a joint rehearsal., Christchurch Choir mums then provided a splendid tea.

Led by the Vicar of Christchurch, the Reverend Christopher Mann, the service comprised Stanford in B flat, *O for a closer walk with God*, also by Stanford, and the Rose responses.

Meanwhile, back at the Abbey, Evensong was sung by the Abbey Girls' Choir and singers from St. Mary's Church, Southampton, as described opposite by Daphne.



Adrian Taylor referees the football match before the rehearsal

Concert, compline and Choral Evensong – a busy term for the girls

Daphne Lindsay writes

Last term was a busy one for the girls, the highlight of which was their successful concert on 25 March. The girls achieved a high standard of singing in the choral items, which included favourites by John Rutter and Malcolm Archer, as well as moving performances of two Negro Spirituals. The penultimate item was Mozart's *Laudate Dominum*, in which the audience enjoyed the difficult solo sung beautifully by Georgie Wyatt.

During the concert, several competent soloists sang a variety of secular songs, from Handel to Lloyd Webber. We extend our grateful thanks to Tim Rogerson for his sensitive accompaniment on the organ of the choral items. CDs of the concert will be on sale very soon, priced at £12 each.

On the first Sunday in April the girls were joined by singers from St. Mary's Southampton and some men from our 'special' choir, for a Choral Evensong in the Abbey. This was a return visit following the Girls' Choirs' visit to St. Mary's for a joint Choral Evensong in January. Jeffrey Williams accompanied the choirs on the organ and Tim Rogerson played the final voluntary. The music included *Sunsion in G* and *God so loved the world* from *The Crucifixion* by Sir John Stainer.

The following Wednesday a small group of the girls sang a service of Compline by candlelight, in the Abbey. This was a lovely service, the only difficulty being the lack of daylight towards the end of the service, which made reading the music quite difficult! Despite this the girls sang beautifully.

Dates for your diary

Important services

29 May	6.30 pm	Choral Evensong and Rogation procession to the fields
2 Jun	7.30 pm	Sung Eucharist for the Feast of the Ascension sung by the girls, boys and men
12 Jun	6.30 pm	Choral Evensong for Pentecost
19 Jun	6.30 pm	Evensong for Trinity Sunday
3 Jul	10 am	Sung Eucharist and farewell to Daphne
10 Jul	6.30 pm	Special service focusing on the King James Bible
24 Jul	6.30 pm	Choral Evensong
25-28 Aug		Choir singing in Wells Cathedral

Social events and concerts

17 Jun	7pm	FORAC Quiz in the Church Rooms. £5/head to include a ploughmans supper (please bring your own drinks)
2 Jul	7.30 pm	Boys singing in Benjamin Britten's St. Nicholas with Romsey Choral Society

The term ended with the girls joining the men and boys for the Easter Day Service, where the new choir stalls, which the girls used, were dedicated.

❖ *Sadly, Daphne's time as Director of the Girl's Choir comes to an end this term. Do come along to her final service, the Sung Eucharist, on 3 July, to wish her well.*

And finally

Congratulations to Jon de Sausmarez, former Cantoris bass, on starting earlier this year as Executive Head of The Romsey School.