

St. Bartholomew's Choir

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June 2000

Diary of the Trip

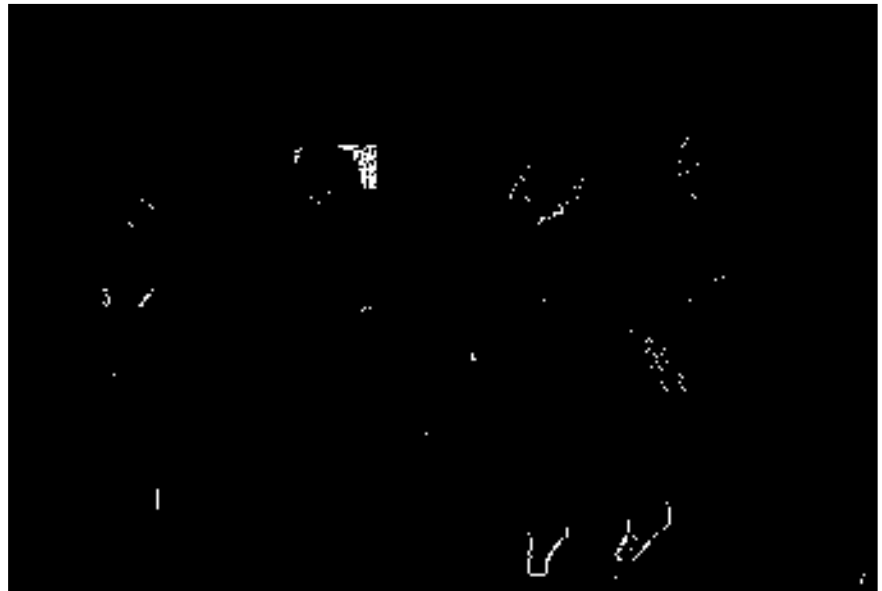
Kevin O'Connor has given us his perspective of the trip.

Tuesday 25-4-2000

Bleary eyed, we crept up to St. Bartholomew's in the bleak hours of the morning. The weather, naturally enough, was lashing rain. We hastily transferred our luggage into our designated cars, and drove to Dublin port, where we sat waiting for a little over an hour. We boarded the Stena Challenger and made our way up to the lounge, where many of the boys proceeded to make the most of the play area, although at least one of the boys fell asleep in a chair. Some of the younger gentlemen learned how to play Backgammon, with one or two being a lot better at it than others. After four hours we rolled off the boat onto dry land and Welsh soil. After making our way past HM Customs without arousing suspicion, we set off for Gloucester. On the way some of the cars stopped off at St. Asaph's in Wales, a

town that boasts a fine cathedral. On our way again, some of us got lost... decided to detour through the Roman town of Chester with its fine examples of Tudor Architecture. At any

Cathedral for practice far too early in the morning: 9 AM for the boys and 45 minutes later for the gentlemen. After practice, the boys and some of the younger gentlemen went to the Jet Age



Tom, Patrick, Sam, and Simon at the Jet Age Museum

rate, we finally arrived at Nicki's Taverna in Gloucester, where we would dine most nights. Then there was time for a quick drink and then off to our respective hotels for a well-deserved night's sleep.

Wednesday 26-4-2000

Our first full day in Gloucester was quite a shock - having to get to the

Aviation museum.

Among the aircraft on display was the Harrier Jump Jet in which the boys were allowed to sit. We also saw a reproduction of a Gloster (sic) biplane, the last wooden plane made for the R.A.F. That evening, Sumsion in G and "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace" by S. S. Wesley marked our first Evensong in the spectacular cathedral.

Diary of the Trip (continued)

Thursday 27-4-2000

One of the privileged duties we have on trips like this is to act as ambassadors for the City of Dublin. On Thursday morning, we met the Mayor of Gloucester, one Councillor Arthur Meredith. We presented him with greetings from the Mayor of Dublin, Councillor Mary Freehill, along with several gifts. A number of

unwind and play football, although some clearly preferred the playground area. At Evensong, a few hours later, we sang Stanford in A and "O Jesu Christ Meins Lebens Licht" by Bach.

Friday 28-4-2000

Friday was designated the "day off", as the Cathedral was in use that evening. As a result, the

Museum, and then on to the Birds of Prey centre where they got to see a kestrel in action.

That evening, the boys (and, for that matter, some of the parents) tried their hand at Bouldering.

Saturday 29-4-2000

Back to business. After practice, the boys and younger gentlemen went off to a local bowling alley where everyone enjoyed two games. One of the mothers seemed extremely adept at the bowling, even though it was her first time playing.

For Evensong, we sang Byrd's Second Service, Ave Maria by Bruckner, and Dum Transisset Sabbatum by Tavener.

After Evensong, we were given a brief tour of the cathedral. It was interesting to learn that King Edward the Second was buried there after his unpleasant demise. There was also a tribute to Edward Jenner, the inventor of the first vaccine against smallpox.

Sunday 30-4-2000

The penultimate day of our trip was punctuated with no



Bobby Barden tries out a new hat...

volunteers were dressed up in the regalia of past Mayors, and some even got to wear the Mayoral chain. We then serenaded the Mayor with "Ubi Caritas" by Duruflé. Light refreshments were provided (and much appreciated).

Afterwards, the boys went to the local park to

town was crawling with policemen and liners were being placed over the bins, presumably for security reasons. Unfortunately the weather was truly dreadful, and for that reason many of the younger gentlemen stayed in bed most of the day. The boys, however, travelled to the Waterways

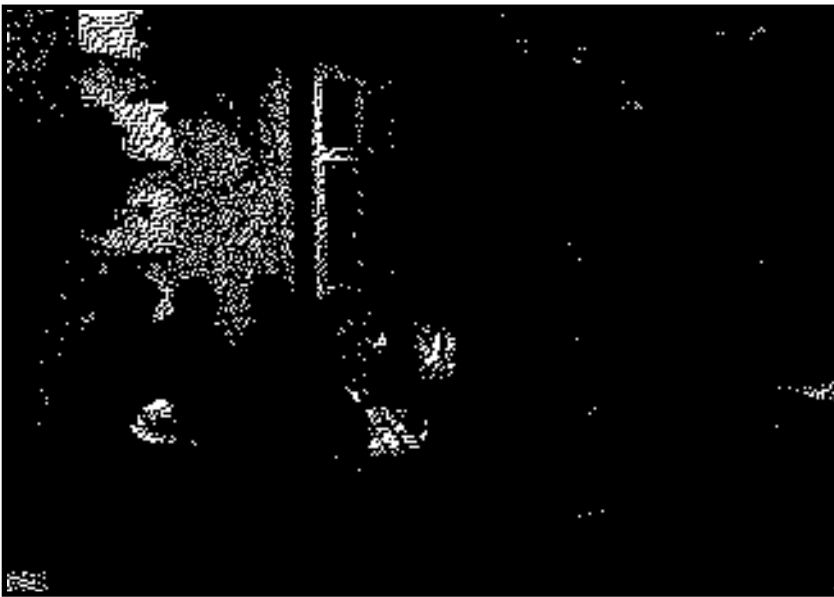
Diary of the Trip (continued)

less than two services. In the morning we sang Ireland in C, "Jubilate" by Stanford, and "Ave Verum" by Mozart. In the evening service, we sang Noble in B minor, "Ubi Caritas" by Duruflé, and "Cantique de Jean Racine" by Fauré. By now everyone had got into a certain routine, and it was sad to be

was uneventful, and the boat arrived on time at 6 PM.

Thank You

A special thanks must go to Malcolm Wisener, our Musical Director, and to Andrew Mackriell, our organist. In addition, the trip could not have been a



The Gentlemen unwind on Sunday evening

leaving after such a short time. There was just enough time, however, for a swim in a local swimming pool.

Monday 1-5-2000

We began our long drive early in the morning. The traffic was extremely light, and for that reason many of the cars stopped off at different places on the way. The ferry crossing from Fishguard to Rosslare

success without the hard work of the support party: Tom Arnold, Patricia Barden, Neville Beresford, John Cogan, Mary Downey, Ultan Edge, Anthony Fitzpatrick, Niamh Harty, Albert Horan, Alex Kinsella, Margaret Percival, and Rachael Murphy.

The trip was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and we're all looking forward to the next one!

Participants in the trip:

Boys

Patrick Arnold
Andrew Bannister
Ben Boles
Joshua Cashman-Edge
Sam Cogan
Eoin Clancy
Hugh Clancy
Mark Cummins
Andrew Dempsey
Simon Downey
Roger Fagan
Kevin Fitzpatrick
Sean Fitzpatrick
Killian Horan
Cian Kinsella
Conor McDermott
Jude Murphy
Niall Murtagh
Killian Rogan
Jonathan Van de Belt
Tom Young

Men

Richard Bannister
Bobby Barden
Fran Dempsey
Robert Dempsey
Ben Doherty
Ian Ellis
Stephen Fagan
Alan Fletcher
Brian Gageby
Robin Heather
Robert Hilliard
Clive Hope-Ross
Graham Kerr
Stephen Kerr
Nicholas McMurry
Gillen Motherway
Charles Mullen
Kevin O'Connor
Sean O'Connor
Mervyn Percival
Doug Poynton
Dominic Thurston
Tim Thurston

Musical Director

Malcolm Wisener

Accompanying Organist

Andrew Mackriell

St. Bartholomew's Welcomes New Vicar

The Reverend William Ritchie, currently Rector of the parishes of Mevagh Union in North-West Donegal and Clondehorkey with Cashel, will be installed on Tuesday, August 1st by the Archbishop, Dr. Walton Empey.

The sermon will be given by our former curate, now Bishop of Meath and Kildare, Richard Clarke. Previous to his Donegal

posting, the Reverend Ritchie was Rector of Kells, Co. Meath for seven years.

The Institution will of course be when the boys are away on holiday, but the ladies of Christ Church Leeson Park choir will combine with our Gentlemen to provide the music. The Organ will be undergoing its major surgery, so we will have a piano for accompaniment.

Cratloe Wedding

Eight of the senior choirboys with six men travelled to Cratloe to sing at an international wedding. The couple were from New York and the guests arrived at Shannon from all over the world.

The music included the Haydn "Little Organ Mass" in which Andrew

Bannister sang the Benedictus with a video and other cameras trained directly on him.

The exercise gave a boost to our choir funds, which, following our Gloucester trip, had been much eroded.

Spem in Alium

On Monday, June 19th, our choir joins together with the Palaestrina choir and the choir of St. Patrick's Cathedral to sing Tallis' 40-part Motet, Spem in Alium.

John Dexter, the Director of Music at St. Patrick's, is responsible for organising the eight separate choral groupings; four from St. Patrick's, two from the Palaestrina choir, and two

from St. Bartholomew's.

The whole exercise is very difficult, as the piece is only kept on the rails by very accurate counting. It is very difficult to recover if you miss a beat!

Having said that, it will no doubt come together in the end and be a huge success. Lyric FM will be recording the concert as part of the Anna Livia festival.

Organ Fund

Very generous contributions and commitments have taken us half way towards the £200,000 required for the organ restoration. Our goal is of course to safeguard St. Bartholomew's musical tradition for the next generation.

As Malcolm Wisener said, "It is heartwarming to see the generosity which is a clear sign of how much our music means to people."

One young choir man, for example, has promised a donation in excess of his income.

However, we are told from others experience, that the second half of the funds needed are always the more difficult, so, if you have not yet participated, please do! Cheques can be to Nora Bedlow, 26 Gledswood Avenue, D16, or you can contact Malcolm Wisener.

Work on the organ begins in the week commencing June 5th, which means that it will be out of action from then on. We will also be announcing some further fundraising fun, like an Oscar Wilde evening stage-managed by our friend Alan Stanford, and a charity auction of collectables and other imaginative goodies. See you there!

Feis Ceoil Success

Six of the choir boys (Patrick Arnold, Andrew Dempsey, Simon Downey, Roger Fagan, Kevin Fitzpatrick, and Sean Fitzpatrick) competed in this year's Feis Ceoil, all coming through with commendable results.

Andrew Dempsey had the distinction of coming second in the Treble Solo, while Kevin Fitzpatrick got

3rd place in the Under 15 Guitar competition. We congratulate all six.

The Feis Ceoil has a long association with St. Bartholomew's, as a number of their competitions are held there.

There is no doubt that St. Bartholomew's will feature even more prominently as a location when our Organ rebuild is complete.

Congratulations

Bobby Barden wishes to congratulate Richard Bannister, one of the Basses in the choir, who recently won an academic scholarship from Intel Ireland in Leixlip.

The scholarship consists of a bursary of £2,000 and the opportunity to work at Intel during the summer, along with a number of other benefits.

Obituaries

Sadly we have lost a number of good friends with choir connections in the last while.

Peter Mellon died on April 6th. Peter was one of the great characters around the Dublin church music scene. Peter sang in St. Bartholomew's from 1948 for many years, following which he established himself as a sides-man in St. Patrick's Cathedral. The church was completely full at his funeral, which in itself is a testament to how popular Peter was. The gentlemen of the choir sang the requiem, which consisted of music largely chosen by Peter himself well before he took ill. Peter always joked about a "love" for "All in the April Evening" and the choir was tempted to sing

this - but they refrained, as it would have taken away from the solemnity of the occasion. Rest in Peace, Peter.

Herbert Bradbury died on April 22nd. Mr. Bradbury sang in St. Bartholomew's a long time ago - between 1932 and 1936. He always retained an interest in how the choir was doing, and generously contributed to our choir funds annually. He devoted himself unsparingly to St. Mary's Home, Pembroke Park, where he is greatly missed. He suffered from poor health for many years, but rose above it to serve his Maker by caring for the ladies in the home. May he rest in peace.

Deirdre Kelly died on March 28th. Deirdre, the

mother of former chorister Hughie, was an outstanding Dublin conservationist. She courageously fought the civic councillors to prevent Dublin being ruined by excessive development. Her book, "The Four Roads to Dublin", won acclaim, covering the locality in which she lived, Rathmines, Ranelagh, and Leeson Street. Deirdre had a number of other publications and sadly passed away at far too young an age. May she rest in peace.

Gladys Power died on May 13th. Gladys was the mother of a former chorister, David Power. Sadly for her family, she died suddenly, but she had reached the good age of 85 years. May she rest in peace.

In times gone by...

This article is an extract from the 1954 edition of "The Chorister's Pocket Book". Thanks to Mervyn Percival for remembering it.

ASSEMBLING for practice or Service. Do not make a row in the street or play noisy games, or shout, or rag about. There is no harm in such things at the proper time and place, but if they are indulged in in the neighbourhood of the Church or practiceroom, people will think that the choirboys are a noisy, unruly lot. You are responsible for the good name of the choir outside the Church as well as in it.

IN THE VESTRY. Put on your cassock and ruff or collar; see that they are properly buttoned, that you are neatly dressed, and that your hair is tidy. Don't put on your surplice till just before the Service, and when once you have got it on don't talk any more if it can possibly be avoided.

WALKING INTO CHURCH. When walking into Church or in processions hold up your head and don't let your body sway about. Walk exactly even with your partner; preserve the proper distance (about 3 feet) between the files-this can be judged by the distance between the pews. When turning a corner the inside boys should stand still or take very short steps so that the outer boys can make their turn without having to hurry; when the outer boys are even with the inner they should move on together. Fold your hands in front of you unless you have to hold a book; do not put them in your cassock

pockets. If it is the custom in your Church to bow to the Altar, do so with proper reverence and do not be content with a sort of familiar nod. This is not respectful.

IN THE CHOIRSTALLS. Stand erect on both legs equally. Hold up your music or books, and do not attempt to sing from the desks unless they are very high; direct your voice upwards and not towards the floor.

Kneel upright against the desk, not half sitting back, except at such times as you may be allowed to for a rest; it looks bad if boys do not all kneel in the same way. Never cover your mouth with your hands or your surplice; as far as possible keep your hands off the top rail of the desk. Sit straight and do not cross your legs; be careful that your cassock always covers them. Trousers or bare knees do not look well in the choirstalls.

DURING SERVICE. Follow everything in your books, even if you know it by heart, and try to think the whole time about the meaning of what you are singing.

Try and remember at Service what you have been taught at practice, especially in such matters as voice production, breathing, tone, and clearness of words. It is so easy to forget these things, especially when singing familiar music in familiar surroundings.

Listen to the Lessons and you will find them interesting; it is often a help to follow them in your Bible.

Never look about you or fidget when you are in the

choirstalls; don't look down the Church to see who is there; it distracts your attention and annoys the congregation.

Never talk or whisper or eat sweets during Service; these things are just bad manners; choirboys ought to know better.

FINDING PLACES. Directly you have finished singing one piece find the next piece required as quietly and quickly as possible, and then leave your books alone. Don't turn over the leaves merely for the sake of doing so, and don't always turn over one leaf at a time: it is quite easy to make a good shot at about the right place by using a little sense.

THE SERMON will always be a bore if you don't try to listen and understand it. It may, of course, be beyond you, or you may not be able to hear it well, but anyhow you must discipline yourself into good behaviour. A good plan, in such cases, is to occupy your thoughts by practising saying psalms or hymns to yourself, and you will find it very valuable in later life to have learned such things by heart. At all events, remember that the behaviour of choirboys during the sermon is a real test of their efficiency.

AFTER SERVICE. Don't begin undoing your cassock or fidgeting about till the Vestry prayer is finished. Then take off your robes, remove anything from your cassock pocket, hang your things up carefully, and leave the Church at once. On no account wait about or make a noise outside.

The boys with the Mayor of Gloucester, Councilor Arthur Meredith.



The choir outside the Mayor's Offices in Gloucester



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 printed and edited by Richard Bannister. Some of the articles in this issue were written by Bobby Barden and Kevin O'Connor. Photographs of the Gloucester trip were taken by Richard Bannister.