

St. Bartholomew's Choir

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

February 2002

Exeter Trip

We depart for Exeter this year on Tuesday April 2nd.

The choir are to be given a Civic Reception by the Mayor of Exeter on Thursday April 4th in the city's historic Guildhall. This is one of the oldest municipal buildings in England; part of it dates back to 1594. It is next door to the Turk's Head Inn, which was a frequent haunt of Dickens.

The cathedral itself is distinguished by its twin Norman towers and its impressive west front. It dates from the late 13th century. Its Gothic vault (nave/choir roof area) is the longest in the world, at 300 feet. Exeter is full of architectural treasures for us all to enjoy. A full plan of the cathedral is on page 4.

Most of the gentlemen of the choir will remember our previous trip to Exeter in 1996. A review of the trip can be found in the newsletter from May 1996, which should be available on the choir web site by the time you read this.

Our choir newsletter is now being included with the parish newsletter – “The Instrument”. For this reason, it is being delivered to a wider audience than before, and as such it makes sense to give a brief resume of St. Bartholomew's Choir.

Founded 130 years ago, today St. Bartholomew's Choir is one of the only male voice choirs in the Church of Ireland, currently consisting of 26 boys and 20 men. There are normally a number of boys waiting to become probationers in the choir. The choir is entirely voluntary, with members travelling from all over the city. The boys receive monthly pocket money.

The choir's principal duty is to sing the Eucharist each Sunday at 11:30am, as well as special services for the major festivals in the church calendar. The men sing Evensong each Sunday at 7:00pm, and are joined by the boys on selected evenings.

For many years now, St. Bartholomew's Choir has been travelling abroad to sing the post-Easter services in Cathedrals across the UK. Among these engagements, we have been to Ripon, Hereford, Exeter, Lichfield, Gloucester, Worcester, and St. David's. In 1998, the choir made a trip to Paris, which included a concert in Chartres and singing at mass in St. Sulpice and La Madeleine. The choir is making its second visit to Exeter cathedral this easter.

As you can see, a huge amount of work is involved for all concerned, especially the organist and choirmaster, Malcolm Wisener. All involved give generously of their time to ensure that the highest possible standard of choral music is maintained.

For further information, please visit the choir web site at <http://www.bannister.org/choir/>.

Hugh Clancy

Congratulations to chorister Hugh Clancy on achieving 2nd place in this year's Young Scientist competitions. Hugh's project, which was undertaken with another student, involved the locating of human life underground by robotic means in a disaster situation

Hugh's photograph subsequently appeared in *The Irish Times*.

Organ Fund

Two extremely generous donations of €25,394 (£20,000) were recently made to the Organ Fund.

One of these came from our neighbours, Siemens, and the other was a National Conservation Grant from Dublin Corporation.

The parish has been overwhelmed by the response to the Organ Appeal Fund. This has included many donations from parishioners as well as many other friends outside the parish. Two particularly large anonymous donations came from people with strong links to the choir.

All involved value St. Bartholomew's musical tradition.

David McLachlan

The choir was particularly saddened at the passing of our Sacristan, David McLachlan, at the turn of the year. He was a great friend of us and we admired the dignity with which he performed his duties.

We will always remember his unique swinging of the thurible, especially on Trinity Sunday when he repeatedly swung the

incense in full circles over his head. We were all waiting for something to go wrong - but it never did!

A contingent of the gentlemen sang at his funeral requiem on Thursday, January 3rd. The address was given by his close friend and our former curate assistant, Father. Andrew Wagstaff, from Walsop Priory.

Concert of Carols

Our annual concert with Alan Stanford took place on December 16th, to a capacity audience.

This year the choir sang several carols which were new to our repertoire, including "I wonder as I wander" by Rutti, "Whence is that goodly fragrance" by Baker, and "A child is born in Bethlehem" by Scheidt.

We are extremely grateful to Alan Stanford who managed to find time in his busy schedule to give another memorable performance for us..

Over £2,000 was raised overall, with the proceeds being split equally between the charity "Concern" and the Organ Fund.

Lamentations of Jeremiah

At Evensong on Sunday March 10th, the gentlemen of the choir will be singing the five part Lamentations of Jeremiah by Thomas Tallis, which is most appropriate in this lenten season.

The piece is approximately twenty minutes long and is among the most beautiful in our repertoire.

Evensong takes place every Sunday at 7:00pm and is sung by the gentlemen of the choir, with the full choir on special occasions.

We hope that we will be joined by as many people as possible on March 10th, and indeed on any other Sunday evening.

Christmas Party

On Friday January 18th, Bobby and Pat Barden hosted an enjoyable and informal party at their house at which no singing was allowed. The food, the drink, and the chat kept going well into the early

hours of Saturday morning. Bobby was presented with an inflatable Jaguar by some of the younger gentlemen, much to his astonishment.

Special thanks to Bobby and Pat for organising this occasion yet again.

Doug Poynton

Doug Poynton, one of our Basses, had a hip replacement in the Mater Private Hospital on January 22nd. He has made an excellent recovery and we were delighted to have him back with us on Ash Wednesday.

Barbados

National Radio

June Heather reports that the Very Reverend Harold Crichlow, Dean Emeritus, plays tracks from our CD on Barbados National Radio five days a week. He visited Ireland in 1980, preaching in St. Bartholomew's, and conducting a "enlightening" seminar.

Fran Dempsey

Fran Dempsey, one of the Tenors in our choir suffered a heart attack at the end of November. He underwent an operation in the Beaumont Hospital, where the problem was quickly identified. We are delighted to report that Fran has made excellent progress and will be back at work shortly. He was present for a rehearsal two weeks ago, and promises to return properly to the choir very soon.

Glory of Christmas

The boys were invited once again to sing in the "Glory of Christmas" concerts sponsored by Raymond Gubbay Ltd. on the 19th and 20th of December. As always, both nights were sold out. The boys sang with the Carlow Choral Society for a number of pieces, as well as singing three pieces

on their own – "Whence is that goodly fragrance", "In the bleak midwinter", and "Jesus Child".

Andrew Dempsey deserves special congratulations for singing the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City" as a solo from the front of the stage on both nights.

Bill Fry

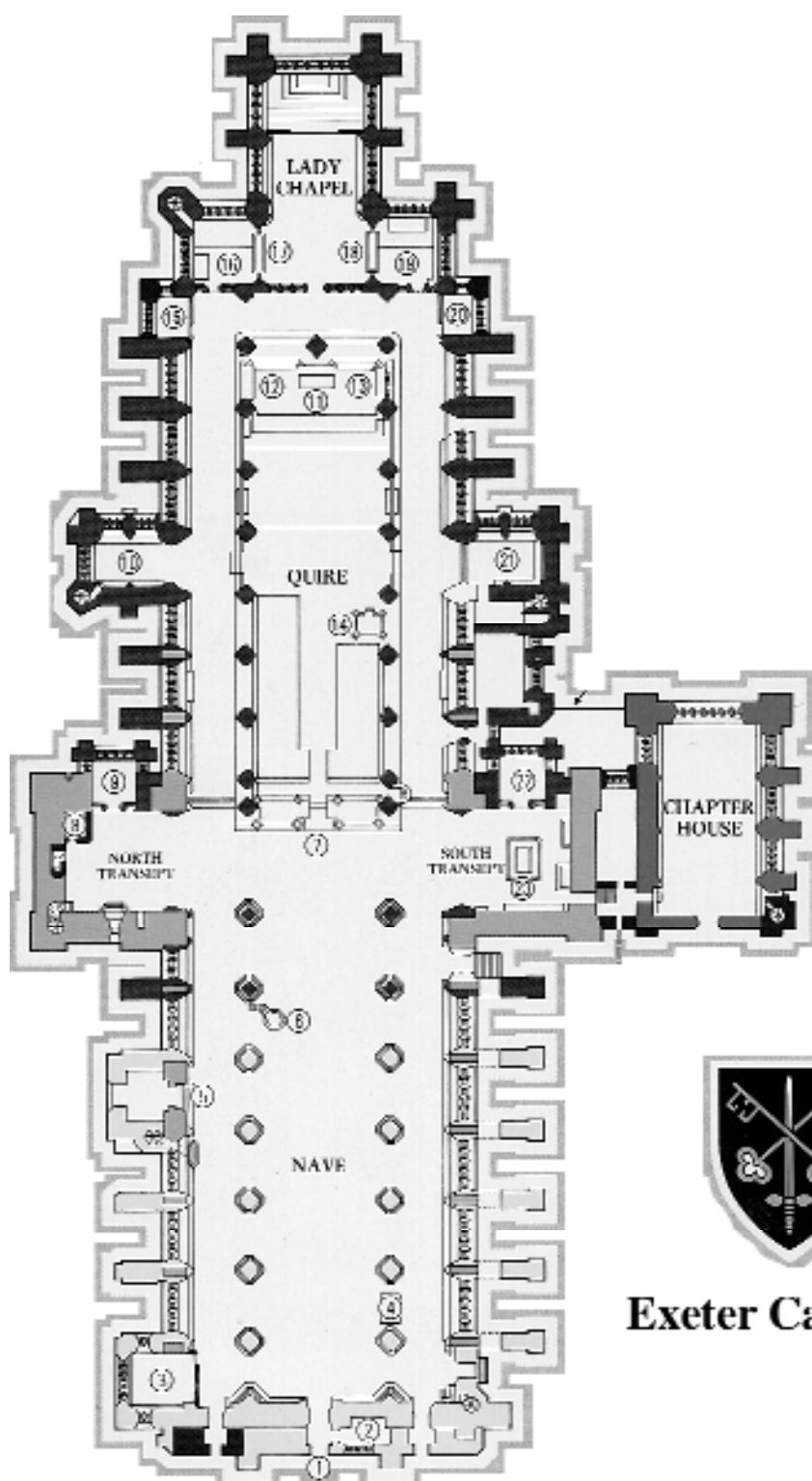
Bill Fry was our Organist and Choirmaster from 1938 to 1946. As witness that he is still going strong, he gave a recital on December 7th on the Willis organ in the magnificent chapel of St. Monica's home in Bristol where he lives.

The recital included works by Bach, Corrette, Rheinberger, Langlais, Boyce, Haydn, and Walford Davies.

Britten War Requiem

Some of our senior choir boys will be joining with the boys from St. Patrick's Cathedral, the Palestrina Choir, the RTE Philharmonic Choir and the National Symphony Orchestra to sing the Britten War Requiem on Friday March 1st in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The performance will be conducted by Maestro Alexander Anissimov.



Exeter Cathedral

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