



**The new Song School – Gardiner Room  
St Martins House**

**LEICESTER CATHEDRAL  
OLD CHORISTERS ASSOCIATION  
MEMBERS NEWSLETTER 2010**

# LEICESTER CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATION

<b>President</b>	Geoffrey M H Carter	
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Very Revd. Vivienne Faull Very Revd. Derek N Hole Very Revd. Alan C Warren Revd. Canon Michael T H Banks Revd. Canon Michael Wilson Revd. Canon John Craig Revd. Canon Stephen Foster	
<b>Chairman</b>	Tony Stevens	
<b>Secretary</b>	Peter Collett 117 Charles St, Sileby, Loughborough, Leics., LE12 7SH. E-mail : peter@pcollett.freeserve.co.uk	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Richard Belton	
<b>FCOCA Representative</b>	Richard Belton	
<b>Committee</b>	Graham Wright Richard Belton Simon Headley John Thorpe David Salt	Dr Christopher Johns (Ex-Officio)

The Association was founded in 1965 and is affiliated to the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations which was founded in 1910.



## DR. GEORGE GRAY MEMORIAL TRUST

<b>Chairman / Trustee</b>	David Briers, 7 Houlditch Rd, Leicester, LE2 3FF	
<b>Trustees</b>	Richard Belton John Thorpe Geoffrey Cox	Michael Gray Neil Crutchley

The Dr. George Gray Memorial Trust is managed by the Association and was launched in 1982 to finance choristers' scholarships to the Cathedral Choir. It was registered as a charity on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1983 under registration number 513625.

## **CONTENTS**

- From the President
- Members Notes
- End of an Era
- Choir News
- Choir trip to York Minster
- St Martins House
- Dr George Gray Memorial Trust
- Federation News
- Cathedral Choir 100 Club
- Important dates for your diary

### **From the President**

Some of you were able to attend the President's evening back in March, when we played skittles at the "Rose and Crown" at Thurnby. It was a most enjoyable evening, and I do hope that more of you will be able to join us for a repeat performance in March, this time at the "Wheatsheaf" in Thurcaston. Full details later in this newsletter.

Last February my wife and I had the pleasure of joining several members of the Peterborough OCA when they travelled to Richmond in North Yorkshire to celebrate with Dr Stanley Vann on the eve of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Stanley was widely regarded as one of the foremost choir-trainers of his time, and it was a great privilege for me to have been part of his "team" in the early 70s. It was certainly a very special occasion, and there were many happy memories of our experiences in what was thought of as one of the best cathedral choirs in the country at the time. Stanley was quite frail, and had suffered a fall earlier in the week; however, he was able to take part in the celebratory meal, and I was able to present him with a copy of a short piece which I had composed in honour of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, based on two of his beautifully crafted psalm chants. Sadly Stanley died a few weeks later, having had another fall; his funeral service in Peterborough Cathedral was a truly memorable occasion, and included some of his own music. There have been numerous tributes to Stanley, both in the musical and the national press. I shall for ever be grateful to him for taking me on as an alto lay-clerk back in 1969. Stanley had been George Gray's assistant organist in the early 30s, and when I left Peterborough to come to Leicester, it gave me great pleasure to know that I was taking on the position which he had held all

those years before. As a young man he also conducted the Humberstone Choral Society, and as their present conductor I am still following in his footsteps.

Stanley Vann is not the only ex-Cathedral organist whose death we have noted this year. Allan Wicks from Canterbury, Kenneth Beard from Southwell, and Wallace Ross from Derby have all passed on during the last twelve months. Wallace (Wally, as he was known) was probably just as at home on the traction engine, "Fiery Elias" as on an organ console. He had taught at Alderman Newton's School at one time, and played the organ sometimes at Leicester Cathedral in George Gray's time, although I don't think he ever held the assistant organist position.

As one generation passes on another is ready in the wings to take over. We recently said farewell to Jonathan Gregory as Master of the Music at Leicester Cathedral, and will shortly be welcoming Christopher Johns as his successor. I would like to wish him well in his new position; Christopher hails from Derby, where he was a chorister at the cathedral, so there seems to be some sort of two-way movement between the two cathedrals.

Also taking on a new role is one of our ex-choristers, Thomas Moore, who has recently been appointed as Director of Music at Wakefield Cathedral. I received this news with particular pleasure as I had been his first organ teacher. His younger brother, Stephen, whom I also taught, but who sang as a chorister in the choir at St. James the Greater, is shortly to become Director of Music at St. Matthew's, Northampton.

Finally, may I wish each and every one of you a successful 2011.

Geoffrey Carter

*From the Editor:*

*Firstly, apologies to all for the late distribution of this newsletter we do endeavor to get this to you at the start of the New Year but with busy lives things have slipped this year! Secondly, please support the **Presidents evening at the Wheatsheaf Pub, Thurgaston on Saturday 12 March 2011** and the reunion to be held on **Sunday 12 June 2011**.*

## MEMBERS NOTES

### Deaths

**Wallace Ross** was assistant organist at Leicester, then moving to Derby Cathedral where he was Master of Music from 1958 to 1982. He also taught music, Latin, Greek and history at the former Sturgess School, in Markeaton Street. He formed the Derby Bach Choir, the Derby Cathedral Orchestra, which was later renamed the Derby Symphonic Orchestra, and the Cathedral Brass Ensemble.

He used to take the cathedral choir to Cadeby in Leicestershire every year where they would sing carols around the village.

He died on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010 aged 89.

**Ron Briggs** Cathedral Songman 1970 – 1983 died on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010. He moved to live in Shrewsbury and worked for The Children's Society for many years.

**Ron Reah** Association Patron and former Cathedral Songman. Ronald was also a composer and, as well as writing music for the choir, composed an organ piece – "Fanfare for a Golden Jubilee" – in celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the re-hallowing of the Diocese and Cathedral. He died on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

**Roy Sawbridge** was a Cathedral Chorister from 1940 to 1944 and a bass songman until 1994. Roy passed away on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010. He was master of music at the former Wycliffe School and a brilliant pianist.

Tony Stevens wrote this testament:-

*It's difficult to know where to start to write an appreciation of someone you have known for nearly 70 years, but I suppose I ought to begin at the beginning. When I joined the boy's choir in 1941 Roy was already a year ahead of me having joined in 1940. One of my earliest recollections Roy was playing football before choir practice with a tennis ball in St. Martins East by the entrance to the Song School much to the annoyance of the two Vergers one of whom, Mr C Innocence lived in one of the houses as did Mr J White. We had to climb up the Drain pipe onto the roof of the Song School to retrieve the ball. We would have snow ball fights in the grave yard Dec v's Can. Roy was always on Dec and I was on Can. I remember one year David Holmes and Elgar Dickenson's Parents took us to climb Snowdon over Gribb Gough, we stayed at the Y.H.A. in Betws-y-Coed there must have been about 14 of us. The evenings always finished with a sing song and Roy on*

*the piano. In the school holidays David Holmes would take about 14 boys to a farmer friend of his at Owston for a week and we had a wonderful time. Roy was quite a character and joined in the fun. We would all pile on to the back of John and Roger Pickering's Father's open coal lorry to go to the farmer's field to pitch our tents. We used to hold socials in the church house and Roy always asked to play the piano and even at that early age he was an accomplished pianist. It is said that if he had pursued that vocation he would have been a concert pianist instead of a Music Teacher at Wycliffe School.*

*I remember going on a choir weekend trip to Strasbourg with Peter White. Roy Colin Tipple and I were housed together in an apartment where the Lady owner let us in, gave us the key and said "I will be away for 4 days so help yourself to the food and do what you want to do." In the apartment was a Steinway piano in perfect order and as Colin had never heard Roy play I persuaded him to sit down and he proceeded to play with all the perfection and authority of his younger days. It was a wonderful and entertaining week end.*

*Roy served in the Royal Air force for his National service in England, he never married and lived all his life on Hinckley Road. Roy was the leading Bass singer at the Cathedral for many decades and gave much pleasure to large congregations with his powerful, perfect pitch voice. His dry sense of humour, ready wit and willingness to join in what the Lads were doing especially in his younger days made him a great character and a life long friend. He never compromised his Christian principles throughout his life. The love of his dog was for many, many years his number one priority and sole companion.*

Tony Stevens

Chairman L.C.O.C.A.

**Derek Freeston** who was a chorister in the late 30's and early 40's died at St Andrews Village, Auckland, New Zealand on 9th October 2010. Derek remained a member of the Anglican Communion all his life and retained a love of singing and choral music. He last visited Leicester Cathedral in 2005, and enjoyed attending a Sunday morning service feeling that he had a life long connection to the place and the community.

Derek's younger brother **Maurice** who was also a chorister passed away on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010, he had emigrated to Australia in 1967.

**Stanley Vann.** Following the events to celebrate his 100th birthday in February, Dr Stanley Vann, D.Mus.(Cantuar), B.Mus.(Lond), Hon. F.T.C.L., F.R.C.O., A.R.C.M. died on 27th March. Stanley was born in Leicester and was Assistant Organist at Leicester Cathedral from 1931 to 1933 and Organist and Master of the Music at Peterborough Cathedral from 1953 to 1977.

A few weeks prior to his death, BBC Radio 3 marked his 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday with a special Choral Evensong, preceded by one of his famous recordings; Stainer's "The Crucifixion" and an extract from a recent disc of Vann's own compositions.

**Margaret Ashlin** a long time Patron and supporter of our Association died on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010. Her funeral was held at the Cathedral on 1<sup>st</sup> December, with the Cathedral Songmen singing a plainchant.

**Kenneth Wadd**, former songman died just before Christmas. His funeral was held on 6th January 2011 at St Mary's Knighton. It had been good to see Kenneth and his wife at reunions in recent years.

## Weddings & Anniversaries

On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2010 **Donald and Judith Salt** celebrated their Ruby wedding anniversary and on 10<sup>th</sup> September **Tony and Sheila Stevens** celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.



**Roseanne Green** married Graham Twedde on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August in Barnard Castle with a reception on the family farm.

**Lucy Hermiston** married Benjamin Day on 11 September and they are expecting their first baby.

## **Other Notes:**

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2010, Association Patron **Ian Imlay** celebrated 50 years as organist of St Nicholas Church, Leicester with a choral evensong in Leicester Cathedral led by Canon Barry Naylor.

The St Nicholas Singers (former and present members and friends of St Nicholas Choir) were directed by Ian and accompanied by organist David Cowen.

Charles Wood's introit Hail Gladdening Light, was followed by Smith responses and Stanford's Canticles in C. The Anthem was Brahms' How Lovely are Thy Dwelling Fair, the service concluding with the Final from Louis Vierne's 1<sup>st</sup> Organ Symphony.

**Canon Stephen Foster** was licensed as Coordinating Anglican Chaplain to the University of Leicester during a service of Morning Prayer on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010 at the Gatehouse Chaplaincy. We are delighted that Stephen has agreed to become a Vice-President of our Association.

Congratulations to **Thomas Moore** who was appointed Director of Music at Wakefield Cathedral in June 2010. As well as a being a former Leicester Chorister, Thomas was an organ pupil of Geoffrey Carter. Thomas' brother **Stephen** was also a pupil of Geoffrey Carter and has been appointed Director of Music at St Matthew's Northampton from January 2011.

**David Fisher's** Tiffany Anthem, written for and performed at the Federation Evensong at Leicester Cathedral in 2004, has been recorded as part of a recent CD by the choir of Derby Cathedral under the direction of Peter Gould. The CD, entitled Angel Voices is available from the Cathedral Coffee shop at £10. For details call 01332 241201 Ext 41.

**Chris Martyn**, after several years of not singing a note in public, has joined Aldwyn Voices, a local group of about twenty singers who perform mostly *a cappella* and mostly twentieth century English church music. So far they have performed in Tewkesbury Abbey and in Malvern Priory. The standard is high – with just three rehearsals before the day of the concert. Chris was invited to join, on the recommendation of a friend who sings with Ex Cathedra.

## END OF AN ERA

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September saw the last service for Canon Precentor, Stephen Foster and also Director of Music Jonathan Gregory. It was a wonderful send off for two extraordinary people who have influenced the Cathedral Music over the years. The service was well attended and the Choir, under the direction of Motje Woolf, sung two surprise pieces for Stephen and Jonathan. These were very much appreciated.

Jonathan had been at the Cathedral for 16 years and Stephen 6 years.

Jonathan sent a brief message and update at Christmas.

*"Dear Friends – Happy New Year to you! Thank you to the Old Choristers Association for the surprise gift of £240 when I left the Cathedral in September. I have appreciated very much the support and encouragement of the many Old and 'younger' Old Choristers, and enjoyed the dinners and carefully thinking Committee meetings in friendly homes.*

*The service in June, with John Craig, and the subsequent festivities in September will be remembered happily. It was great also to sing in York Minster, of which George Gray was proud.*

*I look forward to continuing my membership of the Old Choristers' Association.*

*In October I went to Hong Kong examining for ABRSM for 6 weeks. It was a new experience examining in the midst of local communities (music studios, often in shopping centres or other local communities) and besides staying in a lovely hotel, we visited the islands and had walks on a variety of terrain. I also made friends with local organists and sang and played at St John's Cathedral in Hong Kong. The pattern of daily examining and swims in the hotel pool was very appealing – I hasten to add we worked hard also.*

*On return I gave an Organ Recital before Evensong at St John's College, Cambridge.*

*Our UK Japan Choir gave their Christmas Concert at St John's Wood on Dec 11th and we sang Bach – Cantata 61 and Magnificat and Carols – it was lovely to have singers from Cambridge, Leicester, London and Tokyo all joining together – a challenge for rehearsal technique – but we have a lovely souvenir recording.*

*Now we are looking for somewhere to live in London - so downsizing considerably.*

*With best wishes for the New Year"*

Jonathan nurtured and developed the choristers and his departure was felt especially by these young people. We wish him well with his obviously very busy life. We send our best wishes to Jonathan and Yoshimi as they venture into pastures new.

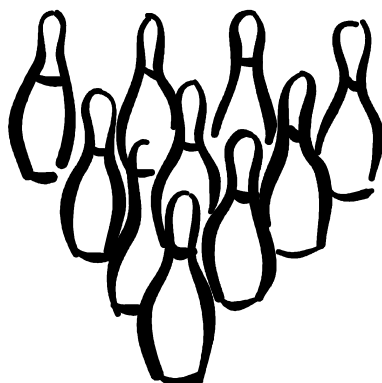
As previously mentioned Stephen Foster has been licensed to the University of Leicester where he is Co-ordinating Anglican Chaplain. Just prior to him starting at the University, he and Ann became Grandparents for the first time as their daughter Hannah had a baby boy. Stephen made a significant impact to the Music, Liturgy and life of the Cathedral and his big personality and presence is much missed. We wish Stephen and Ann well especially in his new role and hope that through members of the Association they will keep in touch.

Following the departure of Jonathan, Simon Headley was appointed as Acting Director of Music until 31 December 2010. Simon undertook this role with 'enthusiasm and aplomb' and the choir responded with hard work and with wonderful results, particularly over Christmas.

On January 1st 2011 we welcomed Chris Johns as the new Director of Music at the Cathedral and as an Association we wish him every success in his new role. We look forward to hearing from him over the next few years.

On Palm Sunday – 18 April 2011 – we will be welcoming and installing the new Canon Precentor, Johannes Arens. He will be joining the Cathedral team from the Diocese of Ripon and we hope that he and his family have a successful move and we look forward to meeting him when he arrives.

## **PRESIDENTS EVENING 2011**



**An invitation to join Geoffrey and Gill Carter for an evening  
of Pub Skittles at  
the Wheatsheaf Pub, Thurcaston on**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

**Cost is £7.95 per person with a traditional menu of  
Faggots, Sausages or black pudding or Vegetarian option,  
served with chips or cheesy mash.**

**This will be an excellent opportunity for Old Choristers to  
meet and socialise so please do attend, last years event  
was great fun.**

**Please complete the enclosed reply form and return to  
Peter Collett**

**Look forward to seeing you there!**

## CHOIR NEWS

Thirty five of members of the choir went to **Southwell Minster** on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2010. We arrived early with time to look round the Minster and enjoyed the experience of singing with many other boy trebles, altos, tenors and basses. We were seated on a gigantic stage in the nave. The Dean welcomed us and their lady Precentor sang very clearly. Our own Succentor Kathryn Noble was in an exulted position at the front of the clergy in the service. We sang *Omnes de Saba* by Handl, Rose responses, Ps 72, and the splendid Bairstow in D, which we hope to sing in York Minster. The anthem was new for us - the beautiful Epiphany setting of '*There shall a star from Jacob come forth*' by Mendelssohn. The three choirmasters took turns conducting, and the organist accompanied on a mobile console in the nave. Our own Simon Headley played Buxtehude Epiphany variations at the end of the service.

After a noisy chorister hot meal (lasagne) and fellowship we departed in the icy rain, glad of our Woods 'football-celebrity-style' coach. We arrived in good time at 8.45, in time to sort robes and music, ready for the next day's important Sunday singing.

The annual Songmen's dinner took place on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at the Belmont Hotel. All were welcomed by John Thorpe and a response on behalf of the guests was given by Richard Belton. Jonathan Gregory summarised some of the musical highlights of the past year.

In addition to five sung services a week and associated practises the Cathedral Choir has sung for many special and additional services. A joint concert was held with groups from Leicestershire Arts. The choir has also sung at Wistow and Market Harborough Parish churches. In May, the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of the Three Choirs Festival was celebrated here in Leicester with the Songmen of Derby and Leicester Cathedrals singing music in 6 parts by Charles Wood and our own Charles Paterson. In January we look forward to welcoming the choirs of Southwell Minster, Derby and Coventry Cathedral here to join with our own in what will be a 'Four Choirs' festival

All of this places high expectations on our songmen, the choristers and their parents. Their support is key to all that the choir do and we are blessed with committed and supportive parents to whom we all are immensely grateful. No-where was this support more visible than in the highly successful residential week in York. Special thanks to Jenny Kurinczuk for all of her hard work in arranging and organising the trip. The choir rehearsed

daily at Bootham School where they were staying and sang every day in the Minster, except Thursday, when they enjoyed an outing to Eden Camp. These residential weeks are so valuable for music training, fellowship and for the experience of singing in such a large and awe inspiring building. Congregations at services were always in the hundreds.

Closer to home, members of the cathedral sang with 10 other church choirs in the annual RSCM choral festival, this year at St. Mary's Melton Mowbray, forming a combined choir of 130 singers.

Our songmen enjoy the fellowship of singing together on Wednesday evenings, as well as an occasional supper, an annual dinner and outing.

Balancing the commitments that our busy choristers have outside of the cathedral with the requirements of singing here presents challenges, not least with attracting new members to the choir. The system of chorister teams enables some flexibility but requires reliability. Recruitment continues and we have some promising singers in the feeder groups who it is hoped will grow into cathedral choristers.

The organ recital series took place throughout July and August and has presented talented and established players as well as up and coming names. The series opened with a master-class and recital by David Titterington. Another notable feature was the addition of an extra recital at the end of September. This was the 1922 Film 'Nosferatu' c. 90 minutes in length to which an improvised organ accompaniment was provided by Nigel Ogden. This was a most enjoyable evening and attracted a different audience from those who normally attend the organ recitals.

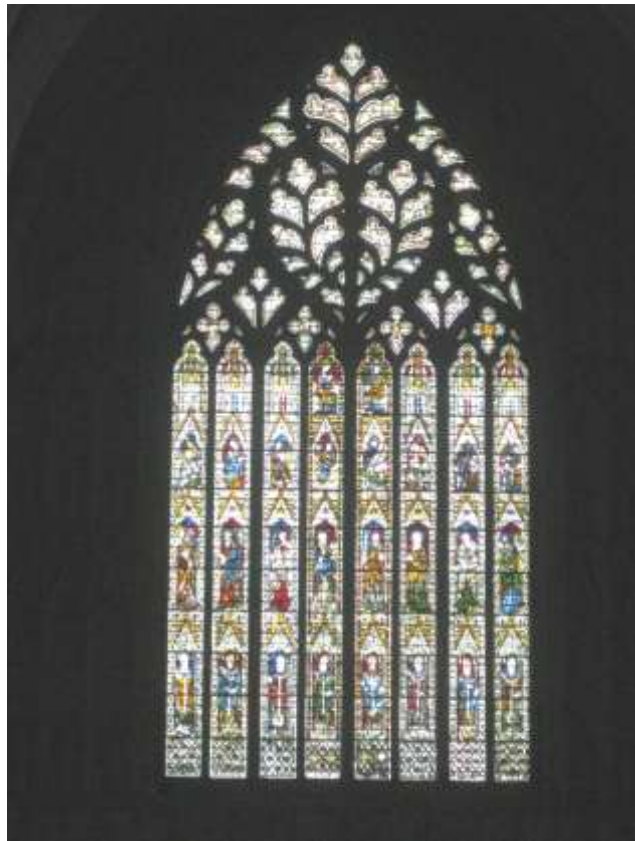
Approximately 70 people are involved in singing at the cathedral in one way or another in the course of a week.

The annual Songmen's outing was a relaxing day taking in the beauty of the Blue John Caverns at Castleton in the Peak National Park, the historic Tramway museum at Crich and concluding with an excellent meal at the Birstall Golf Club.

## **LEICESTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SING AT YORK MINSTER – OUR VISIT IN AUGUST 2010**

During the first week of August 2010 Leicester Cathedral Choir spent a week singing in York Minster. Fifty-four singers, staff and accompanying adults spent the week at Bootham School, a local Quaker boarding school holding morning and evening practices in the assembly hall, sleeping in the boarding houses, eating fantastic meals in the refectory and generally letting off steam in the extensive grounds and swimming pool.

Singing in the Minster itself was a great privilege, with amazing acoustics and a humongous space to fill with our voices. The place really is as beautiful as its said to be; especially with its famous stained glass windows towering above its hundreds of visitors. The fact that the Minster has hundreds of visitors a day meant that during evensong rehearsal in the choir stalls we were not only surrounded by the amazing gothic decoration but also at least 50 to 100 people, often more, who watched us and took photos from behind the rope that cordoned us off from them. This was a very strange experience – it really put



on the pressure during practices! The end result was always worth it though when even more people, sometimes filling the entire choir stalls, attended the services and listened to us perform to the best of our ability, creating some of the best services the choir has sung over the past year.

On Wednesday morning the whole choir walked from Bootham School to the Lord Mayor's offices; only a 10 minute stroll. Sadly when we were about 5 minutes from our destination the weather changed very abruptly and we were suddenly in a torrent of rain. By the time we had reached the Mayor we were soaked through to the skin, especially those of us who hadn't brought a coat, all our 'smart clothes' were drenched. Even for those who were wearing coats it seemed that 'water-proofing' had little effect. Thankfully the Mayor, who was very pleased to see us, overlooked our appearance and the choir sang 'Teach Me, O Lord' by Thomas Attwood

beautifully from memory for her under the sure and steady hand of Mr Gregory's conducting. Then another Head Chorister (Sion Davies) and I presented a letter from the Lord Mayor of Leicester to her and she made a short speech of welcome.

For our day out we went by coach to Eden Camp which is a World War II prisoner of war camp which was built by the first Italian prisoners of war to arrive in Yorkshire. It was a great day out and there were many different and imaginative displays in the separate huts the prisoners used to live in, showing different aspects of the experience of war for the British population and beyond. We all learned a lot about WW II as well as having fun.



Another difference between Leicester Cathedral and York Minster is that the Minster has three choral services on Sunday whereas Leicester only has two. This came as quite a shock to many of our younger choristers and even to some of our older ones! The day involved a lot of hard work (and a lot of coffee) as it was the last day of our trip and everyone was very tired after a very busy but rewarding week away. Everyone agreed that the trip had been a great success.

Hollie Burton  
Head Chorister, Leicester Cathedral Girls Choir

## ST MARTINS HOUSE

St Martins House is now up and running as the hub of Diocesan and Cathedral offices. The renovation of the former Leicester Grammar School is outstanding and the Cathedral Song School has now moved into this building. Processions now start from St Martins House and this poses new challenges for all! The Annual Songmans Dinner on 05 February will be held in the new building and it will be a good opportunity for exploration of the extent of the re-development (and to sample the catering!). Members may be interested to know that the new Song School is known as the Gardiner Room. A brief history on the naming of the rooms in St Martins House follows:-

Charles Booth (1840-1916) - A social researcher and philanthropist, Booth was instrumental in carrying out a survey of London life & Labour in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and popularised the concept of the 'poverty line'. His family country home was Gracedieu Manor in Thringstone, where he also built England's first community centre. He is buried in St Andrew's Churchyard, and a memorial to him stands on the village green.

Lewis Donaldson (1860-1953) – Revd Frederic Lewis Donaldson was vicar of St Mark, Leicester from 1896-1918. He was famous for his leading role in the Leicester 'march of the unemployed' to London in 1905, and for his lifelong passion for social justice and the needs of the poor. He went on to become sub-dean of Westminster Abbey.

William Gardiner (1770-1853) – A Leicester composer, buried in Welford Road cemetery, his best known hymn tune is probably *Fulda*, often used as a setting to *We have a gospel to proclaim* (Edward Burns). He is also famed as being the man who brought the music of Beethoven to Leicester, in 1793.

Elizabeth Heyrick (1769-1831) – the Heyricks are a well-known Leicester family, with many memorials to them in the Cathedral. Elizabeth was very active in the abolitionist cause as well as in other social causes. In 1824 her leaflet *Immediate not gradual abolition* was published and she also organised a sugar boycott in the city. She died two years before the Abolition of Slavery Act was finally passed.

Margery Kempe (c.1373-1438) - a medieval mystic from King's Lynn, and a contemporary of Julian of Norwich, Margery wrote what some consider to be the first autobiography in the English language telling of her spiritual quest and visions. She met with much opposition from both secular and church authorities and in 1417 was examined for heresy in the Guildhall, facing questions from the Mayor, Steward and Abbot of Leicester.

John Wycliffe (c1328-1384) – often known as the 'morning star of the Reformation', Wycliffe was vicar of Lutterworth from 1374 to his death. His English translation of the Bible in 1382 was seen at the time as heretical. He also challenged the hierarchical government of the church and encouraged his followers to preach directly from Scripture, moving from town to town. They were known as *lollards*, meaning uneducated people, and faced severe persecution.

## **DR GEORGE GRAY MEMORIAL TRUST**

The trust is a registered charity under number 513625 and the trustees currently offer nine scholarships of £370 each to choristers to help maintain the high standard and choral tradition expected of a cathedral choir. During the year, the trust deed has been updated and one major amendment was to include the provision that the scholarships may be awarded to girl choristers as well as to boys. The Old Choristers' Association will no longer appoint the trustees but new appointments will still be ratified by the members at the AGM. We are grateful to Mr Richard Bloor for guiding the trustees through this process and liaising with the Charity Commissioners.

The 2010 annual meeting was held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March at the home of John Thorpe when the annual accounts for the year ended 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 were presented. These showed assets of £97401.14 and donations and tax recovered on those donations totalling £2619.70.

During the current financial year of the Old Choristers' Association, donations to the trust from members have totalled £150. These annual donations are always welcome and help to top up the capital for the scholarship awarded in the name of the Association. The names associated with the nine Scholarships are:

Dr George Gray 1 and 2  
Leicester Cathedral Old Choristers' Association  
Friends of Cathedral Music 1 and 2  
Bishop Ronald and Mrs Cicely Williams  
Stephen and Mary (nee Gray) Harland  
Helen Jean Cope  
Lionel Hamer

All scholarships, including those offered by the Cathedral and the Friends, are recorded in leather bound registers and we are grateful to Chris Martyn, a former songman and choir parent, who updates these for us on an annual basis.

The trust has a page on the Cathedral website at:  
[http://www.cathedral.leicester.anglican.org/george\\_gray.html](http://www.cathedral.leicester.anglican.org/george_gray.html)

Richard Belton

## **FEDERATION OF CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATIONS**

The Federation has now been existence for 100 years and to mark the centenary in 2010, the Annual General Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> May was held at Peterborough Cathedral, where the Federation was originally founded and where the local association was also celebrating its centenary year. Members gathered at the Deanery for tea and coffee during registration from 10a.m. which was followed by a tour of the Cathedral and a reception in the New Building prior to lunch. The AGM was held in the Becket Chapel and was attended by 33 delegates representing 26 Affiliated Associations. Choral Evensong was sung by the Cathedral Choir at 3.30p.m. after which tea and biscuits were served in the South Transept and the parcels of the "Once A Chorister" magazines were collected for distribution. The 2011 AGM will be held at St Mary's, Warwick on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May.

It was very fitting that the Centenary Festival was organised by the Westminster Abbey Association from 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> September, being the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the re-founding of the Abbey by Queen Elizabeth I. Accommodation was at The Hotel Jolly (formerly known as the St Ermine's Hotel), just 5 minutes walk from the Abbey. On the Friday morning, tours had been arranged of the Palace of Westminster, Big Ben or the Abbey Library, and in the evening, a musical tour of the Abbey was given by the Purcell Club. A boat trip on the Thames with lunch was arranged for the Saturday morning followed by a conducted tour of the Abbey before choral evensong at 5p.m. The festival banquet was held in Church House. Michael Bourne was able to represent our Association and met the Archbishop of Canterbury and Sir David Willcocks.

The 2011 festival will be held at Guildford Cathedral from 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June.

During 2010, we welcomed back into the Federation Bristol Old Choristers' Association, Dublin (Christ Church) Past Choristers' Association, Hereford Cathedral Former Choristers (who now form part of the Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust), Wells Cathedral Choir Association and Southwell Minster Old Choristers' Association. New members joining us have been Westminster Cathedral Choir School Old Boys' Association, Leeds Cathedral Former Choristers' Association, Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum Association, Winchester College Quiristers and St. Michael's College Society, Tenbury Wells. An application from Bradford Cathedral Old Choristers' Association will be considered by the executive in the New Year. This will bring the total number of affiliated associations to 54.

The executive committee have been overhauling the federation constitution and a final draft will be put to the members for ratification at the 2011 AGM. There is some new merchandise available for purchase and all stock is advertised on the federation website. There is also a sale of certain items. The current liquid assets of the federation are around £11,200.

When the new federation website was launched in October 2008, member associations were given individual pages on which to promote their own activities, etc. Two years later, only a handful of associations have taken up this offer. The blank pages were useless and embarrassing without input and the decision was taken to delete all of the pages and substitute these with a list of associations and their contacts.

Please do look at the website at [www.onceachorister.org](http://www.onceachorister.org).

Richard Belton

## **CATHEDRAL CHOIR 100 CLUB**

The purpose of the *100Club* is to raise funds to support the choir's external activities. It made a significant contribution to the York Minister trip.

The *100Club* runs like a small on-going lottery with a draw each month, so not only are members contributing to the life and activities of the Choir, they also have the added advantage of being able to win a small amount of money. Whilst not as big a pot as the National Lottery the odds of winning will be much better! The size of the prizes depends entirely on how many members are signed up – the greater the numbers, the greater the contribution to Choir funds and the bigger the prizes to the monthly winners.

Membership costs just £4 per month which works out at less than £1 per week. Payment of £4 per month buys a single share in the draw - that is a single entry into the draw for the relevant month. Of course it is possible to buy more than one share, which of course will increase your odds of winning!

Please consider supporting this Choir fund raising activity by joining the *100Club*. For an application form please ring Jenny Kurinczuk (available on 0116 283 1321 after 18.00hrs most evenings).

## **Presidents Skittles Evening**

Please do not forget to add this important date to your diary

**Saturday 12 March 2011**

**Wheatsheaf Pub, Thurcaston**

President of the Leicester Cathedral Old Choristers Association – Geoffrey Carter – is hosting a skittles evening which will be another opportunity for members to gather and socialise.

Cost is £7.95 per person with a traditional menu of Faggots and Sausages or black pudding or vegetarian option. Served with Cheesey mash or chips.

Please see enclosed Booking Form

## **2011 Reunion Date**

Another important date for you to remember

Leicester Cathedral Old Choristers Association  
2011 Reunion will be held on

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

**Choral Evensong at 4pm with a light  
Buffet tea afterwards**

**The AGM will be held before Choral Evensong**

All are very welcome