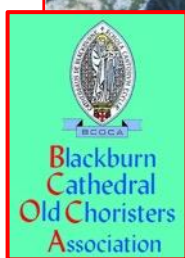


See page 4 for No more M&M

www.blackburncathedral.com

As we look forward to our **Choristers' Annual Reunion on Saturday 5th October** (you are coming, aren't you?... **John Wilkinson OBE, Prefect 1958**, will be with us!)

Shall we ever be able to match, in numbers and enthusiasm, our **Old Choristers' Reunion at Whalley Abbey in 1978?**



How many 'Old Choristers' can you recognise? (Photo courtesy of **Mark Hodson**.)

Contact John Marr... alexsmarr2010@hotmail.co.uk

...if you can come at **12 noon for Lunch on 5th October** in the Temple Gallery (from S. Transept)

Compare our **40th Reunion in 2006** when former choristers were joined by present choristers



**MARTIN
BAKER**

**Bank holiday
recital
28 August
2024**

Photo: Terry Givens

We were honoured to
welcome
internationally
acclaimed organist,
Martin Baker
to play our final Bank
Holiday concert of
2024.



Martin was previously **Sub-Organist of Westminster Abbey** where he took a central role as the organist for **Princess Diana's funeral** as well as other high-profile occasions. Following a stint as Acting Organist and Master of the Choristers, he then served almost **20 years as Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral**.

As winner of the improvisation category at the prestigious St. Albans International Organ Competition, Martin has kept a strong presence on the international recital circuit and **recently played to an audience of over 1000 at St. Paul's Cathedral, London**.

Martin's concert in Blackburn began with W. T. Best's arrangement of the **Mendelssohn Prelude and Fugue in E minor**. The quick right hand figurations in the prelude were played with a dexterity that sounded completely natural, whilst the commanding fugue subject with its falling 7th motif came across clearly at every entry as Martin gradually added stops, building to Blackburn's blazing tutti.

The next item in Martin's programme was **Olivier Latry's very spiritual "Salve Regina"**. This work began life as an improvisation, reflecting on each line of the *Salve Regina* plainsong, and was later transcribed. Martin was joined for this work by soprano, **Olivia Hunt** who, hauntingly, sang each phrase of the plainsong between the organ versets. (Readers may remember that Olivia sang the solo in the Ukrainian carol on BBC1 at Midnight Mass 2022). During this 25-minute work we heard many different colours from the very French-sounding Blackburn organ. After building to an extremely exciting climax, we heard voice and organ together harmonised in a French style. The audience was spellbound by this work with many saying it was the highlight of the programme, which was reflexed in their very long applause.

Staying in France, Martin then gave a lively and rather witty performance of **the first movement of Widor's 5th Symphonie**. Again, we were treated to lots of colour and authentic-sounding registrations which truly demonstrated our organ's ability to speak with the correct accent!

To see and hear this tuneful music CLICK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtmKIDhHwco>

To conclude the programme, **Martin improvised on themes taken from all the previous works in the concert. This was a true tour-de-force** of not only Martin's extraordinary abilities, but of our unique and versatile instrument. At the climax of this final piece, the *Salve Regina*, Mendelssohn fugue subject and main theme of the Widor were all combined in a blaze of glory. Everyone present agreed that the whole occasion had been extremely moving as well as exciting. The one thing that stood out for me was how Martin immediately became one with the instrument and got the absolute best out of it on only 2 ½ hours of rehearsal time - a true skill, indeed.



To hear Martin improvise on the superb rebuilt 1937 Coronation organ in Westminster Abbey, CLICK https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcDU-KzpkB8&list=RDEM2_a34HvxfKriFTBATuQScw&index=1

Our Bank Holiday series is a new one and we would love to continue to attract players of this quality, but this can only happen if our audience numbers stay healthy so as we don't make a financial loss. Please consider supporting this series next year if you don't already, when we will have **William Fielding, Colin Walsh** and **Isabelle Demers** to play. **John Hosking Organist in Residence**



From our 2004/5 choral scholar

TIM BRAITHWAITE

Dear John,

I hope this message finds you well! I've been enjoying the regular editions of *Music & More*, which arrive in my inbox with impressive regularity, and I thought I'd take the opportunity to share some of my own news with you.

After my time in Blackburn, I moved to The Hague to study *Early Music Singing*, a subject I quickly discovered to be more convoluted and ideologically complex than I initially expected.

As a result, I shifted my focus and graduated in 2020 with a master's degree in historical music theory from the Koninklijk Conservatorium (Royal Conservatoire), with a final grade of 9.5/10. Since then, I've been performing regularly with various Early Music ensembles throughout Europe, including the Nederlandse Bachvereniging, Amsterdam Baroque, Vox Luminis and Sollazzo Ensemble.

Tim singing a solo in Blackburn, July 2005

In recent years, my work has increasingly centered on late Medieval and early Renaissance music. My main focus has been with the Dutch ensemble Cappella Pratensis, and I'm thrilled to share that I'll be taking over the leadership of the ensemble in 2025!

[See this video, below, to experience how the music of that historic period was written and sung. JB]

CLICK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eq9BF6uAxxw&list=PLXuSTxKN3IIO-tIJIONWcuJYiHlhtOk2>

The ensemble emphasizes a skill-based approach to early repertoire, including singing from historical (mensural) notation, improvising counterpoint, and exploring historical solmisation and the Guidonian hand. You might be interested to know that our recent recording of Jacob Obrecht's *Missa Maria zart* has been nominated for a Gramophone Classical Music Award in the "Early Music" category—fingers crossed!

(R) Photo of Tim as part of the 2024 Utrecht Early Music Festival

To see Tim being interviewed CLICK:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0yB6lxDP10s>

In addition to my work with Cappella Pratensis, I'm teaching Renaissance counterpoint (both improvised and written) and analysis at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, as well as courses on historical solmisation and singing from historical notation. I also teach historical singing at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague.

I often find myself reminiscing about our early Renaissance counterpoint exercises with you in the crypt of Blackburn Cathedral!

Hope all is well with both you and cathedral music, and I look forward to hearing some of your own news. Warm regards,

Tim (Lecturer: Renaissance counterpoint at Het Conservatorium van Amsterdam)



Karen Au, our former organ scholar, has recently recorded an online concert of Bach (on John Hosking's Hauptwerk console) in aid of the heating system at her church.

CLICK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KojbK4YJ5Y>



See the photo of this historic organ of the Church in Bückeburg, Germany (R) & then, through present day electronic marvels, listen to the actual sounds it makes as Karen plays John Hosking's "Hauptwerk" organ.





HAVE YOU SEEN the *deluge* of superb publicity which **Daniel James**, our dynamic Head of Communications, is producing to celebrate and enhance our own **active participation now** and also in the rapidly approaching Centenary Year of our Cathedral?

Contact Daniel with your news:
daniel.james@blackburncathedral.co.uk
 for he knows what's happening here.

Take a look at some of the leaflets which adorn our *Welcome desks* :-



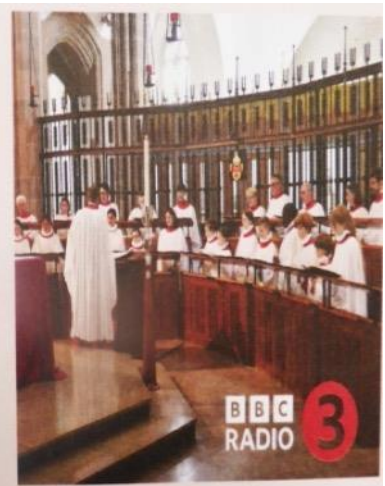
Choral Evensong
Broadcast Live
on BBC Radio 3

WED 16th OCT 2024 | 3pm | | All welcome

Join us as Choral Evensong is broadcast live from Blackburn Cathedral.

Please note that the time of the service on this day will be 3pm and all guests must be seated by 2:45pm at the latest.

blackburncathedral.com/radio3



Blackburn Chamber Choir: Celestial Harmonies

SAT 12th OCT 2024 | 7.30pm | | Book online

Blackburn Chamber Choir - one of the leading choral ensembles in the region - will perform a dazzling array of choral music in our unique Cathedral acoustic.

This is music designed to show-off our astounding organ, which will be heard in all its glory.

Sizzling, exciting, and with a distinctly French flavour.

The popular choir will feature Duruflé's evocative Requiem and Langlais's ground-breaking Messe Solennelle, featuring Organist in Residence John Hosking and directed by the Cathedral's Director of Music John Robinson.

blackburncathedral.com/celestial



Your editor, who first came to Blackburn Cathedral **exactly 60 years ago**, has regrettably come to the conclusion that, being 93+, it really is time for him to hang up his computer and hand on the task of publicising Blackburn Cathedral's music to younger and more skilful folk who know *at first hand* the glories of our cathedral's flourishing music ministry. So he asked to see **IAN WHITE**, our chief Operating Officer, if this would be wildly inconvenient: Ian graciously (via zoom) tried to talk JB out of his decision, but failed.

So **MY ABUNDING THANKS TO ALL** who have contributed so **amazingly, imaginatively and enthusiastically** to our publication, **which started 24 years ago** v.v. small and **GREW!!** Without your creative help our MUSIC & MORE could never have seen the light of day. So please continue to support our cathedral with your time, talents and abounding enthusiasm, for our cathedral is not so much a wonderful building (which it is) but rather the people who worship here.

So Over and out! Laus Deo.

See JB's website: <https://bertalot.org/>

See our continuing organ recitals on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com>
 And keep in contact with our cathedral: www.blackburncathedral.com



WEDNESDAY 12.15 LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITALS IN OCTOBER

2nd Philip Rushforth Chester Cathedral – former chorister, organ scholar, Assistant Director of Music, and now Organist and Master of the Choristers.

9th Laurence Caldecote Assistant Organist, All SS, Northampton, who has played not only in the UK, but also in Norway and the USA.

(16th – **No recital** due to **live BBC broadcast** of Blackburn's Choral Evensong)

23rd Tim Mills Director of Music, Glasgow Academy

30th Ian Dalgleish Director of Music, St. Bartholomew, Wilmslow.



Let Hallelujahs ring out



Readers of M&M may remember that, in the July edition, we asked for prayers for 'Chris', a former Cathedral chorister, who had 'the King's disease' but, like **His Majesty**, was progressing, hopefully to a full remission.

Well he's just been told that, like **HRH The Princess of Wales**, he needs no more chemotherapy – so he can get back to work. This gives him and his delightful family and all who know them, much cause for rejoicing.



It was with great joy that we received this photograph of **TLD's former Chorister BRYAN LAMB** who had recently celebrated his **93rd birthday**.

With **Bryan** is his Grandson **Archie**, and Great Grandson, **Jude**.

Bryan and Pat recently celebrated their 60th Anniversary; they live in a lovely house in an exquisite village near Ely.



Bryan with founder member of BCOCA **Peter Heald** at our 2010 Reunion.

Squadron Leader Lamb: the RAF was his profession for his most active life. Until recently Bryan was a very regular attendee at our Annual Reunions –



hiring a taxi to bring him all the way from Ely and back. That's real devotion to BCCA!

Thank you for blessing us so joyously & faithfully for so very long, dear Bryan

What was the purpose of **MUSIC & MORE** ?

**It was to support the Ministry of
Blackburn Cathedral...**



& Attractively...



...and especially the Cathedral's outstanding long-time **Ministry of Music** which flourishes on a scale comparable to that of some of the more fully financially endowed of UK's great Cathedrals, thanks to our history of gifted leadership and **generous support** from so many willing volunteers.



So only **GOOD NEWS** has been included herein to encourage us to walk the Christian Life in joy (there's enough bad news around)... 'Let your light shine...' Matt 5.16

... and to maintain contact with our present and former choristers (and their families) as they go out into the world blessedly equipped by their creative years of making inspired music in our most Blessed Cathedral.

**FOR
EXAMPLE:**

1978 William Heap



It was with joy that **former Choir Prefect WILLIAM HEAP** called upon your editor last month, bringing with him his Mother, **SHEILA**, who has lived for 40 years in an historic house in Mellor where JB lived.

SHEILA keeps herself healthy by walking along Mellor Lane to **The Spread Eagle** and back – from where she can relish outstanding views of our glorious Lancashire countryside.

WILLIAM retired last year after serving for many years as an Assistant Vice President of Barclays Bank in the Isle of Man. **He recently became a Grandfather** (both his daughters are married) and he celebrated his

retirement by driving all around Europe with his wife, **JANET**, in their camper van.



SO PLEASE SHARE YOUR OWN GOOD NEWS WITH US

so that we may rejoice with you. Send to

daniel.james@blackburncathedral.co.uk





We also received a delightful letter from **Millie Sleight (nee Whiteside)** who's a **founder-member in 1965 of the Blackburn Bach Choir** (now '**Blackburn Chamber Choir**') and who has pursued a most active musical life – specialising in accompanying choirs. She and her family recently visited Bletchley Park: *Millie wrote*: “which is positively mind-blowing: thank God for those amazingly clever people who cracked the Enigma code. A further four days were spent in Hertfordshire, very close to Letchworth Garden City – the first Garden City to be built in England which also has the first ‘roundabout’ in this country. We drove round it twice to

congratulate it!

“What can I say about the wonderful M&M magazine that hasn't already been said? After reading **James Davy's article** I have come to the opinion that Cathedral Organists lead a very hectic life-style. It was good to read **Jack Smethurst's article** again: one of my college friends at Bretton Hall had a similar experience whilst having an operation.

“Sadly it is very unlikely that I could attend this year's BCCA Reunion – I **celebrated my 88th birthday in July** and life has become a bit more difficult recently. As always sending you lots of love – **Millie**”



Thank you, dear Millie, for the joy and inspiration you have brought to all who have the privilege of knowing you. JB

+++++

Here's another taster for the
**INSTALLATION OF
THE MOON
IN BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL
NEXT MONTH**

CLICK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sbz8CoHqiP0>

(This video refers to the moon's installation in *Lichfield Cathedral* – but **our Moon exhibition** will be about to be set up in **Blackburn Cathedral** in a few weeks' time.)



+++++

We've just received this **great news** from our former (highly talented) Assistant Director of Music, **JAMES DAVY**, who wrote:

“An early morning phone call to me whilst I was driving: “I know you're due to be driving to Lincolnshire tonight but is there any chance that you could take the choir and orchestra rehearsal at Snape Maltings, please?”

Photo, below, from the web





"This 8.15am phone call signalled an opportunity I couldn't pass up: **to conduct a choir and orchestra that I've known for most of my life - Tranon Music Group** - owing to the sudden indisposition of the conductor. Unfortunately for him, his doctors prescribed immediate rest and **so I was recruited to share the conducting of a sea-themed concert in that most special of venues, Snape Maltings, founded by Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears.**"

"I'd been there during this year's Aldeburgh Festival as chorusmaster for Britten's *Saint Nicolas* and twice before for operas, but this was my first opportunity to stand where Britten and so many other distinguished

musicians had conducted, and to direct a very fine amateur orchestra and chorus in **Stanford's Songs of the Fleet** - a rollicking set of good tunes, fine orchestral detail, and quite delicious harmonies - along with music by **Percy Grainger** (*Shallow Brown*), and **John Ireland** (*Sea Fever* - arranged very effectively for soloist, choir and orchestra). "

[Listen to an extract of Stanford's *Songs of the Fleet* on YouTube:
CLICK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jm-G-eSTl10&t=1239s>]

"Despite the sudden change in personnel so near to the concert, both choir and orchestra put on a fine performance and made life much simpler by their enthusiastic engagement - and sheer determination to give of their best.

"It was a success after all, and **a large audience (in excess of 600 people)** responded warmly to a heartfelt performance that raised the Maltings roof and ticked off two long-anticipated opportunities: to conduct Trianon and to step out on to the Snape stage and direct a concert. I'm very fortunate to have had so much support early on and so to be able to repay it was gratifying.

"(And I made it up to Lincolnshire, albeit later in the evening, prior to playing a recital at **Worksop Priory**. It's a sort of mini-Southwell Minster furnished in its 20th C rebuild with a Blackburn-style Corona!)"



WOW, this is such great news for you, James, and for all of us who know and admire your prodigious talents. JB

IT WAS OUR JOY to welcome back to Blackburn Cathedral on Sept 18th **Dr Jeremiah Martin** from the USA, to give us another **deeply felt** Wednesday lunchtime recital.



He played a programme of music by Stanford (whose centenary we remember this year) including his main work, Stanford's *Sonata Celtica* (depicting Stanford's and Dr Martin's home country), yet it was Dr. M's performance of ***The Blue Bird*** which remains longest in our memory.

Here's a video of it, played by 'Jerry' on his American home organ with **Blackburn Hauptwerk** stops:

CLICK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68q5WiPJhE>

The lake lay blue below the hill. **BLUE** O'er it, as I looked, there flew
 Across the waters, cold and still, A bird whose wings were palest blue.

The sky above was blue at last, **BLUE** The sky beneath me blue in blue.
 A moment, ere the bird had passed, It caught his image as he flew. **BLUE**

Photo: Terry Glivens

But see more of Dr Martin's recital on the cathedral's new YouTube links (page 10).....

Terry and Alison Givens are regular attenders at the Cathedral's 9.00am service on Sundays.

Terry sent the following photo and comment to M&M:

"The Cathedral Youth Choir, led by **Helen Davies**, plays such an important role, especially in singing the weekly Parish Eucharist service at 9.00am every Sunday during term time. The Youth Choir provides an opportunity for older girls, and also for older boys as their voices change, to extend and develop their period as active choristers."

That morning the Youth Choir were singing *Thorne's 'Mass of St. Thomas'* and *Saint-Saens 'Ave verum Corpus'*



Foreground L: **Canon James Lawrence** with **Head Virger Alex Barnes**

"The brightness and beauty of our Youth Choir's singing is always such a true pleasure for all of us regular attendees at the earlier Sunday morning Eucharist. In fact the Youth Choir are so very greatly missed during the school holidays when, apart from a couple of congregational hymns, the early service on a Sunday is then very largely 'said' - but thanks to our marvellously talented Youth Choir, having a 9.00 o'clock fully sung service early on most Sunday mornings remains a much cherished Blackburn Cathedral tradition."

(JB adds:... which goes back to 1960 when there were so many **ex-trebles** from the men & boys' choir who wanted to continue singing after their voices changed that the 9.00am Sunday service was created so that the newly formed 'Young Peoples' Choir would have their own special ministry in the cathedral's music programme. Their initial conductor was **Ronald Frost** followed by **Keith Bond**, who introduced **young ladies** into the choir, including his two daughters, thus we now have a well-balanced choir of young people.)



NIGEL SPOONER gave us a staggeringly wonderful recital on Sept.25th – so glorious in fact that JB was almost lost for words when he gave the vote of thanks afterwards.

Nigel took 5 'curtain calls' – is this a record?

Nigel's main work was Stanford's **Sonata Britannica** for which Nigel wrote copious programme notes: Nigel told us:

1st movement – based on the hymn tune *St Mary*.

2nd movement – based on Stanford's setting on the words:

'Benedictus qui venit...'(very clearly perceived)

3rd Movement based on the hymn tune *Hanover* **'O worship the King'**. Positive music in the hope that the 1914 War would end in victory.

See Nigel's video on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com>

– but here's a video of **another fine organist**, with written notes!

So **CLICK:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEfx1ReazY0&t=186s>

The brilliant player's name and the organ on which he/she plays seem not to be apparent. **But many congratulations!**



The Cathedral is now creating its own videos of our recitals and concerts, using the technology which enables the cathedral to transmit its main services online.

*But we are so very grateful to **Terry Givens** for his expertise in videoing on his camera so many of our musical events. They form a real treasure chest of musical memories and are available on YouTube:*

CLICK <https://www.youtube.com/@terrygivens8944/videos>

1: JOHN HOSKING, Sept. 4th: Stanford's Sonata No 2 (30 minutes)

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) Sonata No 2 in G minor, Op 151,

Subtitled '*Eroica*' was dedicated 'to Monsieur Charles Marie Widor and the Great Country to which he belongs'.

Completed in August 1917, it pays homage to the titanic struggle the French army had experienced in 1916 at the **Battle of Verdun**, and also the near destruction of the medieval cathedral at Rheims, where 32 French kings had been crowned. Some 300 shells were deliberately fired by the Germans at Rheims Cathedral in WW1. The near destruction of this iconic building became part of France's anti-German propaganda machine!

The first movement bears the title 'Rheims' and is based on the French Easter hymn "*O sons and daughters, let us sing!*" which can be clearly heard from time to time.

The second movement is a solemn slow funeral march but with a lively middle section.

The finale, is 'Verdun'. The latter two movements both feature quotations for the '*Marseillaise*', which can be heard more clearly in the third movement – and indeed ends with a brief, but loud quotation thereof.

Stanford has many changes of texture and rapid changes of key and mood which an orchestra can handle so well. Indeed Stanford did orchestrate part of this sonata which is large and long (30 minutes), strong and powerful, and challenging for recitalist and audience alike.

After the second World War Rheims Cathedral was totally restored, thanks to the French care for its national history, aided by a generous grant from John D. Rockefeller. *Programme notes: JB*

CLICK [Stanford's "Sonata Eroica" - John Hosking \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Stanford's%20Sonata%20Eroica)

JOHN HOSKING'S PERFORMANCE IS SUBLIME ... it was a privilege to be there to hear it..

2: JOHN ROBINSON, Sept. 11th Bairstow: Sonata in E-flat 2nd movement composed during a holiday on the Isle of Arran

ii Allegro giocoso ["Scherzo"] 6 minutes

The title describes precisely what we shall hear: rapid notes with touches of humour.

JOHN ROBINSON'S PERFORMANCE IS DAZZLINGLY BRILLIANT, OF COURSE

Sir Edward Bairstow was held in high esteem by his pupils according to Dr Francis Jackson, who considered his own acceptance as a York Minster chorister under Bairstow in 1929 as '*the most fortunate day of my musical life.*' Jackson's praise of the maestro speaks of 'his ability to do supremely well at whatever he put his hand to... I never heard him play a wrong note, and I think of him every day.' *Programme notes: JB*

CLICK https://youtu.be/h_muzGPRTX0?si=YghjMblfy71vVqk5

3: DR JEREMIAH MARTIN Sept 18th plays his own arrangement of C. V. Stanford's Overture - "**Shamus O'Brien**" Op. 61.

Shamus O'Brien was an 1896 two-act Opera by Stanford about an Irish outlaw who was being hunted by the British soldiers. Shamus is depicted by a **rousing melody** (heard at the beginning) followed by **tranquil music** which could portray the love that the Irish have for their country. Even though Shamus is caught and condemned to death – yet he finally escapes. *Programme notes: JB*

CLICK <https://youtu.be/HLdvRSxuu48?si=smrQIFKakRo0AKVE>

4: Your editor celebrated his 93rd birthday on 15th September: so JOHN HOSKING generously sent him his own **improvised greeting** on an organ fitted with **BLACKBURN Hauptwerk!**

THANK YOU, JOHN H.

CLICK <https://youtu.be/is1QRTTjPqY>



“Photo, above, taken from our bedroom window in Sarum College.”
Jeremy & Jean Duerden.

Read on!

Cathedral Music Trust visits Salisbury by Cathedral Warden **JEREMY DUERDEN**

The **CMT** holds two national gatherings a year, as well as several local ones such as **will be held at Blackburn Cathedral on the 23rd March 2025**, and the second national one this year was at Salisbury.

It says much for the fame and beauty of Salisbury Cathedral that the event attracted 120 CMT members to attend, a welcome figure after the less well-known cathedral at Brecon saw only eighty members in May. As usual, there were others who were involved with the organisation of the event who added eight to the total. The gathering was preceded by the first CMT Academic Conference, entitled *New Generation Perspectives*, held at Sarum College in the cathedral grounds, also well attended. It was good to see **Sam Hudson** there and to catch up with him.



The Conference Dinner was a treat with excellent food and wine, and an entertaining speech from **Sir John Rutter** whose delivery was impeccable, and belied his advancing years, as he reached the age of 79 a few days later.

It was a considerable help for Jean & me to be able to lodge at **Sarum College** a short distance from the Cathedral itself, especially as **Jean**, who was the prime mover in the organisation and the handling of bookings, both for functions and attendees, and I had to nip back and forth a few times between events.

The stately nature of Salisbury Cathedral is the main attraction, and there was a constant stream of tourists visiting while we were there, although we were not aware of any from Russia on this occasion.

Those figures are reflected in the size of congregations, **Evensong worshippers filling the Quire and overflowing into the Nave**, something that smaller, newer cathedrals can merely dream about.

By happy coincidence, the weekend also covered the Annual General Meeting of the *Friends of Salisbury Cathedral*, many of whose members attended the main Eucharist **filling the Nave**.



Registration was at 13.30 on the Friday to start our event, some keen members trying to register before we were set up, encouraged, no doubt, by a torrential downpour as they were arriving.

We were welcomed by **the Dean, the Very Reverend Nicholas Papadopoulos**, and then **the Director of Music, David Hallis**, gave a detailed talk on his long time there, and the



changes occurring during it. To put that in context there was then a recital by **the**

Assistant Director of Music, John Challenger whose mastery of the instrument was fully demonstrated, especially in his organ arrangement of **Holst's 'The Planets'**. **Watch & listen to John C. play this fine work.**

CLICK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cb2lD-2JFUE>

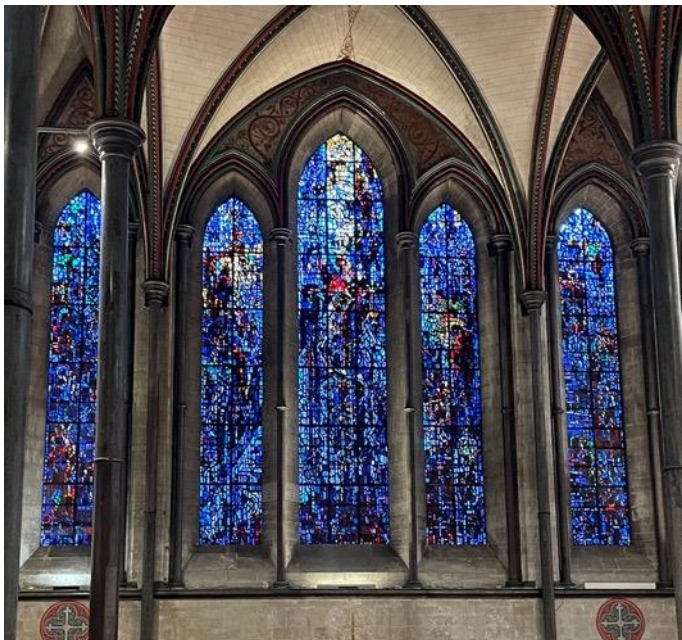


As with any of these events, there has to be a break every so often, and so there was **a cream tea in the Cloister**



before **Evensong**, sung by the Lay Vicars in plainsong. It was no surprise to see so many members return after dark, for Compline sung by the same forces with the addition of the Precentor officiating.

One of the outstanding features of Salisbury Cathedral is the extent of knowledge of the official guides who took small parties of our members around the building on the Saturday morning. The tour of the floor dealt with much of the history of the place, being built in only 38 years, to tower level without the spire, which was added later. The modern font with calm running water and altars are of special beauty: **there was always a crowd around the font taking reflective photos.**

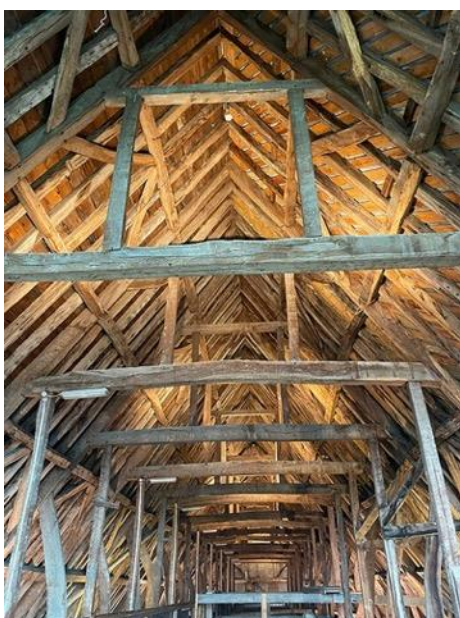


There is much stained glass, a lot of which escaped the attention of the iconoclasts of the Civil War, the origins of some of which glass can be traced back to France from before glass-making of such quality was mastered in England. Some even shows **the coat of arms of the French King alongside that of the King**

of England, although France was not the size it is today then, and much of it was English, but the monarchs were all related to one another.

The tour of the Tower was slightly mis-named as it included the spire as well as **the Tower** (L). It involved ascending more than 300 steps but allowed a view of the internal construction in oak, some 3,000 tons of it, as well as the views from well above the level of the Tower itself.

*Interior of **the Spire!** (R.)*



The afternoon on Saturday was then free for members to explore Salisbury with a plethora of National Trust and Historic Houses properties to view, mainly in the Close, unless one was one of the Local Ambassadors, Trustees and Events Working Group members who took a working sandwich lunch back at Sarum College. It will be apparent from the above that these events do not organise themselves *q.v.infra*.

Those who could make it were able to attend rehearsal before, and then Evensong itself **with the Girls' Choir providing the top line**. The singing was of very high quality.



The Dinner that evening was held in the Refectory at the Cathedral after a drinks reception. The food was prepared in house and was first class, as was the service.

The Dean had prepared a Grace which was not brief by any means, but as his early career was at the Bar, that came as little surprise to me. His address after the dinner was similarly entertaining and rounded off an excellent evening and very full day.



The services at the Cathedral on Sunday offered Matins then Eucharist, with Evensong at 16.30, but a lunch booking had been made for the Cosy Club where the Mezzanine was filled by 55 members who booked soon enough, to ensure that there was time to eat.

We were met after lunch by two local guides who took us in two groups around the city and pointed out a lot of its sights and history. There was a great amount not seen and heard, so much so, that we got back for Evensong with little time to spare and having to use extra seating East of the Quire. One of the amazing items was a cinema set in a **Fourteenth Century Merchant's house**, which used the space afforded by its 'cheque', a large piece of land attached, on which to build a large theatre. The owner was John Halle hence the pun across the lintel above the door, '**the Halle of John Halle**' (Photo L)

The church dedicated to Thomas Beckett was not to be missed, dating as it does from not long after the building of the Cathedral. **HM Queen Elizabeth the First** was a visitor and her coat of arms including the Welsh Dragon, hangs on the South Wall.



The church holds a well-preserved '**Doom Painting**' which must have frightened the congregation into good behaviour.

It is worth a study and I hope that the accompanying photograph is clear enough to show the details of the Hell that awaits those who stray!

See next page

In recognition of its position as a Parish Church, it **holds a beautiful modern font** in prominent position.



The event concluded with a reception attended by members of the choir and congregation as well as the members of Cathedral Music Trust.

It gave an opportunity for staff to tell those not in the know, about the good works done by the Trust with grants totalling £500,000 this year, of which Blackburn Cathedral music department is one of the beneficiaries.

It provided also, a captive audience to hear about other events in the future.

The Spring gathering in 2025 will be at three locations, based at Newcastle Cathedral, with visits to Hexham Abbey for lunch and recital, and Durham Cathedral for lunch and Evensong, with a concert at The Glasshouse on the Saturday evening.

Jean and I visited all three venues in April this year to see what arrangements could be made, and all were very keen to do their part in the event, and those members who learnt about it over the past weekend were quite excited about it, but booking is not yet open. In context, we reconnoitred the Salisbury event in September last year and it has been in planning ever since.

The Newcastle event will be 16th to 18th May, with another at Canterbury 3rd to 5th October 2025.

If you don't want to have to wait for a Cathedral Music Trust event, you will not have to, as indicated above, I am organising a Local Gathering at Blackburn Cathedral on the 23rd March 2025 to which all will be welcome. Manchester Cathedral will be hosting a local event on the 14th October 2024, if you can attend on short notice.

I am always happy to point enquirers in the right direction when they contact me on duerdenjeremy@gmail.com

Thank you, Jeremy and Jean, for sharing your inspiring Salisbury experiences with us.