

# Hyfrydol



No. 107

St Swithun's Choir e-newsletter

February 2023

## The holiday is over, the work begins again

Happy New Year everyone. We have a full program for 2023 and it starts this month. Rehearsals commence on Thursday evening, 2 February. The choir resumes singing services on the following Sunday 5 February at 9 am.

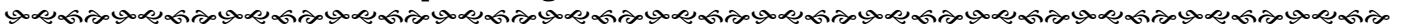
We have our regular Lenten Evensong service on Saturday 25 February. Then we are into Messiah rehearsals and Easter music. And all the while we shall be going through the music to be sung at Salisbury Cathedral in July.

The librarians ask that choristers please return all Christmas music, and any other pieces that they might have collected over the past year. The only music they need to retain is:

- Peter Hamilton's Evensong responses;
- Peter Hamilton's Communion responses;
- John Rutter's "The Lord Bless You and Keep You";
- John Rutter's "A Clare Benediction";
- The blue folder with contemporary songs.

They should all have readily available the following collections:

- "Hymns for Today's Church" book;
- "The Church Anthem Book";
- "100 Carols for Choirs" book;
- The Oxford Book of "Flexible Anthems"  
(many of which actually belong to individual choristers; they paid for them in 2014);
- The blue RSCM "Worship in Song" book.



## Christmas 2022

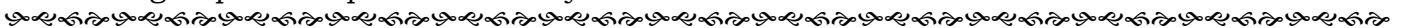
Christmas 2022 will be remembered in the Choir's annals as being, er, different. The choral program began on 1 December with our regular gig; singing carols in the atrium at Royal North Shore Hospital, by which time, Phillip had managed to damage a shoulder while cleaning his swimming pool. He had only one hand to impose choral control. He had only the one working arm to direct a whole Messiah presentation at the Catholic Cathedral in Waitara ten days before. He is a real trouper, our Phil. But then he had a proper medical review and disappeared into hospital for a full shoulder reconstruction. He was unable to participate in any more Christmas music.

The small choir managed without direction at Roden Cutlet Lodge in Gordon a week later, then Amelia Linquist directed us for the parish "Carols in the Park" at Bannockburn Oval that same evening.

In the meantime, organist Peter Hamilton was working on the rigging of his new yacht and managed to break a bone in his left hand. Two fingers were bound together to provide the necessary splinting, but he couldn't play an organ that way. So he unstrapped the damage on the several occasions that he accompanied us, and played with both hands and both feet until the gig was over before re-splinting his poor paw. It wasn't until the 8 am service on Christmas morning was over that the broken bone could properly begin its healing. Playing and turning pages must have hurt like H..... Thank you Peter for your extreme dedication!

And through the whole Christmas period, choristers were falling to the latest variety of the Covid witch. Numbers were down by around a half for most services. Fortunately, we managed to field fairly well-balanced groups and "the show went on!"

With Phil out of action, Peter Gilkes stepped into the breach for the rest of the season and directed the smaller groups with aplomb. Thank you Peter!



## Ian de Jersey

In the middle of it all, we had a big funeral for Dr Ian de Jersey, a very good friend of the choir, one-time chorister, part-time organist, and the person for whom the Cultural Foundation commissioned Ann Carr Boyd to compose the version of *Psalm 95* that we premiered at the Psalm Festival in August last year. Dr Peter Gilkes put off several hours of patient appointments to direct the choir for his funeral. And Peter Hamilton removed his finger splint once again to play the organ which would not be the grand instrument we now enjoy without the significant help of the late, greatly respected Dr Ian de Jersey.



## Salisbury 2023

The choir has accepted an invitation to sing services at Salisbury Cathedral, from Monday 10 to Sunday 16 July 2023. The following article was first published in *Hyfrydol* (under its former title of *Sing Joyfully*) in October 2018 when we were looking forward to singing in the Cathedral in August 2020. That was not to be.

### A short history of Salisbury

The story of Salisbury began 2,500 years ago when an iron-age fort was built on Salisbury Hill about 2 miles north of the modern town centre. In the 6th century AD the Saxons invaded Wiltshire. In 552 Saxons and Celts fought a battle at Salisbury Hill. The Celts were defeated and fled westwards. The fort probably lay abandoned for centuries.

However by the early 11th century a settlement had grown up on the site of the old fort. In 1003 the Vikings raided Wilton. Some of the survivors may have fled about four miles east to the safety of Salisbury Hill and founded a new settlement. The new town had a mint and a market.

About 1069 William the Conqueror built a wooden castle to overlook the settlement and keep the inhabitants in line. In 1075 a bishop moved his seat there. However Sarisberie, as it was called, was a small settlement, much smaller than nearby Wilton. It probably only had a population of a few hundred.

### Salisbury in the Middle Ages

The modern town of Salisbury began about the year 1217 when the Bishop decided to move his seat to land owned by the church south of the hill. Perhaps there was friction between the clergy and the soldiers in the Norman castle. A shortage of water on the hill may have been another reason for the move. He created a new town on the plain. The Bishop laid out streets in a grid pattern and leased plots of land for building houses. So a new settlement grew up at Salisbury but the town at Old Sarum continued for centuries.

The new town of Salisbury was given a charter in 1227 (a charter was a document granting the townspeople certain rights). By 1219 Salisbury had a market and an annual fair. In the Middle Ages, fairs were like markets but they were held only once a year. People would come from all over Wiltshire to buy and sell at a Salisbury fair.



### **Market Cross in Salisbury**

Medieval Salisbury was very successful. This was partly because it was on the road from Wilton to Southampton. It was also on the road from London to Exeter. (In those days Exeter was a large and important town and much traffic went between those two towns). In 1244 a stone bridge was built across the Avon, which increased the traffic flowing through Salisbury. Obviously travellers would stop at Salisbury and spend money in the town.

However the main industry in Medieval Salisbury was making wool cloth. Much of this wool was exported through

Southampton. Salisbury grew to be one of the largest towns in England by the 15th century with a population of perhaps 8,000.

Work on Salisbury Cathedral began in 1220 and continued until 1258. The tower and spire were added in 1334. The Bishop's Palace was also built in the 13th century. Then in 1269 Salisbury was divided into 3 parishes.

Meanwhile in the 13th century the friars arrived in Salisbury. In Salisbury there were 2 orders of friars, the Franciscans (called grey friars because of their grey costumes) and the Dominicans (known as black friars).

### Salisbury in the 16th Century

In 1538 Henry VIII closed the friaries in Salisbury.

During the 17th century the wool industry in Salisbury slowly declined. The population of the town also declined slightly to about 7,000. Salisbury was a large and important town in the Middle Ages but by 1700 it had dwindled into a medium sized market town. On the other hand in 1612 Salisbury was given a new charter. This one made the town completely independent of the Bishop.

Like all towns in those days Salisbury suffered from outbreaks of the plague. It struck in 1563, 1604 and 1627.

### Salisbury in the 17th Century

In 1642 came civil war between king and parliament. For 2 years Salisbury escaped the fighting. Then in October 1644 a royalist army occupied the town. In December 1644 a parliamentary army attacked Salisbury and quickly defeated the royalists taking many of them prisoner. However in January 1645 another royalist army attacked Salisbury. They drove out the parliamentary troops. Salisbury remained in royalist hands until January 1646. By then the king was losing the war and he withdrew his troops from Salisbury as they were needed elsewhere.

The civil war ended in 1646 but in 1655 a royalist uprising took place. Not many men from Salisbury were willing to join the revolt. The uprising was soon crushed and 7 rebels were hanged in Salisbury. Others were transported to the West Indies.

### Salisbury in the 18th Century

During the 18th century Salisbury remained a market town of only local importance. Cloth manufacture was still the main industry but it gradually declined. Furthermore Salisbury suffered outbreaks of smallpox in 1723 and in 1752.

Yet there were some improvements in Georgian Salisbury. It gained its first newspaper in 1715. Then in 1737 an Act of Parliament formed a body of men with powers to pave, clean and light the streets with oil lamps. They also appointed a force of night watchmen. An infirmary was built in Salisbury in 1774 and a theatre was built in 1777.

### Salisbury in the 19th Century

In 1801 Salisbury had a population of 7,668. By the standards of the time it was a fair sized town. However Salisbury grew little in the early 19th century and had a population of less than 9,500 in 1851. In the late 19th century the population grew more rapidly. It reached 17,000 by 1901.

In the 19th century the industrial revolution transformed Britain but it largely passed Salisbury by. The old cloth industry died out altogether, but it remained a market town. Nonetheless there were some improvements. In 1833 Salisbury gained gas street lighting and in 1836 a modern police force was created in the town. Then in 1847 the railway arrived.

In 1849 Salisbury suffered a severe outbreak of cholera and 192 people died. Afterwards, in the 1850s, sewers were dug under the town and a piped water supply was created. Salisbury museum was founded in 1860. In 1892 a public swimming pool opened.

#### **A "steamy" day at Salisbury Museum**

The original settlement at Salisbury was on a hill north of the town. By the early 19th century it had dwindled to almost nothing. It became a 'rotten borough' where 10 voters elected two Members of Parliament. This situation was finally ended in 1832. Then in 1882 Old Sarum was finally extinguished when it became a public park.

### Salisbury in the 20th and 21st Centuries

In the 20th century Salisbury continued to grow quite rapidly but it remained an agricultural town. Today one of the main industries is tourism.

The first cinema in Salisbury opened in 1908. Then in the 1920s and 1930s the first council houses were built. Some of them were needed to replace demolished slums. More council houses were built after 1945.



Old George Mall opened in 1968. A new library opened in 1975. A new swimming pool opened in 1976. The *Redcoats in the Wardrobe* Museum opened in 1982. The Maltings Shopping Centre opened in 1986. Wilton Shopping Village opened in 1998.

In the 21st century Salisbury is a thriving market town. Today the population of Salisbury is 40,000.

Source: A BRIEF HISTORY OF SALISBURY, ENGLAND by Tim Lambert

The two names for the city, Salisbury and Sarum, are humorously alluded to in a 1928 limerick from Punch:

*There was an old Sultan of Salisbury  
Who wanted some wives for his halisbury,  
So he had them sent down  
By a fast train from town,  
For he thought that his motor would scalisbury.*

★ ★ ★ ★

### **A special message for travellers**

Salisbury travellers will be contacted in the next few weeks about payments for accommodation at the Merchant's House Hotel. You may expect a bill of around A\$1,100 per person for a double/twin room or A\$1,600 for a single room. Settlement of accounts by Friday 24 March will be greatly appreciated.



### **John Rutter CBE**

A few weeks ago we received a message from Trish Kinghorn, as follows:

I have just discovered something interesting!

John Rutter was asked to write the music for Edward Chapman's funeral and he wrote *The Lord Bless You and Keep You* which was sung by the Highgate school choir which he, Rutter, had attended and was encouraged by the Director of Music to pursue his career as a composer. This is the same school my father attended in London - obviously before Edward Chapman who started teaching there in 1930.

Dad was a lovely bass and a member of the London Select Choir until he married in 1937. One time they sang a concert at the Queen's Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Sir Thomas Beecham - Delius Festival.

I used to love hearing him singing in Church - always sang the bass part in the congregation as had his hymn book with him - I wish I still had it!

Thank you Trish. The message sent us off on a short journey of discovery, first about Highgate School and Edward Chapman, and then about John Rutter.

Highgate School is now a co-educational independent school in north London. It has a history going back well over 500 years. Famous old music students include Trish's father, Gerard Hoffnung, Sir John Taverner and John Rutter.

Edward Chapman was the Director of Music at Highgate School while both Rutter and Taverner were students there. *The Lord Bless You and Keep You* manuscript has the dedication to Chapman in very small font under the printed title. Rutter composed the piece in 1981 for the school's memorial service for the old teacher.

We have found a self-introduction written by Rutter himself. There may be no better way of meeting him, although several of us met him in person when he visited the RSCM Sydney *Inspires* choral festival a few years ago.

## Meet John

Well, it's John here. I'm told I should introduce myself, so:

Gender: male

Nationality: British

Status: married

Age: not important (born 24 September 1945 – Ed.)



I've known I wanted to be a musician ever since I could walk and talk, and the story is true that I first discovered music at home when I lifted the lid of the old upright piano in my parents' London apartment and started to prod the keys, while at nursery school I sang along loudly with all the other kids at morning assembly each day. My bewildered parents, probably driven crazy by the hours of piano improvisation and piping treble singing they endured, thought that if you can't stop it at least get him to do it better, so they sent me at age seven for piano lessons where my piano teacher told me to be a composer, or singer (or anything but please not a pianist). Fortunately the boys' school my parents sent me to had a strong musical tradition, with daily choral worship led by the choir (I needed no second bidding to join) - and the director of music, Edward Chapman, was himself a gifted composer, a pupil in his Cambridge days of Charles Wood (a name that church musicians will know). He encouraged all of us to think composition was normal, ran a fine school choir and orchestra, and pointed my footsteps in the direction of Cambridge University, where I met David Willcocks, the legendary director of King's College Choir, who took an interest in my compositions, encouraged me to conduct, and recommended me to Oxford University Press, who signed me up while I was still a student and have been my publisher ever since. I'm not sure where the intervening years have all gone, but in a way I'm still that kid doodling at the piano with his inventions, only now I get paid for it. I compose, conduct, produce recordings, and try to cope with the flood of commitments that a musician's life involves. Someday I'll get round to some hobbies.

Swiz Choir has no less than 45 separate items in its library catalogue with Rutter's name on them. Some he simply arranged, but for most of them he composed both words and music. Nearly half of them are Christmas carols. Some we have not sung for a long time, and at least one, never. What might be in store?



### Calendar for 2023

Day	Date	Time	Location	Service/activity
Thursday	2 February	8 pm	Swiz	Rehearsals resume
Saturday	18 February	2 pm	Swiz	Wedding
Saturday	25 February	5 pm	Swiz	Lenten Evensong
Saturday	1 April	6:30 pm	Swiz	Messiah presentation
Friday	7 April	8:30 am	Swiz	Good Friday Service of Word and Song
Sunday	9 April	9 am	Swiz	Easter Day Communion
Sunday	7 May	1 pm	Swiz	Salisbury rehearsal
Saturday	20 May	5 pm	Swiz	Ascension Evensong
Sunday	28 May	1 pm	Swiz	Salisbury rehearsal
Sunday	18 June	2 pm	Swiz	Huguenot service
Saturday	24 June	5 pm	Swiz	Farewell concert
Thursday	6 July		Salisbury	Travellers arrive
Sunday	9 July		Salisbury	Evensong at St Thomas Church
Mon - Sun	10 - 16 July		Salisbury	Services in Salisbury Cathedral
Sunday	13 August	9 am	Swiz	Full choir resumes
Saturday	23 September	7 pm	Swiz	Psalm celebration
Saturday	4 November	5 pm	Swiz	Evensong for All Saints
Saturday	2 December	5 pm	Swiz	Advent carols
Sunday	17 December	10 am	Swiz	Lessons and carols
Sunday	24 December	10 pm	Swiz	Christmas Eve
Monday	25 December	8:30 am	Swiz	Christmas Day Communion

Dates, especially from August, are subject to amendment.

