



Hyfrydol



No. 103

St Swithun's Choir e-newsletter

September 2022

The program for September

Evensong, then a weekend in Goulburn are in the program for this month.

Evensong 10 September at 5 pm

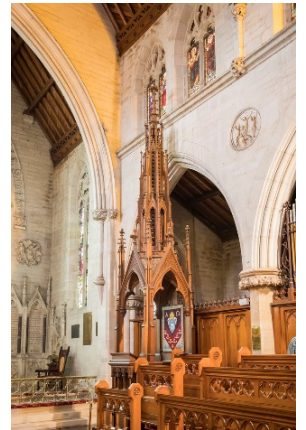
Evensong has involved us in re-acquainting ourselves with the *Evening Canticles* composed by English organist and composer Thomas Tertius Noble. We last sang them in St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin in August 2017. While we can confirm only that Mr Noble's father was also Thomas; it seems most probable that his grandfather was Thomas as well. He was known to one and all as 'Tertius'. He composed *Evening Canticles* in A major, A minor and B minor. We sing the set in B minor. He was a graduate of the Royal College of Music (1889). In 1913, Noble moved to America after accepting the post of organist and choirmaster of St Thomas Episcopal Church in New York City. He held the post for 35 years. He was responsible for establishing a choral tradition at St Thomas's along Anglican cathedral lines. He also founded the Saint Thomas Choir School for boys in 1919. He died in America in 1953.

Goulburn 24-25 September

We travel to Goulburn to present a short concert, and sing two services on the last Sunday of the month. The Director of Music, Barbara Griffin, drove up to attend our Psalm Celebration last month and is looking forward to our visit. We shall rehearse with the Cathedral choir on the Saturday afternoon before joining them for dinner at a local café. We will join the Cathedral choir for the morning Eucharist when the anthem will be Hubert Parry's grand Coronation anthem, *I was glad*. We shall join the Cathedral choir, also, in an afternoon concert in the Cathedral, then sing Evensong by ourselves at the 5 pm service.

Most of us have indicated that we shall be going to Goulburn and have already booked our own accommodation.

The Bishop's seat in St Saviour's Cathedral, Goulburn



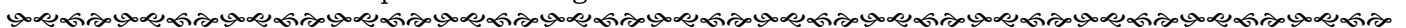
Choristers already have the program; others may like to see it, and perhaps join us:

Saturday 24 September

- 3 – 4:30 pm Swiz choir rehearsal at the Cathedral
- 4:30 – 6 pm Combined choir rehearsal at the Cathedral
- 6:30 pm Dinner at the Paragon Café with the combined choirs

Sunday 25 September

- 9 am Combined choirs warm up/rehearsal in the Cathedral
- 10 am Choral Eucharist
- 3 pm Warm up for concert in the Cathedral
- 3:30 pm Concert
- 4:10 pm Afternoon tea
- 5 pm Evensong



Last month – August

Sickness left its mark on the month with Phil Linquist out of action for a couple of weeks and Kathleen falling foul of Covid in the last week.

The Celebration of Psalms was the month's big event. The two Peters, Gilkes and Hamilton, directed a presentation that was very well supported by the parish and other friends of the choir. Katie did a great job accompanying us on the organ and then gave us the postlude as well – J S Bach's *In Thee is gladness* BWV 615, a choral prelude from his *Orgelbüchlein* (Little organ book). The program was prepared by Peter Hamilton; it included 20 Psalms, presented as six congregational hymns, five choral anthems, four spoken responsories, four chanted psalms (only one sung to an Anglican chant) and four readings.

Particular mention should be made of the World premiere presentation of Ann Carr Boyd's *Psalm 95*. This piece was commissioned by the parish as a tribute to a great benefactor of the parish and the choir, Dr Ian de Jersey, who has been very important in the development of the organ over a long period.

We should also make mention of the version of *Psalm 150* composed by Louis Lewandowski, a nineteenth century Polish/German-Jewish composer of synagogue music. His melodies form a substantial part of synagogue services around the world today. This piece is a useful and exiting addition to our repertoire, and we will include it in the concert we present in Goulburn Cathedral during the month.

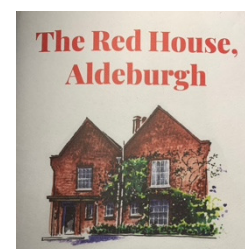
A few of us attended the RSCM NSW Branch's Famous Midwinter Dinner held at St Paul's Church, Burwood, during the month. The guest speaker was Stuart Piggin, Associate Professor at Macquarie University. The dinner followed the celebration of Evensong in the church, sung by the parish choir.

Benjamin Britten, chapter 2

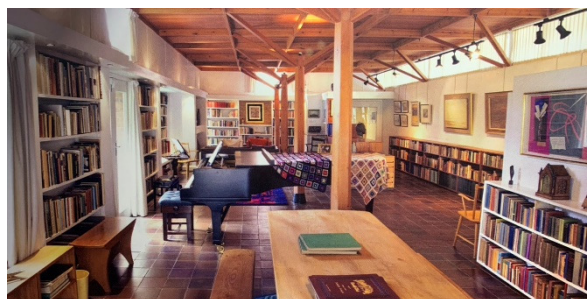
Last month we published an item on Benjamin Britten. It reminded one of our own choristers that she had a close encounter with Britten a few years ago. Here is her report:

Benjamin Britten's home - the Red House

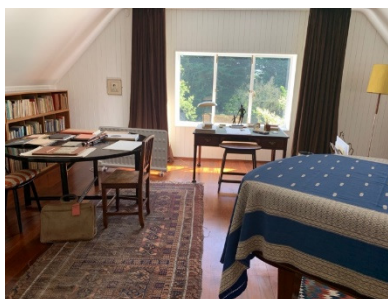
If you're at a loose end for things to do after Salisbury Cathedral next year, and you happen to be travelling in that direction, I can recommend a visit to Benjamin Britten's house. I went there as part of the RSCM International Summer School in August 2019.



The house is a secluded 17th century farmhouse at Aldeburgh in Suffolk. Britten and his partner moved there in 1957 and he lived there until his death in 1976. Everything is kept just as it was, including Britten's library, his music composition studio and his furnishings and artworks. The garden is glorious, particularly the vegetable garden which was full of bumble bees buzzing amongst the frames of flowering pea plants. We spent quite a while visiting all the different parts of the house and gardens and having refreshments.



The Library at the Red House



Benjamin Britten's Composition Studio



Following the visit, I went on with the other Summer School course attendees to the nearby parish church in Aldeburgh where Britten and Peter Pears are buried in the churchyard, and we sang Choral Evensong there under the musical direction of Hugh Morris, RSCM Director. Our anthem was a work by Britten which is not often performed, entitled "Angels in Common Life and at our Death", part of a larger work called "The Company of Heaven" which he composed when he was only 23 years old.

It was pretty amazing but I found it quite a challenge to learn and sing. I worked hard on it in my free time at the conference centre, and I can see on my copy of the score that I've pencilled in where the beats come in each bar because I found the timing very tough. There are many similar elements to the *Ceremony of Carols* such as the kind of warbling effect as we sing up and down semitones, and the canon feel as the theme is passed between voice parts like a baton in a relay. In one part, the tenors sing "Bringing us bro..." and the basses take over finishing the

word seamlessly for them, "...therhood". Here's a recording of it on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/A1FYIakXtgs>.

After Evensong, we strolled to the seaside and sat on the sea wall to have our fish and chip supper. The water was visible distantly across an expanse of shingle and it was so cold and windy that it made me laugh. I felt very English demolishing my fish and chips on this 'summer' evening at the seaside.



The Red House is open Thursdays to Sundays. Bookings at <https://brittenpearsarts.org/events/visit-the-red-house>.

Pamela Summers

The Foundation concert for 2022

The program for this fund-raising concert has just been released, and we know that it includes Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* which we are learning feverishly. The carols take only about 30 minutes; they will make up most of the second half of the program. We shall be joining with the Willoughby Singers again in presenting some well-known, and very British, choral works. Britten composed his piece to be accompanied by harp, and we know that a harpist has been engaged for the evening.

Another of the concert items will be *Zadok the Priest*.

Shortly before he died in 1727, the first King George signed an "Act of naturalisation of George Frideric Händel and others". Handel's very first commission as a British subject was to compose music for the coronation of the incoming King, George II, and his Queen Caroline.

He composed four anthems; *Let thy hand be strengthened* was to be played first, then *Zadok the Priest*, then *The King shall rejoice*, and finally *My heart is inditing* at the coronation of the Queen.

Apparently, at the coronation itself on 11 October 1727, the choir of Westminster Abbey sang *Zadok the Priest* in the wrong part of the service; they had earlier entirely forgotten to sing one anthem and another ended "in confusion".

Now one of Handel's best-known works, *Zadok the Priest* has been sung prior to the anointing of the sovereign at the coronation of every British monarch since its composition and has become recognised as a British patriotic anthem. Handel's other three coronation anthems are regularly included also, but the order varies from coronation to coronation.



An engraving from 1649 depicting the anointing

Who was Zadok? Strong's *Concordance* lists no less than 49 references in the Old Testament to "Zadok".

Zadok was a descendant of Eleazar, the eldest son of Aaron (1 Chron 6:4–8) ten generations after Aaron. He was the High Priest of Israel during the reigns of David and Solomon (2 Samuel 8:16–18). He aided King David during the revolt of his son Absalom, was subsequently instrumental in bringing Solomon to the throne and officiated at Solomon's coronation. After Solomon's building of the First Temple in Jerusalem, Zadok was the first High Priest to serve there (1 Kings 2:35).

The particular Old Testament reference drawn upon by Handel was 1 Kings 1:38-40:

³⁸ So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. ³⁹ And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save King Solomon. ⁴⁰ And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

Handel adapted the Biblical text as follows:

Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon king.

And all the people rejoiced and said:

God save the King! Long live the King! God save the King!

May the King live forever. Amen. Hallelujah!

Salisbury 2023



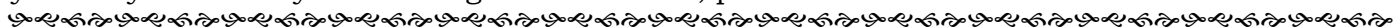
The latest count shows that we have a travelling party of 34 people, including a balanced choir with 24 voices, going to Salisbury next July. Accommodation bookings have closed, but we are very happy to have more people join us; they will need to arrange their own accommodation, but we are very happy to offer help in that regard.

Salisbury Cathedral

Many have already returned the booking form for the day trips. Louise Kearns is anxious to have them all returned promptly so that she can negotiate with the chosen tourist coach operator about coach size. So far, bookings for the Tuesday and Friday excursions to the

National Trust properties (Dyrham Park and Mottisfont House respectively) have not reached a level where the trips will be viable. If bookings remain low, we may look at arranging alternate trips to local attractions within the city of Salisbury.

If you are yet to send your booking form to Louise, please do so now!



The calendar for 2022

Day	Date	Time	Location	Service/activity
Saturday	10 September	5 pm	Swiz	Evensong
Sat-Sun	24-25 Sept		Goulburn	Concert and two services
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.

And for 2023

Mon -Sun	10 - 17 Jul		Salisbury	Choir in residence
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