



St Paul's Cathedral Music Foundation

Newsletter November 2010

No 14

A Saint's Got to Eat

If you've kept some of your cash in foreign currency under the bed against the next GFC, then check the shoebox: if any of it is in British twenty-pound notes, then you may be in a spot of bother.

From 30 June this year they're no longer legal tender – if they have Sir Edward Elgar on them, that is. (The new version bears the image of Adam Smith, Scottish economist and fan of the 'hand of Providence' in economic affairs).

If you look closely at your *old* twenty-pound note, however, you'll see that Sir Edward is gazing across at the west end of Worcester Cathedral (what a surprise), and looking off into the middle distance; what is surprising perhaps, is the identity of the figure *below* the cathedral.



It is none less than St Cecilia, the patron saint of musicians and church music.

The saint hovers, it seems, between life and death (she famously took three days to expire after a botched execution during the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius in the late C2 CE), and her gaze seems to be in the direction of the cathedral, too.

There is no embarrassment in having a triad comprised of cathedral worship, St Cecilia, and Elgar on a piece of currency: St Cecilia presumably – like the rest of us – had to eat, and conducted the routine commerce of everyday life using the legal tender of her day. Saint or no, she was subject to the market realities imposed by her society, as indeed are we.

This curious linking of images on a now-defunct twenty-pound note is a timely reminder that the glorious music at St Paul's Cathedral is a product of, and dependent upon, the material world of which it is part, yet beyond which it points. Put bluntly, quality costs money, and properly so.

During November the Cathedral community – and those beyond it who value the contribution that quality music, choir and musicians make to the life of St Paul's – are being asked to consider this aspect of the Cathedral's ministry in terms of their giving. On Sunday 21 November – the day before St Cecilia's feast day, as it happens – special envelopes will be made available by the Music Foundation for gifts, whether one-off or ongoing.

Please consider the possibility: after all, a saint's got to eat...

+Mark Burton

From the Director of Music, Dr June Nixon AM



Who are the people who occupy the back rows of the choir?

I am sure most of you would say 'the choir men.' A few others after a little thought may say. Aren't they called 'lay clerks'? I doubt very much that anyone would say 'vicars choral'. And yet for many hundreds of years, all these terms have been applied to the singers in a Cathedral Choir who sing the alto, tenor and bass parts of the music.

I find it difficult to contain my appreciation of our men who play such an important part in our services, yet can so often be overlooked. Of all the men on our roll, many receive no remuneration at all, yet regularly and diligently attend rehearsals and services up to six times a week for 40 weeks of the year.

I don't think they would mind if I described them as a "mixed bunch" of teenagers, University students, University lecturers and businessmen to retired professionals from many fields.

Although a "mixed bunch", they mix so well. The more senior act as mentors to the younger with advice on school work, and often just with the

passing on of wisdom and skills acquired over many years, both in and out of the choir stalls. The younger are often able to pass on their newly acquired computer skills to the senior members.

I once stunned an interviewer when asked for the qualities I seek in a potential choirman. Expecting my answer would be something along the lines of "a fine voice", I replied that "any voice and personality which will blend with others, together with a willingness to learn, and a willingness to commit to the constant striving for excellence in Cathedral music". (If the personality doesn't blend, the voices won't blend. Sight reading skills are of course essential, and these will improve with practice.)

Whatever their title, this is what we have from the people in the back row of our choir stalls.

They have to battle traffic or unreliable public transport after a long day's work or study, then concentrate hard in a rehearsal and service. And not just singing, but blending their voices with 30 or so others to create music - not just the notes, but with a musical insight which hopefully might help others to feel that the world is not such a bad place after all!

They are one of our Cathedral's most priceless treasures.

CATHEDRAL IN CONCERT

The large attendance at the Cathedral in Concert on 16 September 2010 was treated to a splendid performance by the Choir, directed by Dr June Nixon, and the Orchestra, conducted by Dr Michael Woods, of Mozart's *Missa Brevis* in D major, K194 and Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*. The Orchestra played Mozart's *Overture to the Marriage of Figaro*, the *Symphony No. 34* in C major and the *Piano Concerto in A major* K488 with Lachlan Redd, piano. Siegfried Franke, Sub-Organist, played Bach's *Fugue à la Gigue*.

Associate Professor Ronald Farren-Price AM wrote the following appreciation of Lachlan Redd's performance in the Mozart piano Concerto:

It was a particular joy for me to be present in the Cathedral to hear my former student Lachlan Redd perform Mozart's *A major Concerto* K488. This was an outstanding performance displaying unique artistry and pianistic command of one of Mozart's most demanding scores. Lachlan's playing conveyed the complete breadth of human emotions contained in this work, from the most sensitive delicacy to the sweeping drama of the climaxes. What an asset he has proved both as pianist and organist for St Paul's!



From Bishop James Grant AM



THEN AND NOW

The publication of Russell Beedles' *A TRIBE OF ANGELS Coming of Age in Melbourne*, which has as its central section his account of his membership of the Cathedral Choir from 1949-53, prompts a comparison between the life of a chorister then and now.

Perhaps the greatest difference is in the demands on a chorister's time. Then, as was the arrangement when the Choir School was conducted on-site, the boys practised each morning and evening, Tuesday to Friday. This meant missing the first two and the last periods of the Trinity Grammar School timetable. It also meant, originally, a journey

by train to and from the former Kew station but, later, by bus from Hawthorn station. Today's choristers, thanks to more efficient travel arrangements, spend more time at school and less in travel.

Russell began in the choir when Colin Campbell Ross was organist and finished under Lance Hardy. Ross was assisted by Norman Kaye and James Slater and, as today, new boys were mentored by the 'seniors'. The Dean, Roscoe Wilson, was a benevolent presence but it was the assistant clergy, Bruce Reddrop and Bill Dowell, and the Dean's Secretary, Madge Jamieson, who were in daily contact with the boys.

The practice room was on the second floor, now the Penman Room, while the Boys' Vestry was on the ground floor, now the kitchen. So, the Book Boys had to bring down the music for the services (on the same trolley as today!) in the lift. Before the late practices with the men on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the boys were fortified with slices of bread and yellow (apricot) and red (raspberry) jam prepared by Miss Wallace.

As today, the boys participated in services on great occasions— in Russell's case, the first visit by an Archbishop of Canterbury in 1950 and the first visit by the Queen in 1954.

Once their voice broke, some of the choristers, including Russell, continued at the Cathedral as members of the Servers Guild.

However, what every boy takes away from his membership of the Cathedral Choir is not only a first class musical experience but also that of learning to manage the competing claims of travel, singing, studies and leisure activities. That this lesson was well learnt is demonstrated by the subsequent careers of some of Russell's peers: Harry Bolitho, Professor of Japanese at Harvard University; Dom Michael (Ernie) King, Abbott of the Anglican Benedictine Monastery at Camperdown; and Dick Mason, ABC sports commentator.

Russell's absorbing account of his childhood in Ivanhoe, his adolescence in the choir and at Trinity Grammar School and as a young adult at the University is available from Readings Bookstores.

This term we welcome Gap organ scholar Caspian Mitchard, who has recently arrived from Abingdon School. Caspian formerly sang in the choir of New College, Oxford, where he served as Head Chorister in his final year. He will return to England next year, when he will take up the organ scholarship at Peterhouse College Cambridge.

The Gap scholarship at the Cathedral is generously supported by Trinity Grammar School, (the Cathedral Choir School), where Caspian will be working in the school music department in addition to gaining organ and choral experience at the Cathedral.



A NEW SETTING FOR A CAROL

Dr June Nixon, the Cathedral Organist, has composed a new setting for the carol, *The Holly and the Ivy* and dedicated it to the memory of Nancy Curry, who died in 1991. Her husband, the Reverend Dr Norman Curry, a generous supporter of the music at the Cathedral, who was an honorary associate priest at the Cathedral from 1961 to 1999, writes "For over three decades, Nancy found joy, inspiration and insight through the Cathedral music. It is fitting, therefore, that as a result of a donation to the Music Foundation, this great tradition of Cathedral music has been assisted, especially in the appointment and training of young musicians".

The new setting, to a traditional folk tune, will be sung at the Christmas Carol services on 19 and 24 December.

This is the fourth piece dedicated by Dr Nixon in honour of supporters of the music—earlier dedications have been to Ken Barelli (Pioneer Foundation), Canon Barry Smith (interim Dean 2008) and Charlotte Zartman, a supporter and frequent visitor from the USA.

THE FOUNDATION'S SUPPORT OF THE ORGAN AND MUSIC AT ST PAUL'S

Since its establishment in 1993, the Foundation has made a significant contribution to the costs of music at the Cathedral, particularly the maintenance of the organ and the costs of the choir. Last year, the Foundation was able to make grants to the Cathedral totalling \$90,000.

This year, the Foundation has seen a shortfall in donations and, so far, it has been able to make grants to the Cathedral of only \$50,000.

In response to this shortfall, there will be an appeal, especially to the Cathedral congregation, at St Cecilia's tide in November 2010.

Choral Services, and Christmas Carol Services, at St Paul's Cathedral*

Choral Eucharist	Sundays at 10.30am (10am on Christmas Day and Easter Day)
Choral Evensong	Sundays at 6pm (Choral Eucharist on 1 st Sunday in the month) Weekdays (Tuesday to Friday) at 5.10pm
Sunday 5 December	6pm Advent Carol Service
Sunday 19 December	3pm Christmas Carol Service
Friday 24 December	8 pm Christmas Carol Service
Friday 25 December	10am Choral Eucharist

*Details of service times, including details of Christmas Services, and other events, are available at www.stpaulscathedral.org.au or by telephone 03 9653 4333)

St Paul's Cathedral Music Foundation was established in 1993 to provide financial assistance to enable the performance of sacred and secular music at, or in association with, the Cathedral by choristers and musicians with particular focus on the Cathedral Choir and the Cathedral Organ.

The Foundation (ABN 99 756 614 261) is a tax deductible gift recipient listed on the Register of Cultural Organisations under section 30-B(4) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Donations may be addressed to the St Paul's Cathedral Music Foundation, 209 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000. Donation forms are available at www.stpaulscathedral.org.au

Patrons: Yvonne Kenny AM, the Countess of Harewood, Professor Richard Divall AO, OBE

Trustees: Rowena Armstrong AO, QC, Professor Anthony Bailey, Bishop Mark Burton, Glen Gersch, Bishop James Grant AM, Professor Robin Sharwood AM

The Trustees are most grateful to Neville Finney, a long standing member of the Choir, for his generosity and commitment in compiling these Newsletters and to LITHOCRAFT, 3 Permas Way Truganina VIC 3029 for its generosity in donating its printing services.

With this support, the only cost to the Foundation is postage.