



Salisbury Cathedral Old Choristers' Association

FCOCA Article 2018-2019

The musicians at Salisbury Cathedral enjoyed a year of varied and interesting music-making.

The choir fulfilled its commitment to the Diocese by giving concerts at Whiteparish, Downton, Great Durnford, Sturminster Newton, Bradford on Avon and Sutton Veny. Salisbury Cathedral Junior Choir continued to sing strongly, meeting every Saturday morning in term time, and appearing at the Christmas Carol Service for BBC Radio Wiltshire among numerous other events. The Salisbury Cathedral Youth Choir and Chamber Choir went from strength to strength.

The annual recording of Christmas carols for Jackie Lawson E-Cards was made during the Summer Term of 2018, an event which always feels strange with the sun beating through the Cathedral's windows, and a CD of settings of George Herbert texts was completed for release in 2019.

The Southern Cathedrals Festival in July 2018 took place in Salisbury and showcased its usual variety of high quality liturgical music. The final Saturday concert was a most memorable event with all five choirs from the three Cathedrals on duty for a performance of the Brahms Requiem. On the Sunday we said goodbye to the Year 8 Choristers and our organ scholar Daniel Mathieson.

We said goodbye to a great friend of the Cathedral's Music, Ian Wicks, who left us to take up the position of Head Master at the Chorister School in Durham. His and his wife Elizabeth's contribution to the life of Salisbury Cathedral School and Salisbury Cathedral was very impressive. The RSCM Young Voices Service in March 2018 was once again a huge success, directed by Susie Lamb, Ian Wicks' popular successor as Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral School.

The cathedral choristers took part in a magnificent performance of Britten's War Requiem in November and followed that with a performance of Handel's 'Messiah' with the City of London Sinfonia. Both concerts attracted a very large audience.

The Christmas season once again saw the choir delivering liturgical music in a variety of services and events. December began with the Advent Procession – From Darkness to Light – which, as usual ran for three consecutive evenings. The BBC Wiltshire Service referred to earlier was recorded for transmission on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and we hosted numerous schools for their carol services. The cathedral choir sang a lunchtime concert in Birmingham Symphony Hall with Thomas Trotter at the organ and then the choir delivered a hectic sequence of services over Christmas itself, with the Cathedral welcoming literally thousands through its doors.

Plans are now well advanced for 2019 and include an Epiphany Devotion with period orchestra, Diocesan concerts at Ogbourne, Fovant and Beaminster, a BBC Radio 3 live broadcast of Choral Evensong, a choir tour to Vienna, Bratislava and Salzburg, a performance of Bach's St Matthew Passion with Florilegium, a concert as part of the St Albans International Organ Festival and the Southern Cathedrals Festival in Chichester.

With the restoration of the Willis organ taking place throughout the whole of 2019, these are exciting times indeed.

David Halls January 2019