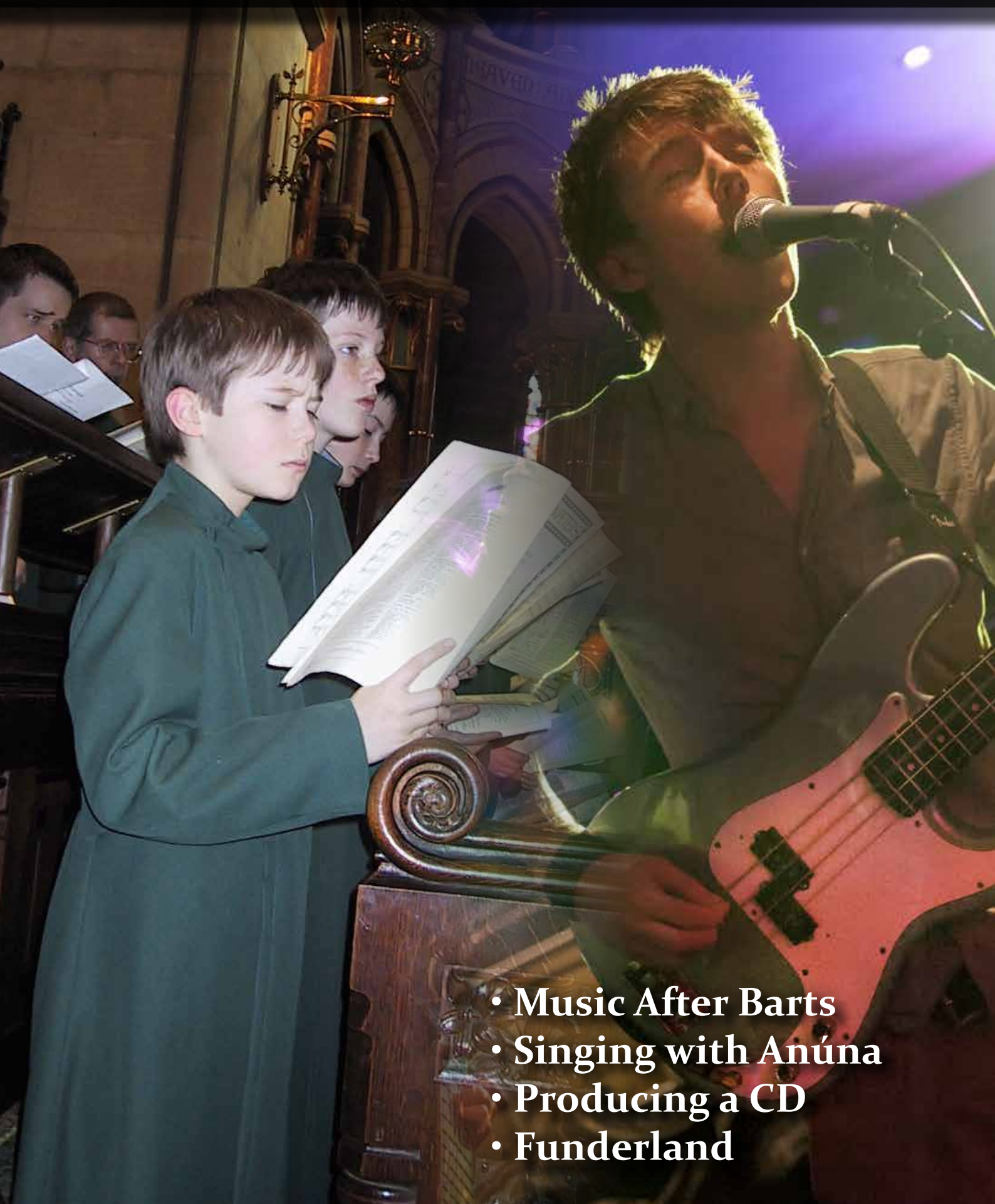




Music @ Saint Bartholomew's

<http://www.stbartholomews.ie>

June 2013



- Music After Barts
- Singing with Anúna
- Producing a CD
- Funderland

Music After Saint Barts

Saint Bartholomew's is justifiably proud of its rich musical tradition. Our choir of boys and men has existed since the foundation of the church in 1867, and the Girls' Choir has recently celebrated its tenth anniversary.

Some of our boy choristers have graduated into the back row as their voices changed. Bobby is of course our longest serving former choir boy, but Brian, Fergal, Killian, Richard, and Robert are making valiant attempts at catching up!

A small number have continued with their musical endeavours outside of sacred music, developing promising careers in music based on foundations acquired at Saint Bartholomew's.

Roisin Horan has spoken to eight former choristers spanning the last two decades to find out how their musical careers have progressed.

Andrew Dempsey / Shadowplay

Shadowplay is a three piece melodic rock band, founded in Maynooth in September 2010. Former head boy, Andrew Dempsey (see front cover), was studying for a Bachelor of Music degree at NUI Maynooth, where he met the other band members, Eoghan and Emmett, who were also studying in the music faculty. The three of them immediately began writing their own music.

In November 2010, they were selected to be the resident band on the Topflight/Today FM Ski Trip hosted by Ian Dempsey. So, in January 2011, they were brought, along with about 500 skiers and the Ian Dempsey Breakfast Crew, to the Austrian Alps, where they played a set every night, including a slot supporting the well known band, *The Saw Doctors*.

In July 2011, *Shadowplay* embarked on a five night tour with TOTO lead vocalist, and seven time Grammy Award winner, Bobby Kimball. On the opening night in The Sugar Club in Dublin, they played a mixed set of their own music,

and TOTO classics, such as *Africa*, *Rosanna* and *Hold The Line*. This tour culminated in a headline slot at the Buncrana Music Festival where they played for a crowd of 5000.

In October 2011 they entered the Summit Bandslam, the renowned "Battle of the Bands" competition held in The Summit Inn, Howth. This competition draws entries from all over the country. They made it through three rounds of stiff competition to claim first place at the final, which took place in December, winning the band lots of great and much welcomed prizes! February 2012 also saw *Shadowplay* nab first place in the Hot Press Lift Off Competition ahead of around 900 other bands from across the country.

Shadowplay have recently signed an international multi-album recording contract with Shamrock/Universal, and they're currently working on their debut album which looks set for a late 2013 release in the UK and Ireland.

Andrew can be heard as a treble on our 2006 CD "Laudate Dominum", singing the solo line in Mendelssohn's *Hear My Prayer*.

.....
 • **Andrew Dempsey**
 • 1997 - 2003
 • www.fb.com/shadowplayofficial
 •

Sebastian Adams / Kirkos Ensemble

Former chorister Sebastian Adams is the director of *Kirkos Ensemble*, a student-run ensemble based out of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. He is also an accomplished viola player and a composer with more than forty works to his name.

Sebastian comes from a particularly musical family. His father is the well known organist David Adams, and his brothers Carl and Rupert were also choristers in Saint Bartholomew's.

Where did your love of music come from, and what are you currently working on?

I was always surrounded by music growing up, though Saint Bartholomew's was probably the catalyst for my love of music today. These days I'm a composer of contemporary classical music, although one of the big ideas at the moment is that there's "no such thing as contemporary music" anymore, because every genre is blurring so much. In any case, I write

music which is mainly informed by the classical tradition. People trying to forge a career as a classical composer now are in an interesting position because of the times we are



living in. 1913 is generally considered to be the beginning of 'modern' music because of the premiere of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, so we are now exactly one hundred years after that, and we've basically seen every boundary of form, rhythm, harmony, and instrumentation broken down and taken to its extremes. I think the important thing

for composers of my generation is to take everything that has happened in the twentieth century and reassemble it into something which has more of a connection with the previous few hundred. My own music, for example, relies mainly on notation and instrumental techniques that would have made sense to a performer from a previous era - but it certainly doesn't sound like Mozart!

Another vital thing for young composers to do is to put on performances of contemporary music. To this end, I've become chairman of the Irish Composers' Collective, which puts on monthly concerts of emerging composers' music by top performers, and I've also founded Kirkos, which specialises in performing very young composers' music and also in 'concept concerts' based around a special theme.

What should we watch for this year?

Kirkos Ensemble will be putting on a late-night celebration of the Rite of Spring, and of everything it stands for at 10:00pm on July 11th as part of the the 10 Days in Dublin festival.

.....
Sebastian Adams

2000-2005

www.sebastianadams.net
.....

Paddy Groenland / Leafzang

The three Groenland brothers, Danny, Paddy, and Tim, were loyal members of the choir during the 1990s, and all three have continued with their musical endeavours.

Paddy was the first to join, and the longest serving. His current project is *Leafzang*, described as "a Dublin-based acoustic sextet that resides in the uncharted territory between Irish Traditional song and acoustic jazz, with instrumentation of vocals, nylon-string guitar, acoustic bass, cello, clarinets, saxophones and drums."

What motivated you to keep going with music after leaving Saint Bartholomew's?

Seven years in Saint Bartholomew's was enough to hook me on performing, though I didn't realise that until much later. Practically speaking, the support of my parents, teachers, brothers and friends was motivation. People around me have always been into music and into finding out about

new music. Being in the choir gave me the ability to sing what I'm hearing in my head, and through my instrument, which is the guitar.



Tell us about Leafzang.

Leafzang is the name of my own project. It's a combination of jazz and Irish folk music with a bit of African and American funky stuff thrown in there too. We are a sextet of voice, cello, saxophone, guitar, bass and drums.

Leafzang is my baby, so I prepare music for that group and

lead it, even though it is very much a joint effort. My heart is in jazz and improvised music. Personally I tend to take that kind of jazz mentality to whatever music I play

— trying to have fun and maintaining some spontaneity — whether it be Brazilian music, funk or whatever. I'm not into musical discrimination.

What should we look out for in 2013?

Checkout Leafzang's Facebook page! We are playing quite regularly around Dublin and are trying to record a CD this year.

What would you consider your greatest musical achievements to date?

Well it's corny, but every time I play music it's the greatest thing, as it's more about the process and not the end result. However, a Brazilian

guy asking me if I could teach him to play Brazilian music is very high up there!

Getting awarded a Fulbright to spend two years at Berklee College of Music, Boston, learning about jazz and all sorts of other things was an amazing experience too.

Paddy Groenland

1992-1998

leafzang.bandcamp.com

Tim Groenland / The Gorgeous Colours

What motivated you to keep going with music after leaving Saint Bartholomew's?

Love of music, basically! Stopping music altogether wasn't an option. I started to play guitar and fumbled around with it for several years before picking up the bass in my early twenties, and I found my way into the band shortly thereafter.

What type of music do you do?

Indie rock — which is a vague and

.....
Tim Groenland
 1993-1996
 thegorgeouscolours.bandcamp.com

possibly useless term, but then musicians are generally useless at describing what they do! I play bass and sing backing vocals, often in the same vocal register I used as a fourteen year old choirboy (I'm pretty fond of falsetto). My training at Saint Bartholomew's has definitely stayed with me. I tend to be the band member most likely to say, "what about some four-part harmony for this bit?" You can listen to some of our tracks online on our Bandcamp site.

What's on the radar for the

next twelve months?

We're hoping to release our second album later this year. Our next gig will be in The Grand Social in July.

What do you consider your greatest musical achievement?

We've self-released an album and an EP so far. We've also played in some fun places — we did the Electric Picnic a couple of years ago, and we've made some enjoyable trips abroad (to some festivals in Spain for example). Probably the greatest achievement is simply staying together as a band this long!

Danny Groenland & the Major 7ths

Who do you play with these days?

I play with several groups: Discovery Gospel Choir, Mob Fandango, Tig Linn, SheatheYour Swords, and Bianca Fachel's quintet. My own project is called Danny Groenland & the Major 7ths. My group has four singers, me, and three backing vocalists, so there are at least three voices in harmony, with a hip hop, soul, rhythm section. We're recording at the moment so there will be an album out later in the year.

.....
Danny Groenland
 1996-1999
 fb.com/DanielGroenland

How did you get to this point?

Saint Bartholomew's really gave me an education in vocal harmony. And I didn't realise it until years later. I took it for granted as a boy, and couldn't wait to leave because it was uncool! I studied music in school and then in University, the Music degree in Maynooth. And music is in the family, my brothers play in bands, some of the same bands I'm involved with too, and our dad is a singer. I loved the complex arrangements at Saint Bartholomew's, and some of the music will stay with me forever.

What do you consider your greatest musical achievement?

My proudest achievement was my first gig in October with my new band, the Major 7ths, simply because I had never been a lead singer before. I was always a harmony voice, or blending as part of a choir, and I have finally found my own voice. I'm heavily influenced by Marvin Gaye, D Angelo, Curtis Mayfield, J Dilla, Crosby Stills and Nash. Other than that, singing on stage with Bobby McFerrin was great, and meeting jazz singers Kurt Elling and Gregory Porter was nice.

James O'Neill / James Wolfe

Long time members of our choir could hardly forget James O'Neill, who, on a choir trip many years ago, asked the Mayor of a UK cathedral city whether she thought that the Queen Mother was "batty". The answer to this question has sadly been lost in the mists of time.

What motivated you to continue with music and pursue it as a career?

Music was something I always wanted to do, but I never really knew how to go about it.

One night I was at a party and my friends and I were told we should be in a band, as we looked like we could be the new Bananarama. I told him we were called [censored] with Wolves, and that our big hit in Sweden was You Can't [censored] To This. He totally bought it and it turned out he was a club promoter. After

much mickey taking, he booked us for a gig and that's how it all began for me.

You've had quite a colourful career. What has been your fa-

avourite moment so far?

It's hard to pick a favourite moment, as I absolutely love each and every aspect of what I do. The first time I played Oxegen, though, was



so special. The crowd were unreal and fed off it so much.

What should we look for in 2013?

Since moving over to London I've been squirreling away in the studio, writing and recording my album. It's been a long process but I'm nearly there and releasing my

track, No Danger, in July. Eeeeeeep!

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

I totally see myself still in music in ten years. Hopefully my career will continue to grow and I'll still get to create music and pretend I'm Beyoncé on stage.

You've recently changed your stage name from "[censored] with Wolves" to "James Wolfe"...

I decided to change my name because I didn't want to be called a [censored] to my face for the rest of my life. And also because I feel that what I'm doing now is a different project and I wanted something slightly more grown up.

If you had to give advice to people going into the music industry what would it be?

The best bit of advice I could offer is just go for it. The only thing holding you back is yourself, so you've got to take the bull by the horns!

I'm very grateful for my time in Saint Bartholomew's and believe that joining a choir offers you invaluable experience in learning how to properly sing and also to understand music.

James O'Neill

1995-1998

tinyurl.com/pyrnms2

Andy Bannister / Eberhart (1)

Another former head boy, Andy Bannister, produces music under the name Eberhart. He has been linked to many emerging bands, most notably [censored] with Wolves (see opposite page) with whom he toured in 2010-2011, performing with well-known DJ, Calvin Harris, at venues such as the Trinity Ball and Oxegen.

How did you end up in music?

I left the choir so long ago. I did the orchestra thing, school and youth, but at age 13 I discovered the joys of electric guitar and began teaching myself to play all my favourite songs. I went through a couple of different bands with friends over the years, but as I grew older I found myself less interested in being at the forefront, and more interested in working behind the scenes.

This didn't end up with me leaving live performance completely. I veered more towards electronic music and sounds, as I got into my college years, and began producing electronically under the moni-

ker H2WHOA!! This was made up of me, and a good buddy of mine, Brian Fitzpatrick. We were doing it for fun. It was my first venture into music production, though my band



before this acknowledged when we broke up that "whether it was a simple chord change or harmony, Andy was able to make our songs go from great to epic". I don't know if I would be so kind about the music we made, but I was having fun, and I definitely would flesh out our ideas.

What was your favourite moment as a musician? Was there a moment when you said to yourself, this is exactly where I want to be and what I want to be doing?

That's a good question, I'm not really sure. I guess for me it all lies in the rush of getting it right. I love the little details in records that you don't really notice, but if you take them out, your record is stagnant. When I find a sound that I like, or just add a little detail that I like, I get really excited, almost to an ecstatic level. I remember all my lightbulb moments. I remember working with another ex-chorister James, and finding the chorus sounds for Rewind, one of our songs and feeling very excited. I also love how I can relive those moments through my records.

Where do you see yourself music-wise in ten years?

Music was my first love, and it will be my last. I like to always disregard deeper meanings in the music I'm making, but if I listen back to my records, they tell a lot about where I was when I was making them, both in my musical spectrum and in my personal life. I'm at the point now, where in some ways I feel like I'm

.....
Andy Bannister

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 1997-2000

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www.eberhartrecords.com

Andy Bannister / Eberhart (2)

starting new in my life, and I like to make records that make me feel happy. It's an outlet for me to express myself, something that I never realized until very recently. If I can make people happy with the records I'm making, I think that's a really cool thing to do. In ten years I hope to be working for labels in the USA. Who knows, it's a risky business, but maybe Ireland will offer more prospects for those involved in the music industry before then?

What should we watch for in 2013?

I produced a band for the first time this year, Jet Set Radio. I don't normally work with bands but I really loved their stuff. It was fun, edgy, poppy, catchy. All of my boxes were checked. The EP is done but I can't give you a release date. I'm working with a number of other artists at the moment but I can't say more

about that at the moment.

Is there any advice you'd give to those seeking to enter the music industry?

For anyone looking to enter the music industry, it's really something that should be done as a labour of love. It's not something that you should enter into for financial gain. If you are talented you have a chance to get noticed, but at the end of the day, it is reliant on luck more than anything; being in the right place at right time.

You need to stay focused, making the best music you can make. It is equally important, you should stay grounded and critique your work. Be proud of your back-catalogue, but remember, you can always improve. And don't turn your nose up at any music. You can learn something from everyone, and every genre. You can learn as much

from Haydn as you can learn from Ke\$ha about writing music.

Find bands you like locally, that are more established and ask them for a support slot. Promoters like to see you have experience. They will equally estimate how many tickets you can add to a bill. So do try and find ways to build up your fan-base.

Get good recordings, something that bands often fail to invest in. For some, the right producer will make all the difference. An objective ear is something worth considering. If your CD lands on a radio DJ/A&R persons desk. You have 30 seconds to impress. If they don't get into your song that quickly, you'll be tossed into the trash heap. So make your songs striking from the very first note. Remember, sometimes you have to spend money to make money. Most importantly of all, have fun!

Killian Horan / TCD Trinitones (1)

Former head chorister Killian Horan is a member of the Trinity College, Dublin acapella group, the Trinitones, that hit the spotlight this year with a YouTube cover of "Teenage Dirtbag" by Wheatus, which reached 50,000 views in just 48 hours.

Why did you choose to continue music after Saint Bartholomew's?

Music has always been a part of my life. I've been doing music since I was a child. It's very satisfying being in a collective group and hearing the music that can be made. I was a part of an acappella group called Schola at school in Gonzaga

College. I have always liked the way individuals come together to produce a harmonic sound.

Who are the Trinitones?

They were set up by Patrick Barret and Linsey Callahan, who are currently fourth year music teaching students. It was officially started about sixteen months ago. They saw

Killian Horan / TCD Trinitones (2)

that there was no acappella groups in Trinity and decided to set one up. They were both already heavily involved in TCD Singers so they had the background. I joined at the start of this academic year, along with four others.

How would you describe the music?

It varies a lot. Some members of the group arrange music of their own choice/taste and to their own personal styles and then bring the music to rehearsal. We then practice and learn it. One of the guys who arranges music has a YouTube channel with about 100,000 subscribers.

What was it like to film the YouTube video?

We did a number of one hour sessions in a variety of different locations. Teenage Dirtbag was chosen because it ranged in styles from choral to contemporary. Two film students in Trinity did the filming, Heidi and Rosa. They were friends with a number of the older guys in the group and volunteered to do it for nothing. They were very profession-

al, but to be honest I never expected the video to turn out as well as it did. The sites came from the campus and from an event held at the Mansion House. It was edited ex-



tremely well and this made it the internet sensation that it was.

What would you consider to be your greatest musical achievement to date?

Being in Trinitones has been my greatest achievement to date. The selection process for entry was pretty tough. I had to do two audi-

tions comprising sight-reading, sight-singing and lastly my prepared piece. But it has been most rewarding as the guys involved in it are all very down to earth, and we all get on very well – which makes the musical side all the more enjoyable.

I think it's fair to say that the video made the Trinitones a lot more well known than they'd otherwise be – I'd not heard of them before anyway.

We only had a small presence on campus before the video doing small balls and other events but after the videos everybody was aware of us, and it opened many doors for us. We were even given an opening slot on stage in front square for the Trinity Ball, which was a major achievement for us.

What should we look for in 2013?

We have a few different plans up our sleeves at the moment, one of them will involve another video. I can't say very much, but we will be collaborating with an Irish act. The second is a surprise, but what I can say is to keep an eye out around Christmas for the Trinitones. It should be very exciting.

.....
Killian Horan
 2000-2003
www.fb.com/Trinitones





Anúna and Saint Bartholomew's Choir

Once again Saint Bartholomew's is becoming a key Dublin concert venue. It's lovely to see a full church, and to overhear appreciative comments about its unique beauty and excellent acoustics.

This concert was particularly special, as it brought together choristers from both our boys' and girls' choirs with Ireland's world renowned *Anúna*. Michael McGlynn founded the choir as *An Uaithne* in 1987, and it famously rose to prominence during the 1996 Eurovision Song Contest, and the subsequent Riverdance, followed by an Albert Hall Prom in 1999.

Many young Irish singers have learnt the highest level of choral skills through their participation in *Anúna*, including Julie Feeney and Eimear Quinn. How fortunate we are that Michael and his wife, Lucy Champion, along with their

daughters, Aisling and Lauren, are making a valuable contribution, as members of the Barts' community, to our musical life. I'm sure our choristers are not likely to forget rehearsing with Michael and his voices, and singing with them at this concert.

The evening began with a chanted candlelit procession – careful choreography is an integral part of any *Anúna* concert – and we heard Michael's re-interpretations of Irish traditional songs from medieval times, together with new compositions, many in Irish, and the *Sanctus* from his Mass. The men of the choir sang the Spanish carol *Riu Riu* and one of *Anúna's* tongue-twister showstoppers, *Dúlamán*.

Our choristers joined *Anúna* for the last three items. The first was a metrical Psalm in the unique Gaelic tradition of the Orkney Islands, and they

did remarkably well, considering the complex overlapping of parts – another *Anúna* speciality.

Stanford's lovely *Blue Bird* was an inspired choice, as was the jazzy *Gaudete*, a 16th century Christmas motet, which found its way into the top 10 in 1973, as sung by Steeleye Span. Michael's lovely setting of *Pie Jesu* ended a most enjoyable concert. It was also good to see a familiar figure in the bass department – our former Director of Music, Fraser Wilson.

Some much needed funds were raised – so, many congratulations to our choristers, and warmest thanks to Michael and Lucy, and other *Anúna* members, for giving of their skills and experience, and their valuable time. They were off around the world again the following day!

Tim Thurston

Easter Sunday

On Easter day we were very fortunate to be joined by members of both RTE Orchestras at our celebration of the Eucharist. One of our girls' choir parents, Una Ní Chanainn, organised and

played in a superb string ensemble which joined the timpani, trumpet and organ in Schubert's *Mass in G* and the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel's *Messiah*. The roof was well and truly lifted in the

Mass setting, with the motet and rousing hymns befitting the occasion – it will be difficult to do better next year.

Tristan Russcher

Funderland

During the month of January this year, the choristers went for a trip to Funderland. Everyone was very excited, including me. All the boys were screaming and running around. The rides were extremely fun. I went on some, including one called "Avalanche". I also went on one that at the end splashes into a pool of water soaking you to the skin. I was freezing after that particular one! We had crepes, burgers, chips and slushies. They were very tasty and added to the occasion.



My favourite ride of all was one called "Inversion XXL". This ride lifts a very long way up and spins around, while turning you upside down. You get a spectacular view of Ballsbridge and the Aviva Stadium. We could not persuade

Mr Grealy to go on that one, though, but he did enjoy a lot of the other rides (as you can see in the photograph!). Mr Russcher did give it a try, but I don't think he liked it very much!

I really enjoyed my visit to Funderland this year and I'm sure all the boys feel the same. I would like to thank all those responsible for giving us this outing, and also thanks to all of the parents who came along. I think they really enjoyed it as well.

Gavin Jones

Changing Choristers

So far this year we have welcomed six new choristers into the choir following a lengthy audition process at John Scottus School. Myself, David Grealy and music teacher Fran Dempsey listened to over 150 children in classes three to six over the course of four days, after which we appointed one (!) boy and four girls.

Páidí Kinlay, Tadhg Ó Ceallaigh, Emma Lohan, Par-

is Moran, Anna Nakonechna and Aisling Spratt passed their Light Blue Voice for Life module, and were admitted as full members of the choirs on 3rd February. As both boys' and girls' choirs are now at bursting point, fitting everyone into the choir stalls is slightly problematic, but it's a nice problem to have!

We were very sad to say goodbye to the Deputy Head Chorister of the boys'

choir, Martin Henihan, at the morning Eucharist on the 14th April. Martin had been a member of the choir since 2008, serving under three different Directors of Music, and was an extremely valuable member of the choir. We thank him for his many years of dedication to the choir, and hope to welcome him to the back rows of the choir in the near future.

Tristan Russcher

Producing a CD (1)

In April 2011, the decision was taken to produce two commercial quality recordings of the choirs at Saint Bartholomew's. The first was a recording of the Girls and Men, titled "And the house was filled with smoke". This disc was completed over an eight month period, and launched at the Concert of Carols and Festive Readings in December 2011. You can read about the production process in the January 2012 issue of this magazine, which is available on the parish web site.

The second recording was put on hold for a few months, but in August 2012 the "Go" button was hit on a CD of the Boys and Men. This diary chronicles the various stages of the production process of "Blessed be the God and Father", from inception all the way through to the finished product.



The project begins with Tristan and Richard exchanging a number of emails discussing possible musical selections for the new CD.

One of the first thoughts is to record Mozart *Spatzenmesse*, but after some consideration this is replaced by the Haydn *Little Organ Mass* for two reasons: first, because it has a fantastic treble solo; second, and more importantly, because our choristers "know it really well". Tristan suggests the rather unusual selection Britten *Rejoice in the Lamb*, which he notes wryly "will take a long time to learn" (probably the understatement of the year...)

Two of the other tracks on the initial list are dropped prior to recording; the Parsons *Ave Maria* and Rutter *Gaelic Blessing*. Instead of these,

Tristan teaches the choir to sing the *Credo* from the Haydn Mass, the writer's favourite movement of the setting, albeit one which we do not normally use in Saint Bartholomew's.



Richard has a coffee with with Brian McIvor, the recording engineer who worked on three of our four previous CD projects – Sing Praises (1998), Carols and Readings (2009), and Smoke (2011) – and negotiates a project plan and schedule.



The first recording sessions take place in a bitterly cold church, the heating system in the building having chosen a particularly inopportune time to break down.



Producing a CD (2)

The very first recording take, a run of the first thirty seconds of the Haydn *Gloria*, is announced as take 156, showing if nothing else that our engineer was not offended by this writer's sarcastic remarks when something similar happened in the previous project!

Over the course of the next few hours, all six movements of the Haydn are recorded, finishing on take 246, a portion of the *Benedictus* sung by soloist Gavin Jones.



The morning service in the church is sung by the Girls' Choir alone, allowing most of those taking part in the recording – everyone except the Organist and Director of Music – to enjoy a lie-in.

Most of the singers are

not called until 2:30pm, but the engineering team gather an hour earlier to record the first movement of the Britten, *For I will consider my cat Jeoffry*, once again sung by Gavin Jones.

After this is complete, the choir regroup to record *The Heavens are Yelling/Telling* (opinions vary!) in a total of sixteen takes, comprising various different portions of the piece, including the trio sung by Elias Dempsey, Emmet Kiberd, and Richard Bannister.

The remainder of the day is spent on *Teach Me O Lord*, with a solo treble line sung by Martin Henihan.



Brian delivers the first edit of the November sessions. This "first edit" is just

that; a rough cut of each piece, taken by assembling individual

takes as per the instructions of Judy Martin, our producer.

Members of the project team listen through each edit and make a note of any mistakes (background noises, wrong notes, heinous tuning, and so on). They then listen through the same portions of each piece in other takes to see whether we have alternative that sound better. If we do, these can then be used to produce a subsequent edit. The production software allows us to crossfade between different takes in a completely inaudible fashion so that we end up with the best possible result.



The choir gives its first full performance of the Britten at our annual concert of Carols and Readings, presented this year by Sena-



Producing a CD (3)

tor David Norris. This forced practice of the full piece proves invaluable as we prepare to spend time recording it.



Day three of recording starts off with the Bach, completed in a total of eleven takes. This piece is relatively unusual in the choir repertoire, in that the gentlemen of the choir have the interesting harmonies, while the trebles are for the most part holding long notes. There is a certain amount of discussion on the pronunciation of the German, and the writer hopes that what was finally agreed will not offend too many native speakers!

The next track to be recorded is the the *Nimrod* section of the Britten, full of interesting if somewhat deranged examples of praising God. One of our choristers hands a stuffed animal to our organist, perhaps in homage to the lyrics "Let David Bless with the Bear".

After this is complete, the majority of the choir are dispatched on a lunch break, but Emmet Kiberd remains behind to record the tenor solo, *For the flowers are great blessings*. He completes it in a total of

eleven takes, finishing up at number 337.

The balance of the day is spent on choral sections of the Britten. Afterwards the adults of the choir enjoy a pint together, and in deference to topical news items, the piece is temporarily renamed *Rejoice in the Horse*.



Day four begins with Killian Rogan working on the alto solo of the Britten, "For the mouse is a creature of great personal valour".

The rest of the choir arrives at 2:00pm, and begin recording what has been for many years a favourite of almost everyone at Saint Bartholomew's except, oddly enough, the Director of Music (and at least one of his predecessors). *Blessed be the God and Father* was written for a choir consisting of just a handful of sopranos and a single bass, which is probably why the altos have almost a hundred consecutive bars rest (a service to the rest of us!).

The piece takes just over three hours to record, though a certain amount of that is due to chorister fatigue; take 409 has almost a minute of the Direc-

tor of Music instructing a certain chorister to "grow up"!

The day finishes with the first movement of the Britten – *Rejoice in God, OYe Tongues*.



Brian completes the first edit from the second recording sessions. As before, the team listens through the result, and identifies where some minor fixes are needed.



An initial mock-up CD cover is produced, using a photograph taken at Funderland, complete with the title "Bless God in the Dance" (as heard in the Britten). David Grealy threatens to resign if this photograph is used in the final product (see page five).



Over the course of an entire day Tristan, Richard, and Brian complete a second edit of *Rejoice in the Lamb*. We celebrate with a healthy portion of the aforementioned animal supplied from a nearby Indian takeaway.

Producing a CD (4)



Another mock-up cover is produced with five dishevelled choristers augmented with some Photoshop-created red-eye. Another line from *Rejoice in the Lamb* makes up the title: "The Devils Themselves are at peace!". Though extremely tempting, the decision is taken not to run with this one.



Day five of recording begins with the Purcell. Robin Heather elects to ad-lib in take 468 of his bass solo, singing "Get on to the Omnibus Properly" instead of the original Latin. This causes considerable amusement among the choristers. Perhaps this, coupled with the energy of a Saturday morning, results in some excellent singing. Subsequently, while this track is being edited, Judy Martin comments "This is very good!!".

David Greal, our Organist, is not available for the afternoon due to a performance engagement in Galway. For this reason, this time is used to record the two unaccompanied pieces on the CD.

The first to be tackled is the Victoria, and one of our tenors is immediately up in arms after Judy Martin objects to a "Macclesfield Quam". Once completed, the boys are sent home and the gentlemen are giving a lengthy break before tackling the White *Regina Coeli*, once memorably described by a former Director of Music as an "alto handbag fight".



The final recording session begins with a small number of boys rerecording the middle section of *Blessed be the God and Father*. The decision to rerecord something is never taken lightly, but in this case proves necessary due to a problem with the original session.

Afterwards, the gentlemen arrive, and the group spends the entire afternoon recording the two movements of *Nicholson in D flat*. It is obvious towards the end that everyone is getting tired, but Judy decides that we've got it – at the end of take 586 – and everyone breathes a sigh of relief. Everyone, that is, except Brian, Richard, and Tristan – who now have a couple of weeks to

transform six days worth of recording sessions into a finished product.



An editing session takes place in Richard's apartment in Dublin. There is a certain amount of consternation (mingled with amusement) that the very best take of the third bar of the Haydn Credo seems to be the very first one – and we did at least six more, none of which were quite as good.



Richard attempts to crowd-source a title for the CD by asking for suggestions on the church Facebook page. This proves highly entertaining if not terribly helpful, with suggestions such as "Noises Off", "Now that's what I call Anglican Service Music!", "Rutter Free Zone", and "Like soooo church music".



Tristan and Richard make the drive out to Brian's studio in Slane, Co Meath and work with him on a first

Producing a CD (5)

edit of *Regina coeli*, the final track on the CD to get to this stage. The rest of the evening is spent producing second edits of the Haydn *Credo*, Haydn *Agnus Dei*, and *Blessed be the God and Father*.



The sheer volume of takes, retakes and versions of the programme require

Richard to do a major file reorganisation. It is noted that we now have the equivalent of about thirty CDs of content to deal with. The cutting room floor is awash with out-takes, some of which Richard decides to keep in the archives for posterity/blackmail.

Once this has been completed, Brian, Richard, and Tristan produce a second edit of the Purcell, both movements of the Nicholson, and *The Heavens are Telling*. During breaks from editing, the group agree upon a final title – *Blessd be the God and Father* – and a redesigned cover, using a segment of stained glass window printed on a purple background. Richard spends a few minutes in Photoshop removing some small chips from the original glass.



effort based on programme notes supplied by Tim Thurston, and text about the church that is shamelessly reused from the Girls' Choir CD. The on-disc stamp is produced from a photograph of the rose window at the back of the church.



One more night in Slane is spent working on editing the Wesley, the Haydn *Kyrie*, and the Byrd. Once complete, a first master of the final CD is produced, including all twenty-one tracks. David suggests that we should add lyrics to the CD booklet, which Fergus McCullough sources for us.



Richard produces a new version of the booklet including the lyrics, and after a bit of experimentation, manages to squeeze the extra content into just four extra pages.

After the morning Eucharist, Richard, Tristan, and Brian gather in the edit-

ing studio to make the last few edits. Just after 7:00pm, the entire recording is listened to from start to end. No show-stoppers are found, and the master copy is burned to CD.

The music selection in the car on the way back to Dublin is (for some bizarre reason) *not* Anglican church music.



Richard delivers the master CD and artwork to the duplication company, and uploads tracks to the iTunes Music Store, programmed to go live on our launch date of June 9th. Apple insists that we include full titles on every track name, meaning that *Kyrie* is expanded to *Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo "Little Organ Mass", H. 22, No. 7: I. Kyrie*.



The completed discs are collected from the manufacturers, and early copies are delivered to the boy choristers at the end of their regular rehearsal. The stage is set for the finished product to be launched by Tim Thurston at a concert on Sunday June 9th.

Richard Bannister

Table Quiz and Auction

We had an excellent turnout for our tenth annual Table Quiz and Auction, presented by Richard Bannister and Robin Heather at St Mary's Rugby Football Club on the evening of May 17th.

We have been fortunate to enjoy the support of a number of corporate sponsors for much of this time, including The Wicklow Wine Company, SuperValu Wicklow, Wines Direct Mullingar, Bridge Street Books Wicklow, Butler's Medical Hall Wicklow, Lumley's Bakery, and the Castlecourt Hotel in Westport.

The auction is an integral part of this evening, and as always there were some fine wines on offer, together with CD bundles from Tim Thurston, an interesting China Tea Set from Elaine Girard, and an opportunity to "Bid for Breakfast", courtesy of Lumley's Bakery. The total raised from auction items alone came to just over five hundred euro.

We also ran a raffle, and as always there were enough prizes for almost everybody in the audience. These included cosmetic gift sets, family passes for Shelbourne Park, chocolates, gift vouchers, books, rugby novelties, as well as a

great selection of wines and spirits. There was one particularly unique corkscrew claimed by a former member of the Girls' Choir. A description probably shouldn't be included here.

There were two controversial questions this year, including one on Irish Geography and one on Chemistry. Worse yet, the writer inadvertently announced the answer to one of the questions over the microphone. This didn't prevent at least one team managing to give an incorrect answer!

And at the end of round six we had a three way tie for first place. There could only be one winner, however, and the Keenan/Kiberd table took home the honours for the second consecutive year.

We would like to thank all those who supported us and who helped us raise approximately €1500 for the choir fund. We are particularly grateful to the President and Committee of St. Mary's for providing us with a superb venue including tables, chairs, and PA system at no cost, thanks to us supporting the club bar on the night.

Robin Heather

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Submissions

Submissions for future issues of this magazine and all enquiries about advertising should be sent to the editor.

Friends of the Choir

This magazine is sent by post to friends of the choir; for further details, contact the Administrator, Claire McIlrath on 01-6688522 or admin@stbartholomews.ie.

Future events

A full schedule of services and events is available on the diary page of the parish web site, located at <http://www.stbartholomews.ie/>.

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