

Hyfrydol



No. 133

St Swithun's Choir e-newsletter

July 2025

July

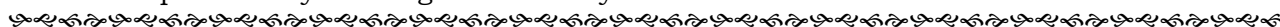
- We are singing Evensong in St Andrew's Cathedral in a few weeks, on Thursday evening, 17 July. The service starts at 5:15 pm, but we shall be there early to warm up.
- Rehearsals for the Foundation concert are all the go this month. Peter Gilkes has already had one Saturday afternoon session, and will run one or two more.

Last month

Huguenot service

We have been contributing to the annual Huguenot service since (at least) 2013 when Meg Matthews directed us in Scot's Church, Margaret Street, Sydney. The service moved to St Swithun's in 2016 and has been here ever since. Our French pronunciation has been improving every year since 2015 when we started singing the Huguenot marching song *La Cévenole*. This year we were particularly brave and sang two verses of it in French. A smaller group also sang the first verse of *Thine be the glory* in French (and many of the rest of the choir sang the French text under their breath); perhaps next year we will all sing it that way.

It was heartening to have a sizeable congregation, and have many stay on afterwards for the generous afternoon tea provided by the Huguenot Society.



RSCM Choral weekend 1-2 August

The weekend features British composer Joanna Forbes l'Estrange, one of the most versatile and experienced choral directors in the world today.



Friday 1 August: The Famous Midwinter Dinner

6 pm Evensong in St Andrew's Cathedral, sung by St Andrew's Cathedral Choir.

7-10 pm Dinner in the Upper Chapter House

\$85 per head; book through Trybooking on <https://www.trybooking.com/DCAGA>

Please note that this is a BYO drinks event. Drinks will be available for purchase.

Saturday 2 August: Choral festival

9:30 am Registrations and refreshments in the Upper Chapter House

10 am Rehearsal with Joanna Forbes l'Estrange

12:30 pm Lunch (bring or buy your own)

1:30 pm Rehearsal

4:30 pm Festival service in St Andrew's Cathedral

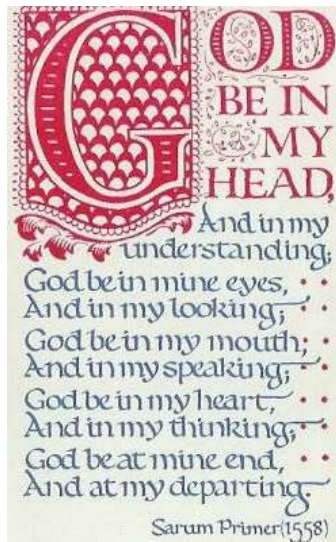
Registration RSCM members \$40 (St Swithun's choir members are all RSCM members through the choir's affiliation with RSCM NSW Branch). Book through <https://www.trybooking.com/DCAHG>.



God be in my head

We will sing these words at a 9 am service in the middle of this month, and again as the introit at Evensong in St Andrew's Cathedral on Thursday 17 July.

In our hymn book (HTC No. 543), the text is attributed to "after R Pynson (c. 1514)" and the musical setting to "H Walford Davies (1869-1941)".



of *The Canterbury Tales*. He had died before the 1558 edition of the *Sarum Primer* was published; it seems very likely that one of the books he printed was the English edition of the *Book of Hours* of 1514 which contained *God be in my head*.



Richard Pynson's printer's mark

The most familiar tune to which *God be in my head* is now sung is the one composed by Sir Henry Walford Davies in 1910. That is the one in our hymn book. We have a version by John Rutter in our choir library which we sing from time to time. The version we shall sing in July is the one by Colin Brumby, an Australian composer, who died only seven years ago (2018).

Brumby was born (1933) and educated in Melbourne. After graduating from Melbourne University Conservatorium of Music, Colin was appointed Music Master at Sunshine High School. Three years later, in 1959 he headed north to Queensland where he was appointed a Junior Lecturer in Music on the staff of the Kelvin Grove Teachers' College.



In 1962 he left to take up a scholarship awarded by the Spanish Government to study advanced musical composition under Philipp Jarnach at an international music course in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. It was there that he met with fellow-Australian, guitarist John Williams, who suggested that Colin should continue on to London at the conclusion of the course in Spain.

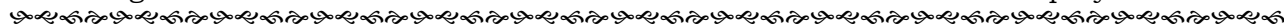
He took John Williams's advice, was appointed Head of Music at Greenford Grammar School, and studied composition privately with Alexander Goehr, Professor of Music at Cambridge University.

He returned to Australia in 1964 to take up a lectureship in the Department of Music at the University of Queensland. In the late '60s, at the invitation of the Queensland Division of the Arts Council of Australia, he composed several twenty-minute operettas for children, which were toured around the state where they were enjoyed by more than 70,000 children annually.

In 1972, he was awarded a Doctorate in Music by the Melbourne University, prior to returning to Europe for twelve months' further study in advanced music composition with Franco Evangelisti in Rome, Italy.

His list of works, many of them commissions, includes symphonies, concertos, operas, ballets, film scores, musicals, chamber music, songs and choral works...in fact, music in almost every genre.

We have a number of his compositions in our repertoire – after *God be in my head*, the one we sing more often is *Richard de Castre's Prayer to Jesus*. Colin himself attended our farewell concert prior to us leaving for Dublin in 2017 and heard our rendition of Richard de Castre's prayer.



Choir Calendar for 2025

Day	Date	Time	Location	Service/activity
Sat	5 July	1:30-5:30 pm	Swiz	Trial by Jury rehearsal
Thu	17 July	5:15 pm	St Andrew's Cathedral	Evensong
Sat	19 July	1:30-5:30 pm	Swiz	Trial by Jury rehearsal
Fri	1 Aug	6 pm	St Andrew's Cathedral	RSCM Midwinter Dinner
Sat	2 Aug	9:30 am	St Andrew's Cathedral	RSCM Choral Festival
Sat	23 Aug		Swiz	Foundation concert
Sat	13 Sept	5 pm	Swiz	Evensong
Wed	24 Sep	6:15 pm	St James, King Street	Evensong
Sat	18 Oct		Swiz	Celebrating Psalms
Sun	26 Oct		St Albans, Leura	Celebrating Psalms
Sat	29 Nov	5 pm	Swiz	Advent Evensong
Sun	21 Dec	9 am	Swiz	Lessons & carols
Wed	24 Dec	10 pm	Swiz	Christmas Eve service
Thu	25 Dec	9 am	Swiz	Christmas Day service

