



The Voice

The newsletter of The Guild of Ex-Choristers of the Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick

Issue No 23

November 2014

Guild elects new Chairman

At the 11th AGM held on Saturday 3 October, Colin Edwards was elected Chairman of the Guild of Ex-Choristers.

As the incoming Chairman of the Guild, I thought that I would take the opportunity to introduce myself. I was a boy in the choir in the 1960s under Geoffrey Holroyde, without whose enthusiasm and encouragement I doubt that I would have continued to enjoy the great choral tradition of the English Churches. St Mary's choir really buzzed in those days and it was great to be part of such a wonderful team. Sadly, at the age of 12, my voice broke with a vengeance, producing a sonorous bottom C but little above G below middle C!

Once a normal range was established I began singing again, with choirs run by Garry Jones and then in various choirs through university. My professional life has been as a mathematics teacher, most recently at Rugby School. I have had the

opportunity to sing in school choirs and singing has been a constant through these years and continues to be now that I have retired to live back in Warwick. Here I am singing with Collegium and the St Mary's Scholars, and I really enjoy singing in St Mary's once again.



Guild Chairman
Colin Edwards

I take over the Guild from Nick Hodges who has done a remarkable job in re-establishing the Guild and leading it through the past 11 years. He has my thanks for all that he has done but also for all that he will continue to do as a member of the committee.

We have talked much about increasing the involvement of younger ex-choristers and we hope that the informal get together in the Zetland on 28 December will encourage more of you to come along. If you have other ideas for activities then please contact me at colin.edwards@chch.oxon.org. I very much hope that I will meet many of you at events over the coming years.

A message from our President

At our last meeting of the Guild in October this year, Nick Hodges stood down as chairman and handed over the reins to Colin Edwards. As President of the Guild, I tried to articulate our admiration for Nick's superb handling of the office over a period of 11 years.

Speaking from a purely selfish point of view, he provided me at every meeting with a foolproof list of annotations to the agenda. It became almost impossible for me to make a fool of myself, which I am all too apt to do. His attention to the Guild's business has been exemplary, and his leadership inspiring.



Edward Higginbottom

Nick, ever since his chorister days under Geoffrey, remains not only faithful to the value of his choral experience, but boundlessly enthusiastic about keeping the musical traditions at St Mary's as strong as possible. His initiatives, his guidance, his probity have all played their part in consolidating the Guild in its early years.

We owe him a huge debt. Under President's action, subsequent to our last meeting, I have written to Nick offering him the honour of joining the ranks of the Vice-Presidents of the Guild. He has gladly accepted, I am pleased to say.

XCHORISTERS' XMAS DRINK

Sunday 28 December

From 5.00pm

Zetland Arms, Church Street



Following the success of last year's post-Christmas informal gathering, once again we will be meeting at the Zetland for drinks on 28 December. This is a great time to catch up with old friends and past singing buddies. No planned activities. No singing (unless you want to). No sermon!

When you've eaten all the turkey, drunk all the beer and broken all the toys, what better way is there to spend your time.

Diary

Sunday 30 November 6.30pm St Mary's	Advent Carol Service Boys & Men
Saturday 6 December 7.30pm St Mary's (Tickets from Gift Shop)	Christmas Concert Boys, Girls & Men
Sunday 14 December 6.30pm St Mary's	Candlelit Carol Service Boys, Girls & Men
Saturday 20 December 7.30pm Warwick Castle	Carols at the Castle Boys, Girls & Men
Sunday 21 December 6.30pm St Mary's	Candlelit Carol Service Boys, Girls & Men
Christmas Eve 11.15pm St Mary's	Midnight Mass Boys, Girls & Men
Christmas Day 10.00am St Mary's	Family Eucharist Boys, Girls & Men
Saturday 21 March 7.30pm St Mary's (Tickets from Gift Shop)	Glories of England A concert of English choral music

Get back into singing

Calling all ex-choristers. Now is the time to get back into singing.

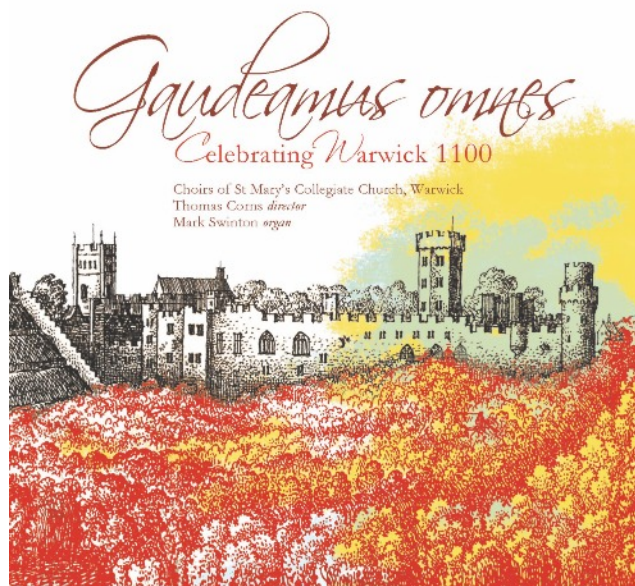
The St Mary's Scholars is keen to welcome new members and particularly seeks tenors and basses.

The Scholars rehearse on Tuesdays from 7.30pm to 9.30pm and, in addition to deputising for the main choir when it is on holiday, regularly gives concerts and sings choral services elsewhere.

Further details can be found on the St Mary's website at

<http://www.stmaryswarwick.org.uk> or email Mark Swinton at adofm@stmaryswarwick.org.uk or call him at the Parish Office, number below, extension 3.

Do something different this coming New Year. Get back into singing.



New choir CD

Out now, just in time for Christmas and available from the St Mary's Gift Shop

Gaudeamus omnes: Celebrating Warwick 1100

Presenting music with the unifying theme of dedication

Includes I was glad (Parry), Jubilate Deo (Walton), We wait for thy loving kindness (McKie), Blessed city, heavenly Salem (Bairstow) and the first recording of Gaudeamus omnes in Domino by David Briggs, especially commissioned for St Mary's and based on the plainsong in the windows of the Beauchamp Chapel.

Also now available, last year's CD - Christmas from Warwick.

The perfect Christmas present, a double CD set.

Richard Scarth - Organist

It is with deep sadness that we report the recent death of Richard Scarth. Richard will be remembered by many who sang in the choir in the late 1960s as a talented organist and accompanist with a keen sense of humour and generous character.

Richard joined the team as Geoffrey Holroyde's unpaid assistant organist in 1966 and played on the first "In Quires and Places" LP recording.

Colin Roy (also a past unpaid assistant organist from Geoffrey's time) played at Richard's funeral earlier in November and represented the St Mary's Ex-Choristers. Richard was 84. Although in good health, he died shortly after a fall.

Chairman attends Festival

The Annual Festival of the FCOCA was this year held at Rochester Cathedral on Friday 26 to Sunday 28 September. Nick Hodges and his wife Carolyn attended on behalf of the Guild.

The weekend began with a drinks and buffet reception hosted by the Dean of Rochester, The Very Reverend Dr Mark Beach. A recital by the King's Singers, a member of which, Christopher Gabbitts, is an ex-Rochester chorister, brought Friday to a close.

A demonstration of the temporary electronic organ was given by Director of Music, Scott Farrell and after Evensong on Saturday, sung by the boys, girls and men, the Festival Banquet was held in the Kings School with guest speaker, Andrew Carwood.

The 2015 Festival will be held in Exeter on 3 to 5 July.



The Guild of Ex-Choristers

The Parish Office, Collegiate Church of St Mary, Old Square, Warwick, CV34 4AB

Email: exchoristers@stmaryswarwick.org.uk

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