



MUSIC @ SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S

[HTTP://WWW.STBARTHOLOMEWS.IE](http://www.stbartholomews.ie)

JUNE 2016



WELCOME!

Welcome to the new look *Music @ Saint Bartholomew's*. A lot has happened in the eighteen months since our last issue. We've inaugurated a chamber choir, added many new choristers, performed in several concerts, taken part in *threeTV* broadcasts, and launched a new CD. On the social side, the choristers had their annual trip to Funderland, the boys visited Leisureplex, and the gentlemen went out to dinner at Old Wesley.

The music at our church has an annual running cost in the region of €60,000 – a figure that would be substantially higher were it not for the many people who volunteer their time and skills at no cost. If you have an idea for a fundraising event, and better yet, if you're prepared to run it – please do get in touch. Additionally, we are actively seeking to increase the number of people contributing to our "Friends of the Choir" scheme which is used solely for the maintenance of our choirs and musical tradition. For further details, please see our web site.

Richard Bannister, Editor
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Christmas Concert (2015)

MUSIC @ SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S

JUNE 2016

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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, Mark Bowyer 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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CHANGING FACES

We were sorry to say goodbye to a number of loyal choristers in 2015.

From the boys' choir we bid a (hopefully temporary!) farewell to William Kinsella, Roman and Alexander Considine, and Mark Connor. We hope that they may one day like to join us again once their voices have settled and sing as either an alto, tenor, or bass in the men's choir.

From the girls' choir, our senior choristers Isabelle McGeough, Daisy Magahy, Catherine Neenan, and Kiah Ronaldson all left to concentrate on their studies for the Leaving Certificate. Thankfully the girls have joined

former choristers Sally Anne McCarthy, Roisin Horan, Cliona Rogan, and Kate Somers in the Chamber Choir, which rehearses and sings Evensong at least once a month. I hope that more past choristers will make this transition in the future and that the girls and boys can continue to contribute their talents towards the music and liturgy at Saint Bartholomew's.

We are delighted to welcome a whole new generation of probationers to the choir. We say hello to Alexander Bailey, Vlad Cojocar, Lochlainn Connor, Edwin Dabsevicius, Turlough Dineen, Julia Ivanova, Emily Joye, Herkus

Mecionis, Donnacha Murray, Delfine Robins, Anita Ryan, Yefim Semanov, and Jessie Spratt.

Luckily we are not saying goodbye to our head choristers from the boys' and girls' choirs. Next term Luke O'Reilly and Rachel Spratt will be joined by former deputy head chorister Elias Dempsey as Choral Scholars, a newly-instituted scheme which will see them permanently joining the choirs at Evensong each Sunday, whether it be boys, girls, chamber choir or consort. We're delighted to be able to offer these positions and hope to expand the scheme further down the road.

CONGRATULATIONS

Hugo Considine, Edwin Dabsevicius, Milan Moran, Erasmus Dempsey, and Ben O'Brien all took and passed their bronze "Voice for Life" exam earlier this term. All the boys worked very hard for this challenging exam which takes into consideration singing, aural

tests, musical theory and appreciation and knowledge of the liturgy. Edwin and Erasmus both achieved a distinction – well done!

By the time these words are read we will have had four more choristers take exams – Sarah Colgan and Jessie Spratt

have been working hard for their Bronze and Oisín O'Reilly and Cian Whittaker for their Silver. Andrew, Lucy, Tristan, and the Vicar spend time teaching various modules, but it's up to the choristers themselves (and their parents!) to do the homework!

RSCM VOICE FOR LIFE AWARDS

The weekend of 14-15 November was particularly busy for RSCM Ireland with over 40 successful Voice for Life candidates presented with their certificates on 14 November in Saint Mary's Pro Cathedral in Dublin. Fr Damien O'Reilly (Saint Mary's Pro Cathedral) officiated at the service assisted by Mark Bowyer, the RSCM Ireland coordinator. Music chosen for the event included *Gaudet in coelis* by Dering, Stanford's *Psalms 150*, and Howells' *Hymn to St Cecilia*. It was a delight to see so many choristers getting their Bronze, Silver and Gold awards, including a good number from Saint Bartholomew's (see previous page). After the presentation of the awards by

Fr Damien, the choir sang the première performance of a piece commissioned especially for the service called *The Language of Birds*, written by young Irish composer Eoghan Desmond. The piece has been well received and RSCM Publications have recently agreed to publish the piece for general sale. This is testament to Eoghan's ability as a composer, and the piece's accessibility to all levels of singers.

The following day the award winners were in the RTÉ studio to record the Sunday Worship programme which was broadcast on RTÉ One television on Saint Cecilia's Day on 22 November and led by RSCM Ireland coordinator Mark Bowyer. Much of the

music sung at the awards service was also sung at the broadcast service. The recording process wasn't too bad – the whole thing was done in one take with one slight correction, which meant that we were away in good time (actually just in time for Tristan to play the voluntary at Evensong in Saint Bartholomew's!) There were lots of nice comments regarding the broadcast and it was good to showcase the work of the RSCM (and in particular the success of Voice for Life) in this way. Thank you to all involved, in particular Blánaid Murphy, Tristan Russcher and the choirs of Saint Mary's Pro Cathedral and Saint Bartholomew's Church in Dublin, who took part in both events.



Saint Bartholomew's Choir

VIVALDI GLORIA

Sunday 12th June, 6:00pm



Tickets €10

Followed by a sparkling wine reception

Saint Bartholomew's Church, Clyde Road

Tickets available from www.stbartholomews.ie

TELEVISION BROADCASTS

After a rather long period ‘off the air’, the choirs of Saint Bartholomew’s were featured not once, not twice, but thrice on RTÉ television in the last eighteen months. On 26 April 2015, RTÉ’s ‘Nationwide’ programme came to report on the current renovations going on inside and outside the church. They also interviewed a few members of the community about the choral tradition here at Saint Bartholomew’s and what it means to be a member of the choir. All the choristers from both the boys’ and girls’ choirs were filmed as part of a normal Sunday morning service, where we sang *Stanford in C*, along with the Easter anthem *Ye Choirs of New Jerusalem*, one of Stanford’s most beloved choral works. The programme was broadcast in August and received great feedback.

We were then approached by RTÉ’s ‘Sunday Worship’ programme to record a service for Saint Cecilia’s Day in conjunction with RSCM Ireland and the choirs of the Pro-

Cathedral, Dublin. This exciting project led to the commissioning of a brand new composition by the Irish composer Eoghan Desmond entitled *The Language of Birds*, which is based on portions of *Jubilate agno* by Christopher Smart. Our warm up for the recording took place in the Pro-Cathedral on 14 November where we joined forces with the cathedral choirs to sing at the RSCM Ireland Voice for Life awards ceremony. Blanaid Murphy bravely took control of the massed choristers, over fifty in total, and whipped everyone into shape.

So impressed were RTÉ by these broadcasts, they invited us to present a liturgy for Good Friday, which the boys and men recorded ahead of time on 6 March. This was a rather last minute invitation so we decided to sing the repertoire with which we were familiar – Victoria reproaches, Byrd’s *Miserere mei, Deus* and the Agnus Dei from Wood’s *Mass setting in the Phrygian mode*. Many members of the congrega-

tion were invited to join us at the studio for what was the first time in which an Anglican choir presented the solemn liturgy for Good Friday on RTÉ. It felt rather strange presenting a service for Good Friday so far ahead of Holy Week but that meant we could sing at our own service on the day itself. The boys enjoyed being seemingly in two places at once – in church and on TV!

The recording process itself is, unfortunately, far from glamorous. Each service took the bulk of the day to record, not necessarily due to musical concerns (our choirs are invariably meticulously prepared!). Much of the time we were left waiting for producers, film crew, sound engineers, even make-up artists! A huge amount of coordination goes into producing a TV broadcast but I’m delighted to say that all of our choristers sang with assurance and professionalism and were great ambassadors for Saint Bartholomew’s and the Church of Ireland in general.



Nationwide (26th April 2015)



Saint Cecilia's Day (22nd November 2015)



Good Friday (25th March 2016)

POTBOILERS, PASTICHES, AND PARTY PIECES

Potboilers, Pastiches, and Party Pieces is a CD of fun music recorded on our organ — with all proceeds going towards the Saint Bartholomew's restoration fund. Richard Bannister explains.

As most readers are aware, our parish is currently engaged in a large scale project to restore and preserve our church building for future generations. We are attempting to raise a total of one million euro over a two year period with lots of subcommittees working on their own individual projects.

Towards the middle of

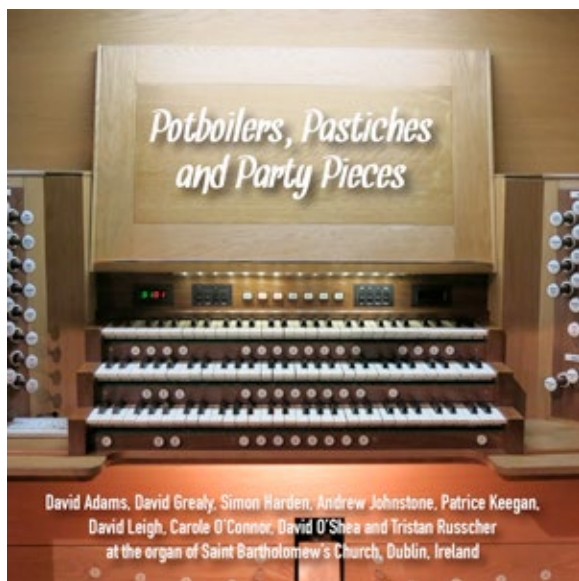
last year I wrote up a proposal for the production of a CD that I envisaged as "Organ Top Of The Pops", the aim being to come up with a set of crowd pleasing selections that "normal people might listen to". I hoped to persuade a cross-section of Dublin's organists to contribute one track apiece.

Our assistant director of music, Andrew Johnstone, agreed to come on board both to contact potential contributors and oversee the overall programme to make sure that the selection was reasona-

ble. Over the course of the next few months Andrew was instrumental (pun absolutely intended) in making things happen, and it is no exaggeration to say that the recording would not have been completed without his assistance.

One of the most important factors in this project was to minimise overall costs. Each of our previous choir CD releases cost in the region of €7500 to produce, making them very much a labour of love rather than a way to raise money. Long time friend of the parish Brian McIvor agreed to do the engineering for us at no cost, and I agreed to sponsor the manufacturing personally, allowing 100% of the €10 sale price to go to the restoration fund.

Recording took place in a bitterly cold church on Saturday, 7 November with Brian and myself joined by Andrew, Tristan, former assistant director of music David Grealy, and guest organists David Adams, Simon Harden, Patrice Keegan, David



Leigh, Carole O'Connor, and David O'Shea. Trevor Crowe was on standby and twice dropped into us to fix minor issues with the organ. The day ran over schedule, but we managed to achieve our goal, with just under seventy minutes of music in the can.

The highlight of the session was a brief moment of levity in the middle of the afternoon when someone enquired whether we had tuning issues. "Yes," came the reply, "but it's French music!"

Post production took place in Brian's studio in Slane over the ensuing weeks. Copies of the first edit were sent to the various contributors, and their feedback was used to com-

01. Toccata sur "Pat le Facteur" Edward Marsh (1966-)	5:29
Performed by David Leigh	
02. Planxty Connolly David Adams (1961-)	8:33
Performed by David Adams	
03. Fiesta! (Fast Dance, Nocturne, Finale) Iain Farrington (1977-)	8:57
Performed by Tristan Rauscher	
04. Flight of the Angry Birds Jonathan Mui (1991-)	8:05
Performed by Tristan Rauscher	
05. Toccata Théodore Dubois (1837-1924)	7:05
Performed by Simon Hadden	
06. Tuba Tune Norman Cocker (1899-1953)	4:34
Performed by David Goadby	
07. Boléro de Concert Louis James Alfred Lefebvre-Willy (1817-1869)	4:57
Performed by David O'Shea	
08. Toccata from Suite Gothique Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)	3:59
Performed by Petrice Kegan	
09. Sportive Fauns Dzsó Ántalfy (1885-1945)	6:20
Performed by Carole O'Connor	
10. Kinderliederorgelbüchlein Carl Severinus Hanstein (1769-1807)	10:31
Performed by Andrew Johnstone	
11. Riverdance Bill Whorlan (1950-)	6:36
Performed by Andrew Johnstone	
Total running time: 68:08	
Producer: Andrew Johnstone Engineering: Brian McEneaney Project Manager: Richard Ransicker © 2016 Saint Bartholomew's Church	

pile the final edit that was delivered to manufacturing in March 2016.

The disc is now on sale at the back of the church, via our web site, and at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. As of this writing we've sold roughly twenty per-

cent of the production run, and would greatly appreciate assistance to help us clear the remainder. If you would be willing to purchase copies and sell them on, please get in touch either in person or by email (see inside front cover).

ALBUM NOTES

The album notes for our new CD, written anonymously, are reproduced in full here.

To those who would never accept a present of recorded organ music, let alone purchase any themselves; to those for whom the word 'toccata' is synonymous with Bach and Widor alone; to those for

whom the term 'chorale prelude' conjures up only the obscurities of some unknown alien hymn-tune, and for whom fugues are pieces during which the parts come in one after another and the audience go out one after another — in short, to those who, through no fault of their

own, are under the false impression that the King of Instruments must forever stand on stiff-upper-lipped royal ceremony, this collection of potboilers, pastiches and party pieces is unashamedly offered, without apology, but with the following few words of explanation.

It can hardly have been intentional that the theme tune of a popular 1980s BBCTV puppet show traced the portentous melodic outline of the Gregorian chant 'Te Deum laudamus'. The resemblance, however, has not been lost on those British organists who remember the show from their infant school days. Though at first confined to the realm of improvisation (where it proved useful especially at baptisms), in 1996 the seven-note theme made a triumphantly French-flavoured entry into the field of organ literature in the shape of Edward Marsh's arresting *Toccata sur 'Pat le facteur'*, subtitled (by way of a reminder to aficionados of the puppet show) *La vallée verte*. As a parody of French manners, this item would have all the ingredients of an Inspector Clouseau farce were it not that Marsh's suave foreign accent sounds too much like the real thing.

Similarly unimaginable without its French antecedents is the rambunctious organ suite *Fiesta!* (2003) by versatile virtuoso Iain Farrington, another British francophile,

yet one of jazzier persuasions. While the three movements recorded here recall the innovative language of such luminaries as Alain and Messiaen, the content is wholly original: this music speaks entirely for itself.

'Pat le facteur' belongs to that class of toccatas in which glittering finger-work forms a counterpoint to menacingly melodic foot-work, a class exemplified for all time by the trepidatious finale of *Suite gothique* (1895) by the Alsace-born composer and Parisian organist Léon Boëllmann. Belonging to a contrasting class, in which manual dexterity takes centre-stage and the cantabile element is confined to a calmer central section, is the no-less-celebrated *Toccata* (1889) by Boëllmann's longer-lived compatriot and contemporary Théodore Dubois. The character of this work, in which the pedals are relegated to a supporting role, is explained by its inclusion in a collection inscribed 'for organ or pedal piano', the latter cumbersome instrument being a relic

of the days when organists may not have been wealthy enough to pay the salaries of full-time organ-blowers but could still afford to live in houses with capacious drawing rooms. Another domestic substitute for the organ was the harmonium, invented, legend has it, by an instrument maker curious to know what a piano would sound like if it could catch a dose of the flu. So dearly did French organists take this wheezing contraption to heart that many of them composed especially for it, the trail being blazed by that notorious fairground man of the organ world, Louis James Alfred Lefébure-Wély, whose *Boléro de Concert* makes a not entirely authorised transfer from salon to sanctuary on this recording.

Whereas the theory and criticism of church music has for centuries resounded with pious pronouncements against the mixing of sacred and profane, the contrary view—that the Almighty might actually be subverting the follies of man to His own greater glory—has been

articulated almost entirely in the practical sphere, from Renaissance burlesques of unmentionable madrigals to Viennese masses fit (some would say fit only) for the opera house. In continuance of that gloriously suspect tradition, the music on this CD conveys within the hallowed walls of Saint Bartholomew's Church a range of diverse extra-mural references from such widely separated worlds as fine art and gaming technology. The scintillating scherzo *Sportive Fauns* — published

in the USA in 1922 by Hungarian organ virtuoso Dezso d'Antalfy, and dedicated to his friend and French counterpart Marcel Dupré—claims inspiration from the mythical half-men-half-goats that strut their stuff in some of the more risqué works of the Swiss symbolist painter Arnold Böcklin (1827–1901). By way of complete contrast, and in defiance of the old adage that new wine can't be put in old bottles, Jonathan Mui's craftily contrapuntal *Flight of the Angry Birds* (2011) drags the mundane melody of hand-

held digital *divertissements* kicking and screaming into the eighteenth century.

Bringing things back home, as it were, *Planxty Connolly* (2008) forms Dublin organist David Adams's own keen-eared tribute to Ireland's national instrument, the uilleann pipes, spicily disrupted with a dash of post-modern mayhem and dedicated to his Dún Laoghaire-based colleague David Connolly. *Riverdance*, as no one who heard its première will ever forget, began life as an interval segment for the RTÉ-hosted final of the Eurovision Song Contest in 1994, when Ireland scored the third of four wins in five years. The segment itself proved that year's *de facto* winner, however, quickly spawning an international hit dance show, myriad interpretations by Irish traditional musicians, the organ solo version recorded here, and everlasting renown for its composer Bill Whelan. Perhaps also springing from Irish soil, albeit much less notoriously, is the *Tuba Tune* published in 1922 by Norman Cocker, then an organist-to-be

Flight of the Angry Birds
(Page 4)

Jonathan Mui

Allegro Scherzo ♩ = 92

Clarinet

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of Manchester Cathedral in the north west of England. Though this jolly work's genesis has yet to be documented, the dedication to Dr William George Eveleigh (1868–1950), then organist of Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, suggests that the composer, while stationed locally during WW1, may have penned the work for that cathedral's organ and its famously fiery tuba stop.

The life-span of Carl Severinus Hansstein—whose birth took place in 1769, some seventy-two years after his death

in 1697—remains a stumbling-block for necromusicologists, the only plausible hypothesis being that, like his legendary teacher and long-time drinking associate P. D. Q. Bach, Hansstein lived life in reverse. Certainly the chronology is not helped by the fact that some of the organ preludes recorded here are based on melodies that are not otherwise known to have existed prior to the nineteenth century. Though the sole surviving manuscript source (the property of a private individual who

wishes to remain private) contains no clues as to the melodies' identification, scholars have categorically established that the *Kinderliederorgelbüchlein* contains references to 'The Grand Old Duke of York', 'Hickory dickory dock', 'Oranges and lemons', 'Old King Cole', 'I had a little nut tree', 'Rock-a-bye baby' and 'Humpty-Dumpty sat on a wall'. When asked how these nursery songs could have been known to the likes of a Hansstein, however, such scholars will prefer to sit on a fence.



*Potboilers, Pastiches
and Party Pieces*

Saint Bartholomew's Church
Dublin, Ireland

MUSIC AT SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S – A BRIEF HISTORY

The following article is taken from a presentation given by Tristan as part of a lecture series in October 2015 on the history of the choir and musical tradition at Saint Bartholomew's.

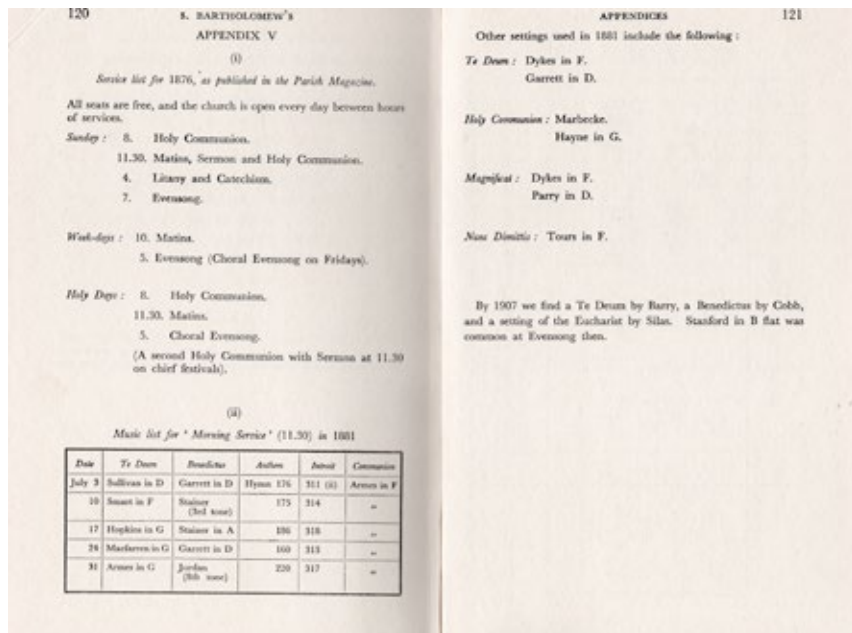
The musical tradition at Saint Bartholomew's has gone hand in hand with the liturgy from the very beginning. Richard Whately, the Archbishop of Dublin immediately prior to the consecration of Saint Bartholomew's, had been an Oxford professor and a strong supporter of the Anglo-Catholic movement. This had more in common with the Roman rite rather than the 'low church' practices found in the mainstream Church of Ireland at the time. This was to be the foundation of the tradition in Saint Bartholomew's, and although the archbishop died in 1863, a couple of years before the laying of the foundation stone of the church, he made a personal contribution of the substantial sum of £500 towards construction costs.

The first organist and choirmaster was William

Henry Owen, who was tasked by the first Vicar, Arthur Dawson, to build a choir and musical tradition, a notable feature of which was the use of plain-song. Though the press of the day dismissed the music at Saint Bartholomew's as "much sound and little music", the congregation apparently found plainsong quite acceptable. Judging by press reports that describe personal acts of devotion, many were used to such traditions.

The idea of a choral tradition was not appreciated by everyone. After Vicar Arthur Dawson's resignation in 1871, the press was flooded with inflammatory articles to frighten nominators of a successor into appointing a clergyman who would stamp out the choral tradition. Richard Travers Smith was appointed Vicar in September 1871 to fierce opposition within the Church of Ireland. This opposition continued for many years during the very turbulent period in which the Church of Ireland's prayer

book was being revised. Even though Smith had detractors in the Church of Ireland, he was determined to satisfy the sizeable congregation of Saint Bartholomew's, which flocked in every Sunday to worship with excellent liturgy and fine music. Records of the time state Mattins congregations averaged 360 in the 1870s and 250 at Evensong. In 1902 a letter was published in the parish magazine to honour Smith's thirtieth year as Vicar, stating *"We cannot forget that through your exertions, and owing in a large measure to your liberality, the church has been beautified in many ways, the organ rebuilt, the Parochial Hall and Vicarage built, while the Church Home has been founded. We dwell, too, with thankfulness, on the crowded congregations, the reverent and dignified services, the daily Eucharist, and the many helps unsparingly given to the devotional life, as well as on the many good works and causes to the support of which you have led us."* I'm sure that we will see a similarly celebratory letter in *Music @ Saint Bar-*



Service List for 1876

tholomew's on the thirtieth anniversary of our current Vicar's appointment!

Even though the congregation numbered in the hundreds, Smith was more concerned that the offices should be of the highest quality, liturgically and musically. William Owen, the first organist and choir master, was tragically killed in a railway accident only a year after his appointment in 1868. Not much is known about his successor, J. C. Marks, although there is evidence that the Select Vestry was concerned about the welfare of the

music under his direction. In a resolution of 1883 the duties of the organist and choirmaster are defined as follows: "*1. That it is the duty of the organist to give the choir the highest degree of musical education which they are capable of receiving, and that practices necessary for this object are not to be regarded by him as voluntary on his part but as in the strictest sense part of his duty. 2. That it is the duty of the organist to give his musical assistance as directed by the clergy in the preparation and performance of any service which they think proper to hold in the church.*"

Choir practices were held at 10:30am on Wednesdays and were open to members of the congregation, who were asked to bring copies of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' and 'Helmere's Plainsong Psalter'. There was a parish 'Choral Union', run by Marks, which met for rehearsal each week and gave the occasional concert. Marks resigned in 1884 and a sub-committee of the Select Vestry was formed to choose a successor.

William Henry Vipond Barry was appointed later that year. Barry came

from a musical family from Cork – his father was an excellent pianist who had studied under Liszt at Weimar prior to becoming resident music-master at Forest School in Walthamstow, where Barry Junior was educated and sang in the chapel choir. Barry's first employment was with the Great Western Railway Company. However, he decided to abandon a potentially lucrative and successful career in engineering in favour of music. He studied the organ in his spare time and was appointed as organist and choirmaster in a number of parish churches in England. Unfortunately, Barry didn't really like working as an organist in Dublin, as he found it 'musically uncongenial', and after a few years he resigned his post to return to England. The Select Vestry asked him to reconsider and he did, staying at Saint Bartholomew's for 54 years.

Music in the Church of Ireland around this time was not generally of a very high standard; it is probable that some of the congregation were drawn to Saint Bartholomew's by

the significant quality of its musical tradition. This can be proved by a parish magazine article from 1879 which attributes a recent decrease in Sunday attendances to the re-opening of Christ Church Cathedral and the consequent resumption of its choral services. Barry introduced much great organ music to Ireland including contemporary works from Germany, France and England. He also introduced choral settings by Stanford and Stainer which are still performed by us today. Barry had an early training in organ building and specified the enlargement

and improvement of the Gray and Davidson organ in 1887, 1894, and 1902. He was regarded as an excellent choirmaster, combining devout churchmanship with expert musical skill. A former chorister under Barry, Canon H. M. Harriss, recorded the following impressions of his days as a choir boy: *"To the casual observer, the choirmaster would appear, I think, as a distinguished personality, whose artistic demeanour was shown in his long flowing, gradually whitening locks, his manner and bearing marked by an old-world charm and courtesy. To those who served under him in the choir these*



William Henry Vipond Barry

(iii)									
MATTINS, 11 a.m.			SUNG EUCHARIST, 12 noon.			EVENSONG, 7 p.m.			
Day	<i>Te Deum</i>	<i>Benedictus</i>	<i>Hymns</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Hymns, etc.</i>	<i>Magnificat and Nunc Dim.</i>	<i>Hymn</i>	<i>Hymn</i>	<i>Hymn</i>
7	Stegall in A	Stainer 3rd Tone	76 178	Harding in F	79 299	West in F	80	220	81
14	Sullivan in D	Cobb in G	180 218	Harding in F	314 324 (Barry)	Cruikshank in B flat	219	22	274
21	Smart in F	Dykes in F	173 7	Harding in F	172 556	Parry in D	21	177	545
28	Benedicite — Maunder in G	Plain-song	406 533	Harding in F	*316 (Barry) 544 (MS.)	Stanford in B flat	†430	620	36

* Procession, 395.

† In Procession.

SERVICES IN S. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

Sundays.—8, Holy Communion. 11, Mattins and Sermon. 12, Sung Eucharist. 3.30, Children's Service. 6.30, Litany. 7, Evensong and Sermon.

Holy Days.—Additional Services as announced.

Week-days.—8, Holy Communion. 10.30, Mattins. 5.30, Evensong (except Wednesdays and Saturdays).
Evening on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Music List for 1923

last elements—charm and courtesy—were considerably less in evidence! Choir practices were, to the small boys at any rate, something in the nature of reigns of terror. And yet this was only one side, and not the most outstanding in the end, of our relations with Mr Barry. Almost imperceptibly we came under the influence of his all but unattainable standards of efficiency. Our best seemed to become something better than we thought ourselves capable of: at times we even received a rare word of cordial praise!”

Barry also worked extensively outside of Saint Bartholomew's in the wider musical world of Dublin, and Dean Wilson of Saint Patrick's Cathedral cred-

ited him with doing more for church music in Ireland than any other organist. A letter of his was published in the Ecclesiastical Gazette: “Frequently in the Old Testament, more especially in the psalms, we find frequent references to instrumental music in the worship of God. True, we are told to praise Him in the sound of the trumpet, the strings and pipe, the merry lute and harp, cymbals etc., in short a veritable orchestra. Man can praise his Creator in the playing of a musical instrument equally as well as in song. Voluntaries should not be regarded as something to play the people out of church. It is that absurd notion that has done such great harm. I main-

tain that the organist should make the voluntary at close of every service a fitting tribute to the splendour of the day's worship.”

In 1902 the parish magazine solicited increasing support for the choir, which then consisted of eighteen boys and twelve men. It states, “It is an admitted fact that boys cannot be got entirely from Dublin. The expense of boarding must, therefore, be added. We have two boys at present from England, and this number we hope to increase to eight, after the summer vacation, if the offertory at our annual Choir Festival should permit us to do so.” These two English boys were boarded at a

private house and attended The High School. The earliest mention of a scholarship scheme for the choristers occurs around this time in a report from the headmaster of Rathmines School, where he would agree to take a number of choirboys at three guineas each per annum (so long as they were the sons of gentlemen) so that he could improve the singing in his school chapel.

In 1937 Barry fell ill and was given leave of absence from June to October. His wife saw to the training of the choristers

and the Rev Robert Ross played for many of the services. The Select Vestry insisted that Barry should be allowed to retire on full salary, but he didn't have the chance to take up the offer. Barry died on Saint Bartholomew's Day, 1938, having served under three Vicars. The parish magazine published the following: "*The Select Vestry wish to place on record their appreciation of the life and labour of the late Mr Barry who passed to his rest on our Patronal Feast. As a Catholic Christian his spiritual life found its centre in Jesus Christ at the altar. As organist he used*

his great gifts in the interpretation of the liturgy, and as choirmaster he brought his literary knowledge and technical skill to the most painstaking training of the choir. His place amongst organists is unique and his Dublin confreres held him in the highest esteem as an outstanding musician and a Christian gentleman. Mr Barry's fifty-four years' service has given a distinctive quality to the music of this church, and a devotional character to our worship of God in His sanctuary. It will be the aim of the Select Vestry to maintain and advance the tradition established under the leadership of



The Choir in 1940

Back Row: Mr. E.S.Fry (Organist/Choirmaster), Canon Noel Waring, Canon Walter S. Simpson (Vicar), Rev. George Slimms, Rt. Rev. Arthur Barton (Archbishop of Dublin), Rev. Roderick Coote (Curate); Middle Row: Gerry Smith, Roy Alexander, Jim Maguire, Stanley Reamsbottom, Sammy Cole; Front Row: Tony Constable, George Reeves, Geoffrey Mahon, Noel Houlden, Brian Draper, Ian Bailey, Jimmy Balbirnie, Leonard Henry



The Choir in 1945

their departed friend."Two of Barry's hymns are included in the Irish Church Hymnal—the tunes *Saint Bartholomew* and *Clyde Road*.

Edward S Fry was appointed as Barry's successor in 1938. His father had been a chorister under Barry, and his grandfather a churchwarden under Smith. Of course, the financial situation in the 1940s made life difficult for the parish and this was reflected in the music budget. The Vicar had to step in and overturn a motion by the Select Vestry to put the choir on a voluntary basis. Fry countered this by working harder than ever to expand the reach of the music at Saint Bartholomew's. For many years prior, the Sunday after Ascension Day had been observed as 'Choir

Sunday', and collections on that day were reserved to the upkeep of the choir and organ. To expand on this, Fry introduced a midsummer festival, consisting of a week-long series of recitals, which ran for many years. Even still, Fry realised that the primary role of church music was to enhance and work hand-in-hand with the liturgy. At the midsummer festival in 1962 Canon Harriss preached on this topic: "*In the worship in Saint Bartholomew's the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist has always held the central place. When I received notice of this Festival of Liturgy and Music with its carefully planned programmes I was impressed by the fact that the first point emphasised had nothing to do with the music at all. The first statement that confronts us is, that the Holy*

Communion is celebrated, and the Offices said, daily throughout the year. Yet when it is possible the two elements of Liturgy and Music are brought clearly to bear on one another. On Sundays and chief Holy Days, the Eucharist has from a very early time in the history of Saint Bartholomew's been celebrated here with a dignity to which music makes a most important contribution. I can myself testify that in my choir-boy days here it was in singing at the Choral Celebration that I began to gain some perception of what the Church's worship can mean."

Fry broadcast a recital from Saint Bartholomew's in 1939, and in 1949 the church made broadcasting history in Ireland by being the first choir to broadcast an Anglican Eucharist. He also introduced the Walter Vale plainsong psalter

to Saint Bartholomew's, which we still use regularly today.

In May 2003 Fry paid a return visit to Saint Bartholomew's to listen to the choir, try out the newly-refurbished organ and see the tributes to his parents in the Chapel of Memory. Fry moved to England after leaving Saint Bartholomew's and passed away on 5 October 2010. He spent the last few years of his life in Saint Monica's home, just outside Bristol, where he often accompanied services in the home's chapel.

It's during Fry's years as choirmaster at Saint Bar-

tholomew's that we start to get a real sense of what it was like to be a member of the choir, thanks to Bobby Barden's informative recollections of when he first joined the choir in 1942. Here are some excerpts from his memoirs:

"We were in the midst of World War Two. It threatened to spill over into Ireland and food rationing was intensifying. Private cars were off the streets and the trams had to cease by 9:30pm each evening. The thoughts of what might happen if Mr Hitler turned his attentions to our shores were alarming. Stories of the Holocaust were leaking out and the fears of evacuation were very

real. All in all, a frightening time for a shy, timid ten-year-old.

Time came to turn for home. Together with my friend Willie Bredin, his mother, brother, two sisters and my mother and sister came down from Ranelagh along Marlboro Road to Herbert Park. We were to take a different route home, down to Ballsbridge then up Clyde Road. Why this longer route, I wondered? It was a Sunday in August and our attention was drawn to what was happening at the very beautiful church we were passing. There was a procession coming out of the church, fourteen boys in red cassocks with short white surplices followed by an elderly priest. The time will have been mid-afternoon and this was to be my first introduction to Saint Bartholomew's Church and Saint Bartholomew's choir at the end of their 3:30pm children's service. The procession made its way from the main door and disappeared into what I know now to be the vestry door.

I'd like to be one of them", I can recall saying. Whether my friend Willie had the same enthusiasm or said so to his mother I can't remember but he and I were destined to travel a new road, in tandem!



Billy Fry and Malcolm Wisener (2003)

Early one weekday at the end of August, Willie and I were dressed in the best our mums could find and we made our way down to the octagon shaped parish hall beside Saint Bartholomew's. We lived in the most modest of circumstances with the war threatening to spill over into Ireland. This meant that clothes were rationed, not that my parents could afford much. I remember a spotted shirt which was made out of a blouse of my fourteen-year-old sister which I flatly refused to wear. In very short supply were tea, white bread, cocoa and meat, with fruit such as bananas and oranges non-existent as also were luxuries such as sweets and chocolate.

I was very, very nervous when mammy told me we were going to be auditioned for the choir. The attraction in those

hard times for our parents was the eventual gaining of scholarships into Saint Andrew's College, then on Clyde Road, or the high school, then in Harcourt Street.

Mr Fry, the choirmaster and to me, then, one of the most handsome and meticulously dressed men I had ever met, greeted Willie, myself and a couple of others more warmly than we expected. Willie went ahead of me. I thought he sounded awful emitting a strange strangulated, breathy sound and attempting some scales and the verse of a hymn. My spirits lifted and I decided Mr Fry must be a saint as he didn't laugh. Instead he told Mrs Bredin that Willie had talented and showed promise and so Willie was in!

Then it was me! I was taken from my mother's lap

and put standing beside the piano. Again I marveled that Mr Fry was clearly the cleanest, tidiest man I had ever met. He also had the longest fingers I had ever seen and a most distinguished long nose.

I sang I'll walk beside you, which my Uncle Owen had taught me some time before, plus some scales. I will have been very timid, which Willie wasn't, and my voice was small but I was fairly musically-accurate and both tonsils and adenoids were gone. Mr Fry declared that I was in! That then was the start of a sixty year-plus adventure!

My joining date was the first Sunday in September 1942 sitting as a probationer in the front pew on the south side of the choir stalls. About one month later I was robed, and without any ceremony, as happens today, I was placed near the altar end of the decani stalls. I was in awe of the four 'corner boys'. They exercised full authority over us all, meting out punishment when they weren't obeyed—this was the regime and we accepted it! Then I was enthralled with the gentlemen of the choir, many of whom were as old as my parents. They were mostly semi-professional singers or divinity students.



The Choir in 1948



The Choir in 1957

This was a time when a conductor for a church or indeed either of the cathedral choirs was frowned upon so Mr Fry controlled all from the organ using his mirror which was adjusted to the lead decani boy. He gesticulated most freely to keep in touch with the choir as he lovingly accompanied the liturgy. His accompaniment of the psalms and his concluding voluntaries won my greatest admiration.

Our normal Sunday was Matins 11:00am, Sung Eucharist 12:00pm, Children's Service 3:30pm and Choral Evensong 7:00pm. Practice for boys was Monday and Wednesday afternoons, then on Friday evening with the gentlemen. There were, of course, several weekday festivals and saint's days in addition to funerals, weddings, and an occasional

concert.

All this represented an enormous change in a ten-year-old's lifestyle. Travel, preparation, practices, in addition to services, took close to twenty hours out of most weeks. New friendships were forged with the other choristers. Saint Bartholomew's with its unique liturgy and music crowded into a young boy's everyday thoughts and aspirations. The clergy, the choirmaster, the gentlemen of the choir, the senior boys and also the parish officers were all looked up to.

The choir played a great part in my life and was an anchor point following the death of my mother in 1943 at the cruelly young age of forty six. It is frightening to imagine how much more forlorn and devastating circumstances would have been if a mother

had not decided to introduce her son to Saint Bartholomew's choir."

Bobby has been a member of the choir ever since, joining the bass line in 1950 and moving to tenor shortly after that. As he often reminds me, Bobby is the real director of the choir, but occasionally permits me to make certain decisions regarding the organisation and day to day running. Not all the new music I throw at the choir is to his liking but he is always diligent, going the extra mile and taking music home to listen to and study, as do many of our choir men. The first time I encountered Bobby was at an RSCM event in Saint Patrick's Cathedral around ten years ago, when I was

organ scholar there. I remember sidling up to the tenor division mid-rehearsal to join in the singing, and he promptly gave me some music and went through the order of Evensong with me. I didn't have the heart to tell him that I'd done one or two before and I was delighted that he was so enthusiastic. I doubt he remembers this meeting as I was a young cocky student who thought I knew everything about music, but ever since I joined Saint Bartholomew's, his support and words of advice in my ear have been much appreciated. We're very fortunate that he shows no signs of slowing down in his retirement and we look forward to his continued membership of the choir for as long

as he enjoys singing.

Alfred Burrowes had been a chorister under Fry and an organ student, and succeeded him as organist and choirmaster in 1946. Burrowes, by all reports, adhered strictly to the high standards set by Barry. He instituted a tradition of a concert of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* shortly after Christmas and enhanced the midsummer festivals by bringing in distinguished soloists and a chamber orchestra. We remember Alfred Burrowes on Saint Bartholomew's Day in the singing of his hymn *King of Saints*.

Senator David Norris was a chorister in the 1950s under the direction of Burrowes. His local parish church was Saint Mary's

on the corner of Simmons-court and Anglesea Roads, but in his 2012 autobiography he states, "*I also went to Saint Bartholomew's in Clyde Road, which had a top-class choir for which you had to audition. We learnt quite a bit of musicianship there, singing Bach and Mozart. It was very High Church Anglican, with incense, vestments and candles; I loved it, but my mother did not approve of such things. She told me how, on a visit to London in the 1930s, she attended a church in Westminster where the incense was billowing and the chanting was all in Latin. She summoned the verger and asked was it a Roman Catholic church. He replied, 'Certainly not, madam,' to which my mother retorted, 'Well it ought to be,' and promptly left*".

In preparation for the presentation upon which this article is based I wrote to numerous past choristers and organists, and Senator Norris was very kind to contribute some recollections: "*I have very happy memories of singing in the choir and particularly Bach's Christmas Oratorio. The organist at the time was Alfie Burrowes and we used to get three to six pence a week in pocket money and tiny lit-*



Singing in Saint Mary's, Haddington Road (c.1960)

tle presents at Christmas. I also remember one boy from a poor family crying because he didn't get a present for discipline reasons."

David Lee was appointed organist in 1956 and immediately put away the plainsong psalter of All Saints, Margaret Street. Interestingly, in Dr Milne's book, published in 1963, he states "*Plainsong has been replaced (at least temporarily) by Anglican chant in the singing of the psalms*", perhaps insinuating that the change would not last – and indeed it didn't. The plainsong psalter was reintroduced at some point fairly soon after Dr Milne's book was published. Lee introduced a number of traditions inspired by his time spent as organ scholar at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, including a special Choral Evenson for Saint Cecilia's Day. He was also the first to incorporate a service of Nine Lessons and Carols into the Christmas celebrations.

David Milne was appointed in 1970 and stayed at Saint Bartholomew's for seventeen years, after which he was appointed housemaster at Saint

Columba's College. I have personally worked with David many times in various guises, including playing for and rehearsing the Guinness Choir. In an email he provided some recollections of his time at Saint Bartholomew's:

"Following my two and a half years as the first organ scholar and college organist at Trinity College, the vacancy for the position of organist and choirmaster at Saint Bartholomew's came at a fortuitous time for me. I was very familiar with the Anglican choral

tradition and had had several years' experience working with boy trebles on RSCM courses. David Lee, my predecessor, was very helpful in introducing me to the musical tradition in the worship at Saint Bartholomew's, and to the personalities of some of the gentlemen of the choir.

From the beginning of my time, I was in no doubt about the sincerity of the liturgy and the importance of the music as part of that. There was a reverence and dignity to the way it was ordered. The opportunity to expand the repertoire of mu-

<i>Date</i>	<i>Te Deum</i>	<i>Introit</i>	<i>Sung Eucharist</i>	<i>Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis</i>
Sept. 2	Parry in D	Lord for thy tender mercies' sake. Hilton	The Leighton	Nicholson in D flat
Sept. 9	Smart in F	Almighty God. Ford	Missa de Angelis	Hylton Stewart in C
Sept. 16	Stanford in C	O Saviour of the world. Palestrina	Cocker in F minor	Harwood in A flat
Sept. 23	Stanford in B flat	Almighty and everlasting God. Gibbons	Wood in the Phrygian mode	Wesley in F
Sept. 30	Harwood in A flat	Deliver us O Lord. Batten	Sumson in F	Stanford in B flat
Oct. 7	Ireland in F	Let my prayer come up. Blow	Darke in F	Byrd Second Service
Oct. 14	Harwood in A flat	Almighty God. Ford	Ley in E minor	Gibbons Short Service
Oct. 21	Parry in D	O come ye servants of the Lord. Tye	Missa de Angelis	Said
Oct. 28	Smart in F	Lord for thy tender mercies' sake. Hilton	Marbecke	Said

Music List September 1962

sic to be sung at Matins, the Sung Eucharist and at Choral Evensong was exciting both for me, and the choir. This was very special to me as I had always aspired to work in this area. I was able to do this now without the full-time commitment of a cathedral position, but with access to the same music.

Over the years, I worked under Maurice Carey, John Paterson, John Neill, and John McKay. Each of these Vicars had a sympathetic approach to music with varying degrees of understanding and varying ability to sing. Jimmy Hammond, Richard Clarke, Ted Ardis, and Andrew Wagstaff all served as curates, bringing their own singing abilities to bear.

From time to time, renewed support from parishioners enabled schemes to support the choir to be upgraded. In my time, the number of boy choristers fluctuated between seven and sixteen. For many years, I undertook to transport the boys to and from services and practices. As for the gentlemen of the choir, a strong sense of commitment was shown and although there was a change of personnel over the years, many were loyal regulars for the entire period. This led to strong friendships outside of the choir

with regular social activity. This was an important aspect of the choir.

We introduced major choral performances for some of the special festivals, augmenting the choir with many of my singing friends. There were concerts, too, especially at the midsummer festival which ran for many years during June. The choir undertook many visits to cathedrals and churches all over the country including Saint Finbarre's in Cork, Saint Carthage's in Lismore, Saint Brigid's in Kildare, Saint John's in Cashel, as well as Saint Patrick's and Christ Church in Dublin. We visited Ballinrobe, Glenstal, Saint Saviour's in Dominick Street, Saint John's in Sandymount, the UCD Chapel in Belfield, and even Ashford Castle."

The next choirmaster was Malcolm Wisener. Malcolm was appointed in September 1985 at the young age of 24. He had previously worked as assistant organist in Saint Patrick's Cathedral under John Dexter. Malcolm writes, "I was DOM at Saint Bartholomew's from 1985 until 2007. The choir was at rather a low ebb when I arrived and we sang unison music for the first two years while I built up

the boys and recruited some men to sing the lower parts. Bobby Barden is the only survivor from that time. It started to come together and we made our first cathedral trip to Ripon in 1987. At the beginning they were bi-annual but became annual. The last trip I did was to London where we sang in Southwark Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. We also made two trips to the île de France where we sang in La Madeleine, Saint Sulpice and Chartres Cathedral.

Other musical events included the boys singing in the Saint Matthew Passion and the Britten War Requiem at the NCH. They also sang for many years in The Glory of Christmas at the NCH and the Waterfront Hall in Belfast. Along with the choirs of the Pro Cathedral and Saint Patrick's the boys and men gave the first performance in Ireland by an all-male choir of Tallis' forty-part motet Spem in Alium. The annual Christmas concert with Alan Stanford was started in 1992.

Around the turn of the millennium the organ started to have major problems—the great soundboard was split and the bellows were leaking badly so it was decided to rebuild and return to an instru-

ment more in the style of the original organ. The previous rebuild was very much of its time but was totally unsuitable for the Anglican liturgy. We had no money when we signed the contract but we had a good committee with Gillian Arnold and Mervyn Percival. Trevor Crowe did a great job at a very reasonable cost."

Bobby wrote an appreciation of Malcolm in a music newsletter from 2007. "Steadily, Malcolm built up our choir in quality and in numbers that few would have ever thought possible. He was endowed with an equal measure of a very talented organist and a superb choirmaster, and had a full understanding and obvious love of the church's liturgy. Over twenty-one years

he instilled in hundreds of boy choristers a love of church music and the discipline required for its performance that became part of their fuller education. Many parents would bear witness to the encouragement he will have given to some with a natural shyness or indeed with some minor behavioural problems. I have never encountered a time when Malcolm was not in control of things, from a quiet Evensong to a Schubert mass, to shepherding the choir across Paris via the Metro with ages ranging from eight to seventy years. Tours were undertaken to several cathedrals across England and Wales as well as to cathedrals around Ireland."

Robin Heather, a bass in the choir for many years,

recalls a moment from a tour to Gloucester Cathedral where the dean could not pronounce his Rs and several of the boy choristers, amongst them Brian Gageby, Dominic Thurston, and Robert Hilliard, included the following petition on the prayer list for choral Evensong: "Please pray for Robin, returning tomorrow to Rosslare in his Range Rover." The dean duly obliged and prayed for Wobin Weturning to Wosslare in his Wange Wover. Apparently the anthem that followed wasn't as successful as it may have been otherwise.

One of Malcolm's most significant initiatives was the institution of a sep-



The Choir under Malcolm Wisener



The Original Girls Choir (2003)

arate treble line consisting entirely of girl sopranos. A girls' choir was becoming increasingly popular in the cathedrals of these islands but at the time it was still a bold and potentially controversial move in a parish church choir which had, until this point, consisted entirely of men. Luckily, the Easter Vestry was delighted to hear of Malcolm's initiative and he began recruiting choristers from the local schools in June 2002.

Cliona Rogan, one of the original group of twelve girls, recalled in 2012 what it was like to be a founding member of the choir: "We began as twelve in September of 2002. Now, ten years and four directors later, the girls' choir has grown to be eighteen choristers strong, with

two CDs down, and all smiles.

When the choristers were being recruited I'm sure Mr Wisener got tired of hearing 'Happy Birthday' sung repeatedly to him in frequencies that the human ear shouldn't be unleashed to for long. Nonetheless, singers were found and our first service took place on February 9, 2003. We straightened our brand new cassocks, revelling in the excitement of singing an actual service. We lined up and went over the important things in our heads: don't drop anything, walk along the black lines, don't fall, sing.

Even though we had practised the music for months previously, there was still a hint of terror in our voices as we emitted our first notes of the Smith responses. We said good-bye to Mr Wisener in 2007 and waited, confused to see who

would fill his shoes. During the transition when Mr Parshall valiantly stepped forward, a choir practice was held to try and choose the likely candidate. Much to our amusement, we watched unhelpfully as they attempted to take control.

Fraser Wilson was appointed in 2008 and in October the girls and men travelled to the far off land of Kilbride, Co. Wicklow for a harvest Evensong, fully equipped with a flexible repertoire and an organist who did some sterling work. Our first semi-abroad trip was to Armagh in February 2009. We made the most of it; we played Frisbee on the hillside and sang Mamma Mia loudly in close proximity to Mr Wilson. Unfortunately, some of us had some time-keeping difficulties, but made up for it by buying Fraser the most amazing present of bright pink,

striped, heart shaped sunglasses (which he definitely has not 'lost').

In 2010 we went international: Venice, Italy, the city built on water. We sang in the depths of Saint Mark's Basilica and listened to beatboxing in Saint Mark's Square. Luckily, we arrived in peak flood season and witnessed the most extraordinary sights; we watched the water seep up through the tiles of our hotel floor as we stood in our pyjamas, laughing. The shock over, we continued with the usual activities of running around with swords and accidentally breaking the radiators. Lest we forget, our trips

have not all been music related. We have gone to Funderland nearly every Christmas since the beginning, courtesy of our best friend Richard Bannister.

After being introduced to the Voice for Life system in 2008, the choir burst into colour. With our newfound medals, a CD was in order. In 2009, along with the boys and men, we recorded a CD for the twentieth anniversary of the Alan Stanford concerts. It was the girls' first time recording and we hardly believed how fast the time flew.

Soon after this we lost Mr Wilson to the organ bench and Mr Parshall took over once

again to some more sterling work in brightly coloured socks. He trained us up and brought another few medals home when some of us undertook more exams with the RSCM. We said goodbye to him once more as he left for England in February 2011. Our current victim, Mr Russcher, has been with us ever since. Here's hoping he can last a little longer >:)"

One of my first tasks after being appointed as director in March 2011 was to plan two full-length recordings of the choirs, one with the girls and men, followed closely by one with the boys and men. We started on the girls' disc in October 2011 and had it out in time for Christmas that year. The results, if I do say so myself, were excellent, and were a good indication of how far the girls' choir had come since its inaugural service in 2003.

Peter Parshall is the person who holds the record for most titles ever held at Saint Bartholomew's: Assisting Organist, Acting Director of Music, Assistant Director of Music and Director of Music. In 2012 he wrote of the progression of the girls' choir: "The words 'growth and



Fraser Wilson and his glasses

development' are exactly the right ones to use, since that is precisely what I have seen since my first involvement with the music at Saint Bartholomew's, two and a half years after the foundation of the girls' choir. Growth, in the sense of numbers and the frequency of their performances, yes, but also growth in confidence, in repertoire, in technique and in ability to work as a unit. I believe that the girls have developed into an ensemble that is able to understand both the privilege and the responsibility of leading others in worship—to give people a glimpse of something that is beyond our understanding—which is the *raison d'être* of the music at Saint Bartholomew's. Along the way, the girls, together with their colleagues in the boys' choir, have reaped all the benefits that membership of the choir brings. I've seen individuals grow in confidence and maturity having achieved awards from the RSCM; just as the choir has grown in confidence and maturity following, for example, an excellent rendition of a difficult anthem. I believe that all the young people involved in the music at Saint Bartholomew's will, in time, come to appreciate what the church has given them, through education,

lasting friendships, and an exposure to the incomparable riches of the choral repertoire."

Roisin Horan sang with the girls' choir from 2004-2007. She has now completed her law degree at UCD and is a regular singer in the chamber choir. In 2012 she wrote an article for the magazine: "In a word, my time in the girls' choir was phenomenal! It enabled me to travel around Ireland with friends, make regular free trips to Funderland, expand my musical repertoire, and most importantly, share my love of music and singing with people my own age who felt the exact same way. The help and guidance of my choirmasters, es-

pecially Malcolm Wisener and Peter Parshall, were inspiring, giving me the confidence to further my vocal training outside Saint Bartholomew's. The friendships I made as a chorister I hope will be longlasting. It has given me great pleasure to hear and see my fellow ex-Bart's girls come on in leaps and bounds. I never dreamed when I started that the choir might one day have a CD (or two!), or travel abroad like the boys. I still can't believe how much has been accomplished since those early practice sessions with only a few girls. This couldn't have happened without the team who believed in us. Fraser Wilson made the impossible possible and Tristan



Peter Parshall and his shopping



Fraser Wilson with the Boys Choir (2010)

brought the standard to where it is today. It seems only yesterday that myself and Cliona Rogan were watching the boys sing at the Eucharist and trying to catch the chocolate coins that Reverend Michael Thompson threw down to the congregation from the pulpit. At this stage, we were still just singing Evensong, with the staple repertoire of Dyson in F and Smith Responses. The speed with which we became real contenders points to a very promising future. Look out boys, we really are here to stay!"

Michael Thompson was Vicar of Saint Bartholomew's and Christ Church Leeson Park from 2004 to 2007 and perfectly defines the contribution of the girls' choir: "Although those who remember my time at Saint Bartholomew's may find this surprising, I was very

rarely insistent when it came to the musical aspect of the liturgy. This was not simply the fruit of self-discipline. It was because the music was under the direction of one of the finest liturgical musicians I have had the honour of working with, Malcolm Wisener. Nonetheless I was adamant that the girls' choir should sing at my institution in Christ Church Leeson Park. In all those places where the wonderful tradition of a boys and men choir has been maintained, it is too easy to view the girls' choir as an add-on, or as a sop to current thinking, or both. Implicit in such an attitude is that it is 'not the real thing'. There should be no place for such attitudes in the church. The life of Saint Bartholomew's is centred on the Eucharistic Offering. In that Offering, Christ includes all of us, and all that

we do, all that we strive for. The music of the liturgy is expressive of our deepest perceptions, or highest aspirations, and of our use of God-given gifts as expressions of the nobility for which we were created. How could that be complete without the unique beauty, timbre and quality which, in their different ways, the girls' and boys' choirs offer? I wanted the girls to know that they were not singing as a concession or as a favour, but because without them there would be something lacking, which only they could supply, in the honour due to Almighty God. The girls' choir of Saint Bartholomew's Church has greatly enriched that offering of worship. I pray God's continued blessing on their musical journey into the Mystery of the Divine."

Not to be outdone, the boys and men recorded

their CD in 2013, launching just in time for our summer concert on 5 June. “Blessed be the God and Father” was a significant undertaking but ultimately a very successful one. The centrepiece of the disc was Benjamin Britten’s cantata *Rejoice in the Lamb*, a significant undertaking for any choir and the most challenging work I had thrown at the choir to date.

Our current music team is a strong trio of myself; our Assistant Director of Music and Organist, Dr Andrew Johnstone; and our vocal coach, Lucy Champion. As we all know, the music at Sunday services doesn’t just magically happen. The boys and girls rehearse on Wednesday evenings, with an additional rehearsal and theory class for the boys on Friday

evenings, and the men also join us on Wednesdays to go through any new music that might not yet be in the repertoire.

We’re extremely fortunate to have such fantastic music staff. We were delighted to appoint Dr Johnstone as assistant director of music in 2015. Andrew has many years’ experience in cathedral music, is a lecturer in music at Trinity College, and is a regular concert reviewer with the Irish Times—if there’s something he doesn’t know about music, it’s not worth knowing. Lucy is primarily responsible for the fabulous sound of the boys and girls, as she regularly coaches the choristers in small groups in the various techniques of choral singing. We certainly wouldn’t enjoy the current high standard of music at services without the expert tuition of our dedicated music staff. In terms of chorister numbers, we’re currently running at full capacity and the stalls are overflowing. We welcomed five new girl probationers in June last year and six new boys in October. In the first part of 2015 RTÉ’s



Recording “Blessed be the God and Father” (2012)



Prague (2013)

‘Nationwide’ programme came to do a segment on Saint Bartholomew’s to publicise the current restoration and highlight the musical tradition. My local barber in Kimmage was starstruck when I walked in the day after the programme had aired and she insisted that her four-year-old son would be joining the choir the following week. On 15 November we combined with the boys and girls of the Pro-Cathedral in RTÉ studios, Donnybrook, to record the Sunday Worship programme for Saint Cecilia’s day. Our Christmas concert on 13 December was a complete sellout (luckily, Bono managed to book online ahead of the event!).

We were also excited to include our new cham-

ber choir at last year’s concert, where they sang Lauridsen’s well-known Christmas motet *O Magnum Mysterium* on their own and augmented the other choirs in the larger works. The chamber choir originally began in November 2014 as a means of keeping past members of the girls’ choir in the Saint Bartholomew’s community—until then, there had not been a way for them to continue singing at Saint Bartholomew’s after they left the choir to concentrate on their leaving certificate examinations. Since then the choir has snowballed and we now welcome members from many different choirs, traditions, and musical backgrounds from all over Dublin and have more than seventy people

in our pool of singers. We even have a few chorister parents singing in the choir who, I hope, are enjoying joining their own children in the stalls at Evensong and maybe even learning a thing or two from them! The chamber choir currently rehearses on Fridays and sings Evensong on Sundays once a month and over the summer supplements the contributions of our wonderful Elgin Chorale at the morning Eucharists. We very much look forward to expanding the chamber choir and are always welcoming new members.

Over the last couple of years, the recession has put a damper on our tours but we have still managed to raise enough money to go to Prague with the girls and men in 2013 and

Hildesheim, Germany with the boys and men in 2014. Tours are not merely superfluous luxuries for a choir—I have come to realise that they are an integral part in the ebb and flow of the choir year and are crucial for the team building and morale of the choir members. They also help spread the word of the music at Saint Bartholomew's and our choristers are always exemplary ambassadors for our church and Ireland in general. It is largely due to the Friends of the Choir, a subscription-based support network for all aspects of the choral tradition in Saint Bartholomew's, that we were able to produce our two recent CDs and partly fund our most recent tours. In 2016 we will be doing some smaller, less-expensive

tours within Ireland with the boys and the girls so that some of our concert proceeds can instead be donated towards the mammoth undertaking of restoring the church.

Having researched in depth the history of Saint Bartholomew's music tradition, I find the most impressive thing about the choir is that it exists at all. A choir is such a fragile thing—it's susceptible to attacks from financial woes, mutable liturgical fashions, dwindling personnel, changes in leadership, and even general apathy. I have witnessed firsthand the demise of long-running ensembles, previously thought to be immune to destruction due to their storied histories. Keeping a choir running requires

the firm commitment and resolve of many people—not just the people who are paid to do so, but more importantly, the voluntary members who give a significant portion of their week and therefore lives to its day to day and year to year running.

It is my privilege to currently helm the music at Saint Bartholomew's but there would be no music at all without the constant support of the Vicar, the Select Vestry, the Friends of the Choir, the congregation, the current members of the choir, and the hundreds of past choristers. This is a tradition that needs to be nurtured and protected, but I'm happy to report that it is thriving and will hopefully continue to grow in the future.



Hildesheim (2015)



FUNDERLAND

Luke O'Reilly gives us his thoughts on the trip to Funderland that took place in December 2015.

Our trip to Funderland is something our choir does every year. Each year we meet at the hall and walk down to Funderland.

We now have to sing to get in for free which is a fair trade off. After singing we divide into groups of four or five and go wherever we want.

My group mostly stayed around the bumper cars where we had fun bumping into each other and other people as well. Some people went onto roller coasters where some pictures were taken at just the right time, to see people on their phones completely bored out of their minds or screaming their heads off. At about 10 we went outside and looked at one or two rides there.

There was one big ride where you sit on a log and are brought up a slope. At the top they send you plummeting down into a pool of water.

At the end almost everyone was soaked and everyone was happy. Next time we go let's just hope we aren't singing in front of the circus; the place was full of animals and smelled less than appetizing.

It was a great night.





