

CHORISTERS TAKE WING



2009 has been a busy year for the choristers of St. Mary's as this list of events reveals. On the 8th April an Evensong at Southwark Cathedral, on the 9th May the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) London diocesan festival service at St Paul's Cathedral. On the 9th June the RSCM young voices "Let it Shine" event at Windsor Parish Church transferred from Eton College because of a Swine flu outbreak! On the 4th July the RSCM awards assessment day. On the 8th August, evensong at St Paul's Cathedral and on Sunday 20th September, a festival evensong at St Mary's. We've sung an awful lot of music in that time, with many highlights, including Zadok the Priest by George Fredrick Handel, I was glad – C.H.H. Parry, O clap your hands - John Rutter; Hail Gladdening Light - Charles Wood, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittus settings by Howells, and George Dyson. It's a list for any Cathedral Chorister to be proud of, and it's all been done by our brave choristers, who have tackled the repertoire with spirit and understanding . They deserve our congratulations. They are really flying now.

CHORISTERS FIND ANOTHER STRING TO THEIR BOW!



On Saturday 15th September, the choristers took a break from their singing duties to play to each other in ways they had not had the opportunity to do before. Head Chorister Lucia played a Gavotte by Lully, and Antonia entertained us on the piano

with Saint-Seans's Elephant. We also heard Nicholas, Sarita and Naveen on the piano, James on guitar, William on clarinet and Andrew on the bell-tree. Since this was their first ever Concert Party, parents joined in as audience, Diane provided the food and they all enjoyed a wide game or two – with prizes of course!

CHORISTERS SING HARVEST

As is the tradition, the Choristers again sang grace at the beginning of the harvest festival lunch at the All England Tennis Club on 11th October. This year's offering was a verse anthem, music by David Ogden, words by Helena Hobbs, "The fruits of the earth". Lucia and Antonia lead off on the verses, Nick, Clem and Alice did verse two, and last but not least Hannah and Thomas sang verse three. All joined in the joyous refrain, "You give us the sun, you send us the rain, the cycle of sea – soh –ons, turning again" Well done guys, expert job well done, and well done Iris Ronayne for putting it together.

CHORISTERS AT KINGS

Well maybe not King's College Cambridge, but the Great Hall at King's College Wimbledon on 14th October. This was a repeat of the summer RSCM young voices "Let it shine" service, with great contemporary music tackled with great enthusiasm by our choristers.



We began with the gathering song, Hallelujah4, in which simple motifs are repeated in slowly diverging time with claps in between to create a rhythmic clapping pattern. It's great fun. Also in the programme was John Bell's hymn "We rejoice to be God's chosen", and Walford Davies's "God be in my head" Together with modern classics like "Shine Jesus Shine" and "This little light of mine", and traditional hymns, "Praise my soul the king of Heaven", and "Church of God, elect and glorious", this was a delightful service that all could join in. We went out to "We are marching in the light of God". The choristers attacked the music with energetic enthusiasm, and thoroughly enjoyed the tea, kindly supplied by Kings College. A not to miss gem in the RSCM events calendar.

GUILDFORD AREA FESTIVAL

The Guildford Area Festival service took place on the 17th October at Guildford Cathedral. It was at this event that Lucia Hearn, Antonia Lenon and Hannah Evans received their certificates for their achievement in reaching the Bronze, or Dean's award under the RSCM voice for life training scheme. These are externally assessed awards, so hold great merit, and the girls are to be congratulated on their success in reaching such a standard so soon.

As is the norm with the RSCM events, the music was an eclectic mix of contemporary and the traditional. So Elgar, "The Spirit of the Lord", Stanford "O for a closer Walk with God", John Bell "We rejoice to be God's chosen", and an exquisite setting of the chorister's prayer by John Harper amongst many.

We had a great day out. Those choristers who came to receive awards or to support them sang with great heart and voice and learnt a lot from the brilliant vocal coaching and leadership of Katherine Dienes-Williams, the Master of the Choristers at Guildford Cathedral.

AND FINALLY

We are pleased to announce that Hannah Evans has taken on the role of Head Chorister. We are most grateful to Lucia Hearn for her splendid service whilst Head Chorister and to Antonia Lenon and Nick Bricknell as team leaders. Alice Fernyhough and Thomas Ronayne take on the position of new team leaders. I'm sure all will equip themselves wonderfully in their new, but responsible roles. Welcome to Naveen and Hector, our latest recruits.



If you have a son or daughter who is keen on singing, has a good voice, and is happy to give time on Friday evenings and Sundays, then you might like to get in touch with Chris Thomas or Iris Ronayne to talk it over. In return for their time we offer vocal and musical training under the Voice for Life scheme, and a happy, inspiring environment with new and maybe old friends.