

# St. Bartholomew's Choir

December 1998

## Choir CD Launched Thursday November 5th

This was a most elegant occasion with a good attendance in the Hugh Lane Gallery. The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Senator Joe Doyle, honoured us by wearing his chain of office; and two other senators, David Norris and our own Mary Henry also attended. The climax of the evening came of course with the arrival of Alexander Anissimov accompanied by Madame Anissimov who had only arrived from Russia on the same day. The choir sang the Cantique de Jean Racine by Fauré as well as Bruckner's Ave Maria.

Then after some

words of "high praise", particularly for Malcolm Wisener, the head boys, Graham Kerr and Patrick Groenland presented a book to Alexander on the Hugh Lane Collection. The inscription inside the cover read "Presented to Maestro Alexander Anissimov by the Choristers & Gentlemen of St. Bartholomew's Choir, Dublin, in gratitude - and to wish him a great first season as Principal Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland. Thursday November 5, 1998." Andrew Dempsey presented flowers to

Madame Anissimov.

Fr. John McKay concluded the speeches expressing his thanks and admiration to Malcolm for his work in producing the CD, but more especially for his ongoing dedication to the musical and liturgical life of St. Bartholomew's.

The choir would like particularly to thank Joanna Crookes who made it possible to have so important a guest of honour as Alexander Anissimov and also the good people who run the Hugh Lane Gallery for their great support.

## Christmas Events

As has become usual at Christmas time, the choir is extremely busy. While the full choir only has two official engagements (aside from the services), the boys have at least three others.

The full choir is singing in a concert of Carols on Saturday, 12th of December, for the friends of the Hugh Lane Gallery. This concert is in the gallery

at 2:00pm.

Also with the full choir, on December 13th, we have the annual concert with Alan Stanford. Going on previous years, we should have a full house - so get there at least 15 minutes early. Tickets have been on sale for some time, and there will still be some available. Part of the proceeds from the concert this

year will be donated to the Omagh fund.

The boys are singing in three identical Christmas concerts - "The Glory of Christmas" - produced by Raymond Gubbay Ltd. The first one is on Sunday 20th in the Waterfront Hall, Belfast. This is followed by concerts in the National Concert Hall on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd.

## Nicholas McMurry Leaves Choir

Nicholas McMurry joined the boys choir around 1987 having been “discovered” in High School by Malcolm. His musical skills were in evidence from the start, and after switching to the men’s section in 1989, following the choir’s first cross-channel trip to Ripon, he developed into an excellent Alto. He could easily have gained acceptance into any of the English cathedrals, but he stayed loyally with St.

Bartholomew’s, and was a very significant part of the success of our CD - including, of course, the solo role in Gibbons’ “This is the record of John”.

Joining the Irish Youth Choir about three years ago, he was the Counter Tenor Soloist for them this year. Nicholas was also a member of the various choirs in Trinity College for a while - including College Singers.

Nicholas is now studying voice in the Cork School of Music under Geoffrey Spratt. In addition to involvement in many other musical activities, he is singing in St. Finbarre’s Cathedral. We suspect and hope that he will return to us on every occasion that he can get to Dublin.

It is hard to imagine St. Bartholomew’s without Nicholas; let us hope that it is just a “leave of absence”.

## Organ Restoration

A final report on the work which must be undertaken on the organ is now being prepared. It is some considerable time since any money was spent on the instrument so the costs are going to be very substantial - probably in the range of £80,000-£90,000. The work will be done for the year 2,000, but very soon we will have to commence an enormous fund raising campaign.

## Choir Photo

We still have a number of copies of the photo, which was taken on the sanctuary steps of La Madeleine, with the names of the choir. If any choir parent wants one, they are most welcome, at no charge, from Bobby Barden.

## CD Sales

We have now sold over 500 copies of our CD “Sing Praises”, which is an incredible achievement.

The CDs are on sale for £11.99 each in Veritas, Middle Abbey Street; the Religious Resource Centre of the Holy Trinity Church, Rathmines, Christ Church Cathedral, and the APCK Bookshop, Dawson Street.

In addition, parishioners, parents, and friends of the choir can still purchase copies from Neville Beresford after Sung Eucharist every Sunday for £10. Why not buy them in numbers? - They make excellent gifts! Should you have difficulty in getting hold of a copy, please let us know!

The Sunday Tribune

on November 22nd featured a review of the CD.

*“The low cost of producing CDs has given many groups the opportunity to record their own disc. With a small choir there will be problems, the chorale from the Brahms Requiem for example sounds under-voiced, but the range of the music on the 16 tracks soon compensates. Wesley’s rarely heard anthem “Ascribe unto the Lord” is the longest work and it is valuable to have this fine performance. The other works range from plain-song to modern composers.”*

The review was written by Ian Fox.

## New Psalters on the way

The men currently sing the psalms from old blue covered psalters which are now over 55 years old, and hence are falling to pieces.

A new set of red covered psalters will be introduced shortly, which have been presented to the choir in memory of the parents of one of the choristers.

The unique psalter

used at St. Bartholomew's was introduced to our church by former choirmaster Edward S. Fry in 1943, and comes from All Saints, Margaret Street in London.

Bobby Barden visited "Bill" Fry two weeks ago at St. Monica's in Bristol and found him fit and well. He is totally absorbed with any news he receives of St.

Bartholomew's - and during the visit, he played the fine Willis Organ which is in the chapel of St. Monica's. His lovely room looks out over the beautiful grounds of the home, and there are many pictures and mementoes of St. Bartholomew's to be seen there. Bill hopes to visit Dublin in the Summer of 1999.

## New Faces

Every season we lose some boys for one reason or another. On the other hand, these are quickly replaced by new faces. In this new season, we have welcomed six new boys:

*Eoin Clancy  
Hugh Clancy  
Simon Downey  
Conor McDermot  
Killian Rogan  
Jonathan Van de Belt*

At the same time, we have to bid farewell to Sam Boles, Robert Lindsay, Richard Mahony, James O'Neill, Timothy Telford, and from the men's section, Nicholas McMurry and Stuart McCoy. We wish them all the best of luck in the future.



*Worcester Cathedral - We are visiting here and St. David's in Wales next April.*

## Culwick Concert

Three of the senior choir boys will be singing with the Culwick Choral Society in Benjamin Britten's St. Nicholas next Saturday Evening, December 12, in the National Concert Hall.

## St. Francis Xavier's

Once again, we have been invited to sing an evening mass in St. Francis Xavier's Church, Gardiner Street - a beautiful Jesuit church in the heart of the city. This will take place around the end of January.

## Post Easter Visit to Worcester and St. David's

Stephen Shellard, a former chorister in St. Barts, is the lead Alto in Worcester, and - uniquely - his wife is in fact the Precentor! We also have a friend in St. David's - the organist and choirmaster there is Geraint Bowen, a former assistant organist in St. Patrick's Dublin.

**Choirmaster:** Malcolm Wisener GRSM, FTCL, ARCO, 122 Morehampton Road, Donnybrook, Dublin 4. Tel 01-6683237  
**Treasurer:** Neville Beresford, 1 Linden Vale, Proby Square, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Tel 01-2885693  
**Secretary:** Bobby Barden, Forgefield, Stocking Lane, Dublin 16. Tel 01-4945671  
**Newsletter:** Richard Bannister. E-mail: richard@bannister.org.