

# St. Bartholomew's Choir

<http://www.bannister.org/choir/>

June 2001

## Antiques Auction

On Saturday May 20th, an auction of antiques took place, with the proceeds going to the Organ Rebuilding Fund.

Thanks to the generosity of many people, we were donated more items than could be put under the hammer - as items continued to arrive right up until the auction took place.

On the night itself, we took in just over £10,000 - thanks to the skill of our good friend Brian Coyle of James Adam Salerooms. The surplus items are currently being sold off, so the total amount

raised is continuing to rise.

Very special thanks are due to the Institute of Engineers, for allowing us to use their superb lecture hall and facilities at 22 Clyde Road with very short notice. The venue could not have been better.

The success was of course a team effort from the parish, but it is important to single out just one person - Alan Fletcher. He introduced the idea of having the auction - and took many days off from his academic activities to see it through to its successful conclusion.

## Easter Trip 2002

Malcolm has announced that the choir will be returning to sing at Exeter Cathedral in Easter 2002. Exeter Cathedral has an attached choir school, which provides convenient accommodation and meals for the boys.

Many of you will remember Liam Lyons, a former chorister, who is now a member of the Exeter Cathedral Choir, and a student at Exeter University.

The choir last sang in Exeter in Easter 1995, and several of the younger gentlemen in particular are looking forward to returning to a rather good donut shop!

## Summer Concert

Sunday May 27th was the evening of the Choir Summer Concert. The programme included works by Brahms, Finzi, and Haydn among others, but the highlight of the evening was without doubt a performance of Mendelssohn's "Hear My Prayer".

This work, a little over ten minutes in length, is

written for Treble solo with Choir. Our soloist this time, Andrew Dempsey took several rounds of applause for his impeccable singing throughout.

The last time this work was sung by St. Bartholomew's Choir was over 20 years ago, with Celtic Tenor, Niall Morris as the soloist. Before this, we

have to go back to 1943/1944 with George Reeves singing the main part. George was actually at our concert this year, and Andrew's singing brought back many memories for him.

With great support from parents and friends of the choir, almost £900 was raised for the choir fund.

## **Pall Bearers leg it as Vicar frowns**

No not a headline from a tabloid but a near enough description of an episode in the life of the Parish of St Bartholomew's. It all happened when a small film production company based in Pembroke Road asked the Vicar if they could film part of a short play in the Church for a six to seven minute video for a forthcoming competition. He happily assented and a fee was struck.

St Columba's Day, 9th June, after Mass was the agreed date. And all duly arrived complete with props and support artists. They were left to it with the arrangement to lock the Church at 6pm. So far so good. They had run out of time and would return early

on Sunday to complete the Church shots but this time only outside.

The play is based on a bereavement leading into the formalities of the Funeral Rituals. A hiccup occurred when the hearse was late on Sunday morning. Instead of arriving at 10.15 it wound its way around Elgin Road at 11.05. Frantic gestures sped through the cast as all attempted to complete the filming before the Eucharist commenced. Many worshippers were inconvenienced on arrival trying to find their usual parking spot. Others were bewildered as to why a coffin should be spotted in the grounds on a Sunday.

Irregardless the Choir and Servers and Vicar lined up meeting as is the custom

at the Parish Room door. Vestry Prayer concluded the Vicar turned round. A coffin on trolley, complete with two pall bearers was parked at the West door. Choristers were amazed - what might this be - a newly introduced ceremony for Trinity Sunday? The Vicar was not amused. His face said it all. One look and the pall bearers sped swiftly out of sight. The Eucharist continued unhindered.

A sincere word of apology from the film crew for an greatly regretted episode. They thank all who showed such patience and tolerance whilst they attempted to gain lost time on a very tight schedule on a hopefully worthwhile project.

## **Post-Easter Visit to Cork - April 19th - 22nd**

An enjoyable time was had by all during our easter trip - this year, to St. Finbarre's Cathedral in Cork. In all we sang in four services; Evensong three times, and the Sung Eucharist on Sunday morning.

Our visit sadly coincided with the death of the Very Reverend Maurice Carey, Dean of St Finbarre's

from 1971 to 1993 and Vicar of St. Bartholomew's from 1964 to 1971. Maurice was in St Bartholomew's some months ago and provided Bobby Barden with a number of old photographs of the choir dating from the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury. We extend our sympathy to Hilary, his widow, and the family.

The boys had their usual mix of hard work and fun, which included a visit to Cork Gaol (photographs are available!), and the opportunity to play the famous bells of Shandon.

Special thanks are due to the brave parents who took care of the boys on the trip - Niamh Harty, Mary Downey and John Cogan.

## **Sidney Bedlow**

We were all saddened by the passing of long time parishioner Sidney Bedlow.

He was a great character - and for many years served as a member of the vestry. Even in his last weeks he made strenuous efforts to attend the Eucharist he loved so much. We extend our sympathies to Norah and his family.

## **Congratulations**

David Falconer, our Assistant Organist, delighted us all with the news of his engagement. His lovely fiancée, Maeve Morris has just successfully completed a Masters in Music Performance and studies singing under Veronica Dunne and with Suzanne Murray. Her plans include spending some time on the continent. We extend our congratulations and very best wishes.

Congratulations are also due to choir member Fran Dempsey. We sang a performance of his work "Ave Verum" at Corpus Christi on June 14th.

## **Parents Lunch**

We had a buffet lunch after the Eucharist on Sunday May 13th for the parents of the choirboys and the choir to give everyone an opportunity to get to know each other. To those who so generously brought along food we say a big thank you.

Nobody knows more than our choir master how much effort the parents put

in to getting the boys to St. Bartholomew's three times a week - practices on Wednesday and Friday evenings, as well as the morning service on Sunday.

We are arranging to circulate all parents with a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of all the boys to assist where communication is needed.

## **Visitor from Cumbria**

Former chorister Tony Constable paid a visit, along with his wife Elsie, to Bobby Barden on Saturday May 5th. This resulted in a lunch in Bewleys in Ballsbridge, attended by both Tony and Bobby, as well as two other choristers

from the early 1940s - Jerry Smith and George Reeves.

Tony is quite some character and if you want to hear the story of his life post his choir days, then visit his web page at <http://web.onetel.net.uk/~constable/>.

## **Organ Progress**

As can be seen, the new keyboards and pedals are in place for our new organ, and you can see where the rows of stops will be going. Inside, the tracker action is being fitted, and hundreds of pipes are being installed. Some time ago now, the new and far more substan-

tial set of bellows were installed in their new under-floor location.

The Dedication of the new Organ has been set for Sunday October 7th, but some sections will be sounding very soon - so this is certainly something to look forward to.

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