

## Salisbury (*Reunion 1st July*)



This has been a time of great change for the choir, as following a sabbatical period, Simon Lole, Director of Music from September 1997, announced his decision to leave Salisbury in July 2005 to pursue a freelance career.

I was delighted to be appointed as his successor and Daniel Cook, previously at Westminster Abbey, was subsequently appointed Assistant Director of Music. Daniel has wide experience of working at the highest musical level and I am confident that he and I will make a superb partnership. Daniel studied under Keith Wright at Durham, was Organ scholar at Worcester Cathedral and Southwark Cathedral, whilst continuing professional training at the Royal College of Music.

Simon Jacobs joined us as organ scholar for the current academic year. He completed a music degree at Cambridge University and was Organ Scholar at Christ's College, Cambridge.

There were four special events to celebrate Simon's eight years at Salisbury. All ex-boy choristers from his era were invited to sing at a special Evensong in the cathedral, and all the girls at another Evensong. For the first time ever all current boy and girl choristers sang together with the men of the choir on Radio 3's live broadcast of Choral Evensong. Although Simon enjoyed many leaving parties, there was a special farewell tea party in the cathedral after his final Evensong at which hundreds of members of the congregation joined to wish him well and hear the Dean of Salisbury, June Osborne, thank him for all he had given to the Cathedral during his tenure.

The choir worked well throughout maintaining the consistently high standards it produces. The *Opus Dei* remains our priority here with nine choral services each week divided between the boy and girl choristers supported, as ever, by our six excellent lay vicars. The choir also had the honour of singing at the funeral of Sir Edward Heath.

We joined our colleagues from Chichester and Winchester Cathedrals in Winchester for a marvellous Southern Cathedrals' Festival in July 2005. Plans are well advanced for the SCF in July 2006, which will be hosted by Salisbury Cathedral. The choir continues to give two concerts in the diocese each term as well as participating in the annual Diocesan Choirs' Festival. They also join in outreach music workshops with the Cathedral School in primary schools in the Salisbury area.

The boys and men of the choir enjoyed a ten day tour of the East coast of the USA, singing three services, six major concerts and two choral masterclasses. The girls and men travel to Italy for a week-long tour in March 2006. Shortly after they return, the boys, girls and men will record a new CD of music dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

The choristers have supported fund raising efforts for the cathedral's Choral Foundation by singing in two concerts - an evening of French choral music including Fauré's *Requiem* and Handel's *Messiah* - and by helping the cathedral school's cook to produce over one hundred Christmas puddings sold to parents, friends and members of the congregation!

We continue to work hard at recruitment. Our *Be a chorister for a day* initiative is hugely

successful and is certainly a useful way of attracting new families to find out about the chorister/cathedral choir world (photograph below). This, combined with an active PR programme, helps to keep our choristers in the local public eye.



I am very pleased that the cathedral has bought a new Blüthner concert grand piano and a series of concerts is planned. From January to March 2006, whilst the Father Willis organ is overhauled, the piano and the Collins' chamber organ will be used. The cathedral's musicians will play one of Bach's '48', in order, on the piano at the end of each service culminating in a concert in March.

Our summer 2006 leavers will be **Matteo Placidi, David Smith, Matthew Wright, Alice Beverley, Gillian Branch, Camilla Harris, Elizabeth Post, Daisy Syme-Taylor** and **Lucy Taylor**.

DAVID HALLS  
Director of Music

### **Cathedral School Association News**

*(Reunion Saturday 1st July at the Cathedral School)*

The Salisbury Cathedral School Association held its 108th Reunion on Saturday 3rd July 2005 with the theme "Memorabilia and Reminiscences". The School Librarian and Archivist, together with members of the Association produced photographs and other memorabilia, recalling the life of the School to the present day. The earliest photograph on display was taken in 1866.

Simon Lole, after eight very happy years as Director of Music at Salisbury, which he counts as his dream job, has decided to hang up his cassock to seek pastures new. His musical career started over 27 years ago. He was chorister, and later Organ Scholar, at St Paul's Cathedral, London, under Christopher Dearnley (previously Master of the Choristers at Salisbury, prior to Richard Seal). His Headmaster at St Paul's was Derek Sutton, former chorister at York Minster and teacher at Salisbury Cathedral School and lay vicar at the Cathedral - already then two connections to Salisbury for Simon! Simon held the post of organist at the Parish Churches of Barking, Croydon and Warwick, followed by three years as Master of the Music at Sheffield Cathedral, prior to his appointment to Salisbury Cathedral.

A good number of choristers of Simon's era and other former choristers sang with the Cathedral Choir for the Association's Annual Reunion Evensong after which a BBQ was enjoyed by younger members. We said farewell to Simon at the traditional Reunion Dinner held at the Cathedral School Refectory, attended by many members of the Association.

We are all pleased that David Halls (left) has taken up his new post as Director of Music at the Cathedral. He started as Assistant Organist to Richard Seal in 1997 and became Organist and Assistant Director of Music to Simon Lole (right) in 2000.

Ben Lamb, former Bishop's Chorister at Salisbury and Organ Scholar at Salisbury 2002-03, Director of *Sarum Voices*, was married to Cathy Langston, Organ Scholar at Salisbury 2001-02, on Friday 29th July 2005 at the Cathedral.

In 2006 the school swimming pool will be 50 years old. Our sports master at the time made us swim when the water was as low as 53 degrees Fahrenheit (13-14 degrees Celsius), before the heating system was installed at a later date!

A new CD recording *Praise and Thanksgiving* was commissioned by The Friends of Salisbury Cathedral to celebrate their 75th anniversary in September 2005. Both boy and girl choristers are taking part in this recording (Griffin - GCCD 4046) which includes new music specially commissioned by the cathedral. The CD is available from the Cathedral Shop.



STEPHEN J MILNER