



Newsletter 2023

Incorporating William Byrd Festival Programme

Choir and Funding Support

Since the beginning of the year the choir has undertaken several important musical events and services. This includes preparing for the 400th Anniversary of William Byrd's death, see later Festival Programme.

It will also be performing Bach St John Passion on Saturday 25th March 2023 at 7.0pm with Aric Prentice conducting the choir and soloists Chris Way , Evangelist and Alexander Bower-Brown who will perform Christus

Significant work is continuing by the music team to help the recovery of the choir which was depleted over the pandemic period.

The cathedral's additional choirs (Consort and Youth Choir) maintain their contributions to the liturgy. This year is considered a year to consolidate (2022/2023) and to flourish (2023/2024) thereafter.

Recruitment is an ongoing issue - the girls are expected to achieve relative stability In 2023 and the boys hopefully to follow having had a dip in 2021/22. This was in numbers and quality as a result of the recruitment hiatus induced by Covid-19. For both front lines interviews are on-going.

Cost pressures are still preventing earlier changes to the current programme of services. Saturday Evensong is being sung on alternate weeks by the Youth Choir and in the intervening weeks by the choral scholars and lay vicars alone (ATB). Unfortunately Sunday morning Choral Mattins has not yet resumed.

On 29th January 2023 the evensong service celebrated the generous sponsor support given to the Cathedral Choir by individuals and groups across greater Lincolnshire and beyond. The service is to thank these sponsors and to join in worship to thank God for the gift of music, for composers, conductors, players and performers.

It was well attended and received with thanks to the Music Fund Council for the organisation and preparation and work on the day.

The music for the service included the Magnificat and Nunc Dimitus setting in the key of D George Dyson and for the Anthem Edward Elgar's setting of Great is the Lord.

Then followed the presentations of Choristerships, Choral Scholarships, Chorister Bursaries and Lay Vicar Endowments by the sponsor representative(s).

The Lincoln Old Chorister Choristership was presented to Issac Turner by John Parry on behalf of LCCOCA.

The Lincoln Old Chorister Choristerships' first recipient was Jonathan Line in 2002 and Issac is the ninth chorister to receive the award.

One of the aims of the association is to support the choir and like many other associations demonstrates the importance of such support by former choristers. This helps to sustain the viability of Cathedral Choirs and provides the opportunities for youngsters to enjoy the same unique experience which they gained.

Many Old Lincoln Choristers do this by giving regular amounts to the Music Fund and have, through their fund raising and generosity, raised sufficient funds for two Choristerships. The LCCOCA has since raised over £20,000 towards a third Choristership, the target now being £50,000. When the required amount has been raised a Chorister will be chosen to wear a medallion acknowledging the LCCOCA Choristership.

It is also good to report that much effort by the music department, led by Director of Music Aric Prentice, in the recruitment and training of choristers from local schools continues well with over twelve schools participating .

LCCOCA Directory

As a reminder, following a request by some of the former old choristers the committee is establishing an 'Old Chorister Directory' The list is far from complete, but members can provide as much information as they wish to share with other members including choir member dates.

Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Associations

Since the 2021 AGM the LCCOCA has renewed its' contacts with the FCOCA and on behalf of our Association John Parry is liaising with the Federation on matters of interest to both organisations.

For the 2023 FCOCA National Festival it is to be hosted by the Association at Warwick on the 15th – 17th September. It will form part of the 900th anniversary of the founding of the church of St Mary and its choir. A full programme of events is being planned for the weekend and for those members who may be interested, details are in the FCOCA 'Once a Chorister' magazine on the FCOCA web site: www.fcoca.org.uk along with suggestions for accommodation, places of refreshment and other places to visit in the area.

Farewell

On the 2nd February 2023 Dean Very Revd Christine Wilson retired following a farewell evensong on the day. The Dean had been a good supporter of the Association and we send her our best wishes for a happy retirement .

H John Parry

For LCCOCA

Byrd 400 Festival Programme at Lincoln: a celebration of the ‘father of music’

Tuesday 4 July 2023 marks the 400th anniversary of the death of William Byrd, the ‘Father of Music’. Byrd came to Lincoln Cathedral in 1563 when, at the age of just 23, he was appointed as ‘Song Master and Pulsator at the Organs’. Just 100 years ago Byrd’s music - and the enormous influence that his music has had on the course of composition ever since - was little known. In fact, the concert given in Lincoln Cathedral in 1923 included more music by Mozart and others than by the man himself! However, this pioneering concert re-established William Byrd at his rightful place in musical history.



Friday 30 June to Tuesday 4 July 2023

Just a century later, Lincoln Cathedral will put this right and one of its greatest sons will be remembered and celebrated in a 5-day festival of music, liturgy and research to remember the enormous contribution William Byrd made during his long life and especially during those early formative years here at Lincoln.

Music in worship

In an immersive five days of music and liturgy, Lincoln Cathedral Choir will lead with regular worship, to include all three Mass settings, some twenty motets and anthems, all four settings of the evening canticles and more, much of it in newly-researched editions. The cathedral musicians will be joined for some events and services by the world-famous *Tallis Scholars* and by the *Chapel Choir of Merton College, Oxford*. The Wetheringsett Early English organ, built on historic principals, will also be on loan to the cathedral throughout the festival – celebrating Byrd’s work for keyboard - and the music for viols will be featured in a concert by *Arculo*.

Lectures and Recitals

An academic symposium on Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 July includes twelve new papers by eminent researchers, including Kerry McCarthy, author of *William Byrd*, Professor Magnus Williamson (editor of the *Cantiones Sacrae* volumes) and Professor Owen Rees of Queen’s College, Oxford. Research papers have been selected particularly to develop understanding of the influence of those early nine years during which Byrd led the music in Lincoln Cathedral.

The fully-inclusive cost of the Academic Symposium has been priced, with significant generous sponsorship, at just £20.

Memorial Stone

In 1923, on the 300th anniversary, Lincoln Cathedral installed a plaque to William Byrd’s memory in the north choir aisle. With generous financial support and with the kind permission of the Fabric Advisory Council, the cathedral has commissioned a

memorial stone. It will take pride of place in the floor of Lincoln's ancient St Hugh's Choir, from where Byrd himself would have led the daily office in the sixteenth century. The stone will be unveiled and dedicated at Evensong on Tuesday 4 July 2023, on the 400th memorial of his death.

As always, attendance at all cathedral services is free of charge.

How to take part

If you wish to make the pilgrimage to Lincoln in July, then concert and symposium tickets can be purchased through the cathedral website www.lincolncathedral.com

If you feel able to make a donation to help offset our festival costs including the costs of the memorial stone, then please contact nick.brown@lincolncathedral.com

We look forward to welcoming people to Lincoln from across the world in the summer, as we remember and celebrate the life and work of William Byrd.

Aric Prentice

*Director of Music and Master of the Choristers
for Lincoln Cathedral*