

Hyfrydol



No. 104

St Swithun's Choir e-newsletter

October 2022

This month

Welcome back to Summer Time, even if it doesn't feel quite warm enough for that yet.

The first Sunday in October means putting clocks forward by an hour, and it means that the men of the choir leave their jackets and ties at home when the dress for services is "shirts". It probably means that the ladies may also leave their dark jackets at home too, but we are not brave enough to pontificate on that subject to them!

Our big event for this month will be the Foundation Concert on the last Saturday. We have been rehearsing Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* for a while now, and some other program items have been sung recently at our Goulburn concert.

Last month – September

The Evensong service on Saturday 10 September allowed us to revisit a setting of the evening canticles we last sang in Dublin; those composed by English organist and composer Thomas Tertius Noble.

For the last weekend in the month we travelled to Goulburn to sing in St Saviour's Cathedral with the Cathedral Choir. The dedication to St Saviour sent us on a short study to learn how many churches bear the name which doesn't seem to be very common. We found five in New South Wales, one each in Punchbowl, Liverpool, Goulburn of course, in Ladysmith near Wagga, and at Quaama



near Cobargo. Just a little more study revealed that St Saviour is none other than Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

The very impressive building in Goulburn was designed by Edmund Blacket, noted ecclesiastical architect, who arrived in the colony in 1842. St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney and the original buildings at Sydney University are his best-known works. While his best-known style was "Victorian Gothic" the Goulburn Cathedral looks to be more Norman. The great circular stone pillars within the nave reminded us of the interior of Winchester Cathedral. Blacket died in 1883, just before the

Cathedral was completed in 1884.

The interior acoustic is much more generous than our own in St Swithun's, Pymble. And Peter enjoyed playing the organ which, like the Cathedral itself, dates from 1884. While it has been reconditioned since then and modernised to some extent, it still offers challenges which Peter managed to master over his short time with the instrument.

We rehearsed on the Saturday afternoon, firstly on our own and then with the Cathedral choir, before joining them for dinner at the Paragon Café.

On Sunday morning we augmented the Cathedral choir for the morning Eucharist when the Communion anthem was Hubert Parry's grand Coronation anthem, *I was glad*. Such an anthem does not suggest itself as a suitable piece to be sung during Communion, but everyone had partaken of the elements by the time the anthem was presented. Swiz choir sang the first choir parts and the Cathedral choir sang the second choir parts.

It was interesting to sing Peter Jewkes' version of the Communion responses. Peter Jewkes was organist at Christ Church St Laurence in Sydney for many years, and is also an organ builder. His company currently maintains our own organ.

During the morning service we sang four hymns, including one with words written by seventeenth century English poet John Mason — *How shall I sing that majesty* — to a tune composed by Ken Naylor, Housemaster and Director of Music at The Leys School in Cambridge from 1953 through to 1980. He named the tune *Coe Fen* after the small area of marshy ground that lies between the school and the Cam River.

After lunch on the Sunday, we presented a short concert from our choral repertoire, with brief introductions by Phillip, and an organ interlude by Handel (*The cuckoo and the nightingale*) that proved to us that Peter had indeed mastered the organ.

At 5 pm we were back to sing Evensong, virtually a repeat of the service we sang only a fortnight before in Swiz: canticles by Tertius Noble and the anthem by Malcolm Archer (*And I saw a new heaven*).

It was a most enjoyable weekend, even though the choral effort was heavy on the Sunday; a good reminder of what we shall be doing in Salisbury next July. We had a balanced choir of 25 voices and a touring party of about three dozen, almost exactly the same as we expect to have in Salisbury.

The Foundation concert for 2022 – Britten and Britain

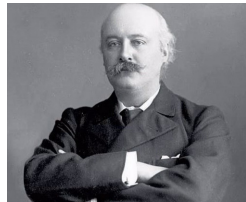
It won't be a re-run of the "last night of the Proms", but it will be a great celebration of British choral church music. The program is entirely British with items by the following composers, listed in the order of their birthdays:

Georg Friedrich Händel (1685 – 1759)
 Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848 – 1918)
 Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852 – 1924)
 Sir Edward William Elgar, 1st Baronet, OM, GCVO (1857 – 1934)
 Roger Cuthbert Quilter (1877 – 1953)
 Henry Balfour Gardiner (1877 – 1950)
 Herbert Norman Howells CH CBE (1892 – 1983)
 Edward Benjamin Britten, Baron Britten of Aldeburgh, (1913 – 1976)
 Patrick Arthur Doyle (1953 –)
 Thomas Hewitt Jones (1984 –)

All but the first had a presence in the twentieth century; only two are believed to be still with us.



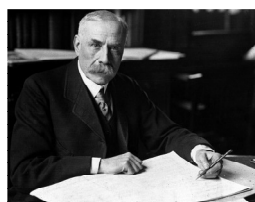
Handel



Parry



Stanford



Elgar



Quilter



Gardiner



Howells



Britten



Doyle



Jones

I was glad

The following item is re-printed from the August 2018 issue of this newsletter. Because we are singing the anthem at the Foundation Concert and also because we are facing the prospect of another coronation in coming months, we feel that it will be of renewed interest to readers.

Last month *Sing Joyfully* included an item on CHH Parry's version of *I was glad*, the anthem he composed for the coronation of King Edward VII in 1902 and which has been sung at every coronation since. But that was not the first time that the text was sung at a British coronation.

The version of Psalm 122 shown in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer reads:

¹I was glad when they said unto me: We will go into the house of the Lord.

²Our feet shall stand in thy gates: O Jerusalem.

³Jerusalem is built as a city: that is at unity in itself.

- ⁴For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord: to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.
- ⁵For there is the seat of judgement: even the seat of the house of David.
- ⁶O pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.
- ⁷Peace be within thy walls: and plenteousness within thy palaces.
- ⁸For my brethren and companions' sakes: I will wish thee prosperity.
- ⁹Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God: I will seek to do thee good.

Parry's version uses only verses 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7. He revised it in 1911 for George V by adding the festive introduction.

The psalm, or parts of it, has been sung at British coronations since the early seventeenth century, and probably even earlier than that (when it would have been sung in Latin).

A setting of it in English may have been composed for the coronation of Charles I in 1625. Thomas Tomkins' version may have been sung at the coronation of Charles II in 1661. Henry Purcell is believed to have composed a setting for the coronation of James II in 1685. And a version of the psalm has been sung at every coronation since, with the possible exception of George II's when it was apparently omitted by mistake.

Thomas Attwood's setting was used at the coronation of George IV in 1821, then also in 1831 and 1838 at the coronations of William IV and Victoria, respectively.

All versions since 1685 have included the central section – the Vivats – traditionally sung by the scholars of Westminster School to greet the entering monarch. It has to be re-written every time a new monarch is crowned because the sovereign is mentioned by name.

Christ is the world's true light

One of the anthems we shall sing this month comes from our *Flexible Anthem* book. The music was composed by Professor Walter K Stanton, a graduate from the Cathedral School at Salisbury and Merton College, Oxford. He had a varied and busy life, much of it centred around Bristol where he was Professor of Music at the University. He served as City Organist for the City of Bristol, and he was Conductor of the Bristol Choral Society through the 1950s and 60s. Professor Stanton was also examiner in Music for the Universities of Oxford, Durham and Edinburgh and the University of Wales. He died in 1978, aged 86.

The text of the anthem is from the pen of George Wallace Briggs, who was a Canon of both Leicester and Worcester Cathedrals during the first half of the twentieth century. He was a prominent writer of hymns, both texts and tunes. Probably his best-known hymn was *God has spoken by his prophets* which we sing to the tune *Ebermezer*. *Christ is the world's true light* was written as a missionary hymn to emphasize one of the concepts of modern missions: "In Christ all races meet." To quote Billy Graham: "... God created every race equally in His image, and He loves every race equally. The Bible says, "From one man he made all the nations. ... We are God's offspring" (Acts 17:26, 29).

Salisbury 2023

The travelling party has been expanded with the very welcome news that Adam Wu will be joining us in the bass line.

Louise has advised that, because of limited interest, the day trip to Mottisfont Abbey on the Friday will not go ahead. Instead we shall look for an activity within Salisbury.

The calendar for 2022

Day	Date	Time	Location	Service/activity
Saturday	29 October	7 pm	Swiz	Foundation concert
Saturday	26 November	5 pm	Swiz	Advent Evensong
Sunday	18 December	9 am	Swiz	Lessons and carols
Saturday	24 December	10 pm	Swiz	Christmas Eve
Sunday	25 December	8 am	Swiz	Christmas Choral Communion

Add to this schedule possible carols on Bannockburn Oval, lessons and carols at local nursing homes and a lunchtime concert at RNS Hospital at dates and times to be fixed.

Mon -Sun	10 - 17 Jul 2023		Salisbury	Choir in residence
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