

NOTES



GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

Review of
2022/2023
Academic Year



Stag Hill Philharmonic Orchestra at JtoB

Multi-talented

Our choristers and Lay Clerks don't just sing, and our organists don't just accompany services. There is much more to our musicians. Here is a snapshot from across the year showing a different side to their skills.

Last December, we were delighted to be able to hold our Christmas Eve nativity service, *Journey to Bethlehem* for the first time since the end of the pandemic. This has always been a popular service with local families and this year was no different. With a packed Cathedral celebrating Christmas, some of our choristers played in the Stag Hill Philharmonic Orchestra that provided the music for this joy-filled service.

Sunday 2 October and Sunday 5 February gave the girls and boys respectively another opportunity to showcase their talents in an informal instrumental concert following the 9.45 Eucharist. Members of the congregation were serenaded while they enjoyed their time of fellowship over coffee at the West End of the Nave.

Most commonly at Guildford Cathedral, the organ is used to accompany and enhance acts of worship and ceremonies, and while the voluntary at the end of the service often attracts applause, the organ is a versatile instrument beyond its use in liturgy. At Guildford Cathedral, we are fortunate to have three musicians who can play sensitively as liturgical organists and who can also provide entertainment with quality music in a solo concert. Katherine

has travelled across the country to give recitals in other Cathedrals. Richard recorded and released a CD of organ music. And this year's organ scholar to 2022/23 Organ Scholar, Marcus, gave two solo concerts. In March, Marcus played for the monthly coffee concert, switching between piano and organ and attracting one of the biggest audiences to a coffee concert since pre-pandemic times. In July, Marcus played his valedictory concert utilising almost every stop of the magnificent organ.



Marcus' Valedictory Concert

Out and about



Guildford visit Winchester

We appreciate our choir enormously, so it is good to share their musicmaking with others. This academic year 2022-23 we joined up with the girls and Lay Clerks of Winchester Cathedral.

On Saturday 5 November, Guildford visited Winchester and on Sunday 14 May, Winchester came to Guildford. Taking two

such talented groups of people and combining forces brings out the best in both choirs and leads to outstanding music.

On 15 November the girl choristers enjoyed a day of workshops in Cambridge, visiting St. John's College, Selwyn College and ending in Clare College where they joined with that chapel choir to sing Choral evensong'

On Sunday 5 February we joined with visiting choristers from Croydon Minster with a return visit planned next year. Each term the Cathedral choir visits churches in the diocese. In December, we visited St. Nicolas' Church just ahead of their patronal festival, in March we returned to Shalford parish church and in June we sang a joint Evensong at Holy Trinity.

The girl choristers spent a day at St. Catherine's School, Bramley, by kind permission of the Head, Alice Phillips. This was enjoyed by all and gave an opportunity for them to give a concert in the Anniversary Halls on Saturday 25 February.

Out and about 2022 and 2023

Saturday 5 November 2022
Winchester Cathedral, Girls
and Lay Clerks

Tuesday 15 November 2022
Clare College, Cambridge,
Choral Evensong

Sunday 4 December 2022
The Cathedral choir sang its termly
diocesan service at St. Nicolas'
Church, Guildford in advance of that
parish church's patronal festival.

Sunday 5 February 2023
Evensong with the choir of
Croydon Minster

Saturday 25 February 2023
Residential day at St. Catherine's



Sunday 14 May 2023
Winchester visited us
Further special services took place on

Sunday 12 March 2023
Evensong was sung in the diocese of
Guildford at Shalford parish church.

Sunday 18 June 2023
Evensong with Holy Trinity Choir and
the Cathedral Choir at Holy Trinity

Special visitors

All our services are open to all and across the year we get thousands of people joining us for services either in person or online. Occasionally we invite a specific group of people to join us. One notable instance included Thursday 13 October where we extended an invite to Royal Grammar School parents and staff to join us. It was a wonderful occasion as they sang Evensong from within the choir stalls along side their children/pupils. On St Cecilia's Day (patron saint of music), we were joined

by the Association of Assistant Cathedral Organists for a beautiful Evensong sung by the boy choristers and Lay Clerks. And on 10 January the pre prep choir and parents were invited to Evensong and the pre prep choir sang the anthem wonderfully. The future of the choir is in good hands!

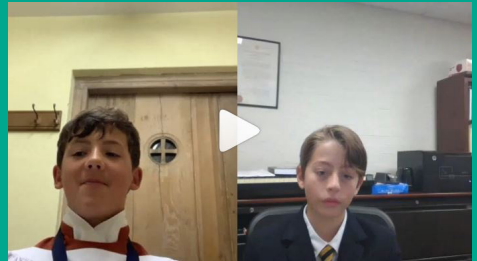
The boy choristers stay singing with us until their voice changes. Across the year, we enjoy inviting back ex-boy choristers to sing with our Lay Clerks in Changed Voices Evensongs.

Beyond these four walls...

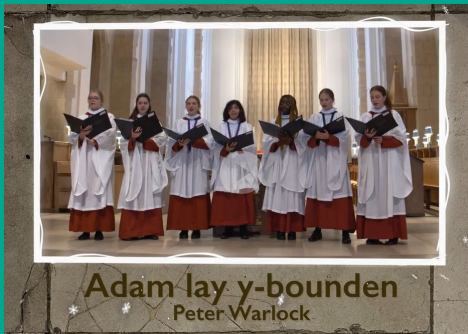
Although Stag Hill is our home, our music reaches much further. Maybe you've heard us out and about?

International Chorister Day

Choristers are like a second family, but being a chorister is an experience that only a small number of children get. So to celebrate International Chorister day, it was fantastic to link up with choristers from around the world. Some of our own choristers compared their experiences with those in other countries. Turns out, they have a lot in common!



Advent Calendar



In the run up to Christmas, it has become tradition to open a flap to get a treat, whether that be a picture, a chocolate, or, more recently, just about anything you can think of. For the second year running, Guildford Cathedral posted our own advent calendar on social media, giving our followers the joy of hearing our musicians give a snapshot every day in advent. This musical version

of the traditional advent calendar gave our followers something to look forward to each day and built up the anticipation for our musical offerings over the season.

Talent recognised

We know that our choristers are amazing and incredibly talented, so it was fantastic to have that recognised by none other than John Rutter himself. Our Head Boy and Head Girl Choristers, Arthur and Ruby, were chosen to sing at the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in John Rutter's Christmas Celebration. There were two performances, so the rest of the choristers and many of the congregation were able to go and cheer them on, and even join in the sing-a-long of well-known carols, showing just how much talent Guildford Cathedral Choir has.





GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

BBC RECORDING and broadcast

TUESDAY 7 MARCH, 5.30pm

The BBC will be recording a service here that will be broadcast on Mothering Sunday. The service will last an hour and you are cordially invited to attend as a member of the congregation.

ARRIVE AT **5pm**
BE SEATED BY **5.15pm**

www.guildford-cathedral.org



GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

BBC RECORDING and broadcast

WEDNESDAY 8 MARCH, 4pm

The BBC will be broadcasting Evensong live on Radio 3 from here. The service will last an hour and you are cordially invited to attend as a member of the congregation.

ARRIVE AT **3.30pm**
BE SEATED BY **3.45pm**

www.guildford-cathedral.org



On the Radio

In the last year, our choristers have been heard on the radio not once, but twice! Our boy choristers and lay clerks were recorded and broadcast for BBC Radio 4 Sunday Morning Worship on Mothering Sunday. This broadcast attracted listeners and compliments from all around the world and was also broadcast on BBC Radio Surrey and BBC Radio Sussex, interrupting their normal service.

Our girl choristers and layclerks were then broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. They sang Choral Evensong in celebration of International Women's Day in March featuring music by female composers from five continents.

Every year, the Bach Choir performs the St Matthew Passion by J.S. Bach at the Royal Festival Hall on Palm Sunday. This year, our girl choristers travelled up to be part of the ripieno choir together with choristers from Southwark Cathedral and St. Alban's Abbey, an integral part of this magnificent work of art. Combined with double choir, each with its own continuo, double orchestra, and six soloists, this work is a powerful statement of quality music, whilst a wealth of arias, recitatives, chorales, and choruses present the work in different strands. It was quite an experience, and one which the girls thoroughly enjoyed.

Hungry Work

Guildford Cathedral girl choristers experienced an unforgettable day out in Cambridge, amongst the highlights. An awe inspiring workshop with Andrew Nethsingha, Director of Music at St. John's College, Cambridge was followed by a lunch of choice (pancakes and burgers proved popular!). Another workshop followed with the vivacious, insightful and engaging Sarah MacDonald, Director of Music at Selwyn College, after which former chorister and current Clare College Choir senior choral scholar Hannah Dienes-Williams took the group on a tour of the humanities lecture theatres and West Road concert hall. After a quick refreshment break it was back to Clare College to meet Director of Music Graham Ross who gave the girls a fantastic and encouraging talk on university applications and university life.



The girls then rehearsed with Katherine, Graham and Clare Choir, joining together in a stunning service of Evensong. Singing is hungry work so it was off to the Buttery for dinner before the coach trip home. What a fantastic experience!

Work hard, Play hard

As you can see, the musicians at Guildford Cathedral work hard all year, especially at the big festivals like Christmas and Easter where they must prepare a vast amount of repertoire and sing in many services in a short space of time.

All this working so closely together means that great friendships are built, and the choristers become like a second family. So it is wonderful to see them having a good time together. At Easter, in between the Sunday services and near the end of a very busy period, the boys were let loose in the Children's Garden at the East End of the Cathedral for an Easter Egg hunt.

And to mark the end of all their hard work and celebration as a congratulations before their final service where the Head and Deputy Head Choristers were valedicted, the musicians and families had a picnic and cricket match at the Royal Grammar School Prep. It was a wonderful way to see out the year together with much fun and laughter. Our musicians know how to work hard, but they also know how to play.



Passing on the Baton



This year has been full of poignant moments. We gave a Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Queen Elizabeth II and another at the Coronation of King Charles III. We hosted the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression with suitable music surrounding and enhancing its time with us.

But in amongst these national events, we also said goodbye to our own Sub organist, Richard Moore. He has moved to a new post as Sub Organist at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, a place close to his heart. While we were pleased for him to pursue a role that he cared so much for and were excited with him for the new chapter, it was with a touch of sadness we said goodbye to someone who was such a big part of the Cathedral family. We officially said farewell to him at Evensong on Easter Sunday.

We were, however, please to welcome Asher Oliver to fill the role of Sub Organist. Since he arrived in April he has hit the ground running, taking on all that has been passed his way and making himself an invaluable part of the Cathedral family.

A Team

Of the six former choristers who received A-level results recently:

Evelyn Byford -

going to Birmingham Conservatoire as an undergraduate singing student

Robbie Mackay -

going to Durham to read French and German and sing as a choral scholar at St. Chad's College

Emma Paterson -

going to read Classics at Clare College, Cambridge, and sing in the Clare chapel choir as a choral scholar

Ruby Skilbeck -

going to Royal Academy of Music as an undergraduate singing student

Robbie Timberlake -

going to Exeter to read classical history and archaeology

Kate Young -

going to read Modern Languages at Christs College, Cambridge, and sing in Christs chapel choir as a choral scholar



Something Special

Across a year at Guildford Cathedral, from 1 September to 31 August, our choirs sing at around 230 services. Most of these are the daily worship offered at Guildford Cathedral and elevated with the quality of the music offered by our musicians. However, these are interspersed with services that are something a little different, reacting to what is happening around the country.

The best example of this was at the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Within twenty-four hours, at the very start of our choir term, the girls and lay clerks put together an Evensong of breathtaking and emotional music at the sad news. This was quickly followed by a service of commemoration on the Sunday. The choir year started the day of the Queen's death, so to produce sensitive music of such high quality so quickly is a testament to the talent and hard work of our musicians.

September also saw the annual Evensong for the Guildford Cathedral Choir Association (GCCA) which saw the boy choristers singing under the former Organist and Master of the Choristers, Philip Moore. The GCCA is made up of former choristers, and at the end of each year the choristers to leave are invited to join, so this event is a great occasion where ex-choristers come back and sing.

Sometimes our choir marries special services with bigger musical works. This year, the boys combined the evening service on Remembrance Sunday with Gabriel Fauré's Requiem Mass, a gentle and profound musical setting to add to the solemn occasion.

To start the Lent term, two of the Sunday Choral Evensongs featured a Bach Cantata as the anthem. These were accompanied by instrumentalists from Charterhouse School giving our choristers a chance to sing with a bigger ensemble.

2023 saw the 20th Anniversary of Girl Choristers a Guildford Cathedral. We turned this into a celebration by inviting back ex-choristers. On 4 February, our 23 girls were joined by 15 returning choristers for an evening of joy and music-making together.



We had another celebration on Sunday 19 February as chorister Kate Young turned 18. In recognition of that, we premiered an exciting, commissioned work at Evensong, a new setting of Psalm 150 by renowned composer Jonathan Dove.

In May we had the opportunity to host the county service for the Coronation of King Charles III. Just as the music for the Commemoration for the Queen was sensitive and poignant, our musicians once again delivered music that was joyful and regal as befitting such an occasion.



A leap of faith

Alongside others from the Cathedral family, changed voices chorister Oscar and choir parents Sian Ford and Monica Lennan took part in a sponsored abseil. The team of fifteen brave supporters including staff, volunteers and congregation climbed 249 steps to the top of the tower then lowered themselves down, taking in the stunning views on the way. The weather was beautiful and those who came to cheer them on shouted encouragement from the base. Altogether, the abseilers raised over £8,000 for the Cathedral. Thank you to Oscar, Sian and Monica for being part of such a successful day!



2023/2024 Academic Year
WELCOME

We have 5 new Lay Clerks who joined us this September 2023.

Peter Hicks -

Alto Lay Clerk and Lead Chaperone.

Laurens Macklon -

Bass Lay Clerk.

Oliver Turner -

Bass Lay Clerk.

Fraser Ellson -

Tenor Lay Clerk.

Hamish Garland -

Tenor Lay Clerk.

Organ Scholar

We are delighted to welcome **Jeremy Wan** as our organ scholar from this academic year.

We also welcome 5 new girl probationer choristers and 3 boy probationer choristers.

Head Boy Chorister this year is Ethan.

Joint Head Girl Choristers are Heidi and Annie.

In their own words

As a choir, we have done so many exciting things over this past year. For me a personal highlight was definitely singing with the Bach Choir at the Royal Festival Hall, as it was an amazing experience, where we were able to sing alongside some incredible musicians.

There have been a lot, but there are two things that particularly stand out. The first, was the first time we sang God Save the King after the death of Queen Elizabeth II; it was very emotional. And the second was going to watch Ruby and Oscar perform at the Royal Albert Hall with John Rutter. It was amazing to see them both performing on that huge stage!

It means a great deal to my brother and me! I don't think he will ever want to leave the Cathedra! I have learned a lot since my voice has changed and it has helped me to continue singing with the choir and learn from the Lay Clerks while my voice has been changing.

Being part of Choristers has meant so much to my son. Joining choristers is the best thing that has happened to him since he moved to RGS Prep this academic year; it has supported his transition to RGS Prep and given him a renewed sense of purpose and identity.

10 out of 10 Definitely, the best musical training!



GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

John Rutter's

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

in Guildford Cathedral

A FESTIVAL OF CAROLS
and Christmas music for choir,
brass, organ and audience.

Guildford Cathedral Choir
and Septura Brass Septet.

SATURDAY

9 DECEMBER

7.30pm

**TICKET PRICES
AND BOX OFFICE**

www.guildford-cathedral.org



SEPTURA
BRASS SEPTET