



THE CATHEDRAL AND
ABBEY CHURCH OF
SAINT ALBAN

ALBAN NOTES

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Affiliated to the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Associations

From The Chairman

Last year was an exciting year for both the ECA and the Cathedral Choirs and 2014 promises to be an interesting and very busy year.

In this issue there are some important announcements about our categories of membership as well as items of news and general interest.

ECA Members' News

We welcome as new members **Chris Price** and **Alexander (Bob) Hall**. They were valedicted from the Cathedral Choir at Christmas 2013.

Forthcoming events – Annual General Meeting

Members will recall that the ECA has changed its accounting and reporting year to 31st March to give us more flexibility to hold our reunions and AGMs. A provisional time and date for this year's AGM is Sunday 27th April at 12.15, venue to be advised with the formal AGM Notice – please put this date in your diary.

Luccombe 2014

Following last year's very enjoyable and successful camp at Luccombe a few members have asked whether there will be another camp this year. The committee is considering the weekend of 11th – 13th July but there need to be a number of changes in that we must have a "critical mass" if we are to camp in the field; we must also have a musical quorum if we are going to sing Evensong.

I have also been advised by Andrew Lucas that as we are the "St Albans Cathedral ECA" I will need to obtain endorsement from the Dean and Chapter. Of course this is perfectly sensible for a number of reasons, including risk and reputation management.

Other News - The Zombies



Rod Argent, former cathedral chorister in the late 50s-early 60s, and The Zombies recently performed a concert at the Waterside Theatre in Aylesbury alongside The Animals and The Yardbirds as part of a UK tour.

Rod wrote the song "She's not there" in 1962 and sang it in our ECA Concert in the Abbey for Peter and Pat Hurford's 80th Birthday in 2010. The Zombies concluded their concert with this famous song.

I was able to meet up with Rod after the concert and he sends his best wishes to all his former friends and colleagues.

Don't forget to visit our website at <http://www.stalbanseca.org/> and also the St Albans Ex-Choristers Association page on Facebook.

Abbey Singers – Choral Evensong



On Thursday 19th December the Abbey Singers sang the service of Choral Evensong in the Quire. The Canticles were a *Magnificat* by Buxtehude and the *Nunc Dimittis tertii toni* by Victoria. The anthem was *Virga Jesse* by Bruckner and the singers were directed by Assistant Master of the Music, Tom Winpenny.

St Albans Cathedral Choirs

As an association affiliated to the *international* Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations we submit an annual report covering our ECA activities and those of the Cathedral Choirs. The report appears in the magazine "Once a Chorister" published in May each year, copies of which, including the current edition featuring the Festival at St Albans, are available from the Chairman.

Annual Report – from Andrew Lucas Master of the Music

In addition to the daily choral services and special services sung by both choirs it has, once again, been an exciting and challenging year for the Cathedral Choir and Abbey Girls Choir.

Our new Minor Canon and Precentor, the Rev'd Paul Arbutnot joined us from St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin where he was Precentor's Vicar and previously an Alto Choral Scholar and Cantoris Alto Lay Vicar.

In February the Cathedral Choir gave a concert at Holy Trinity, Stevenage, in Hertfordshire which was supported by the Cathedral Music Trust.

In April, the Abbey Girls Choir sang Mass at Westminster Cathedral

During the May half-term the Cathedral Choir visited Loreto, Italy where they sang in the beautiful "**Shrine of the Holy House**" or "**Basilica of the Santa Casa.**" In addition to the Master and Assistant Master of the Music, Andrew Lucas and Tom Winpenny, they were accompanied by the Rev'd Paul Arbutnot, Precentor (pictured far right) and Canon Richard Watson, Sub Dean.



(c) E.Tanner



In June the Cathedral Choristers held a very colourful balloon race starting on the Abbey Orchard with the proceeds going towards the choir tour fund.

For several years the Cathedral Choir has held various fund raising events in order to support the tour fund and of course donations from the congregation and other sources are and have been very welcome.

July was a hectic, but musically rewarding month firstly with a BBC broadcast of Choral Evensong.

The Cathedral Choir sang *Quia vidisti me* by Hassler as the introit together with Ayleward's Responses. The canticles were the St Paul's Service by Herbert Howells and the anthem, *Lobet den Herrn*, by JS Bach.

ECA Members should note that an extensive selection of recordings of the Cathedral Choir and Abbey Girls Choir are maintained in the ECA Choir archive and are available from the Chairman for private use.

In addition, there were two concerts for the International Organ Festival Society. The first featured Benjamin Britten's War Requiem performed by the St Albans Bach Choir and Mosaic Chamber Choir with the Cathedral Choristers (trebles).

The second was the biennial Three Choirs Concert where the Cathedral Choir and the Abbey Girls Choir were joined by the choirs of Salisbury Cathedral and York Minster.

The Abbey Girls Choir ended the summer term with an enjoyable day trip to Brighton.



(C) Tim Easter

**IOF Three Choirs Concert
St Albans Cathedral Choir and the Abbey Girls Choir
with the choirs of Salisbury Cathedral and York Minster**

Finally, in December the Cathedral Choir and the Abbey Girls Choir performed with the St Albans Bach Choir and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall for the John Rutter Christmas Concert.